

Congress calls attention to the poisoning deaths of over 2000 villagers in East Africa linked to a Chinese gas plant

U.S. Congress steps in as African villagers continue to die in circumstances linked to poisoned local water supply as a result of Chinese gas exploration

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, April 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Due to the leadership of Representative Michal McCaul (R-TX 10th District), who serves as the Chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC), and Representative Young Kim (R-CA 40th District), the Republican-led Congress has taken the lead in calling attention to the illness and deaths of over 2000 villagers in the Somali "Ogaden" region of Ethiopia linked to suspected poisoning of the drinking water supply near Chinese natural gas drilling activities in the region.



U.S. Rep. Young Kim (R-CA) (2nd L) speaks as (L-R) House Republican Conference Chair Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-NY) and House Minority Whip Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA).

On Tuesday, the 18th of April, HFAC held a hearing on the implications and adverse public health and environmental effects of Chinese Communist Party-linked entities in Africa, where Representative Young Kim posed the following question to members of the Biden Administration:

"Chinese economic activities and investments throughout Africa have been directly linked to environmental degradation and have created public health emergencies throughout the continent. For example, since 2014, Ethiopia Somali Ogaden has seen thousands die from a mysterious disease in areas surrounding a Chinese government-linked natural gas plant that has poisoned the drinking water supply. How are the State Department and USAID planning to hold China accountable for the negative impact of China's investments in African and local communities, and how will the State Department and USAID pressure China to abide by international public health, environmental protection, and labor laws?"



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Representative Young Kim

The congressional witnesses at the hearing were Rick Waters, China Coordinator and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for China and Taiwan; Amy Holman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of African Affairs; and Janean Davis, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa U.S. Agency for International Development.

Background

News of the adverse public health and environmental effects caused by China’s industrial activities in Sub-Saharan Africa have rarely been reported. This is due to

strict censorship by the host African government. Whereas adverse environmental, ecological, and public health incidents connected to Chinese business practices have been reported in Ethiopia, The Gambia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, to mention a few.

The news of the poisoning and deaths was first reported on February 20, 2020, by the Guardian newspaper. The report stated, “A deadly sickness is spreading through villages near a Chinese natural gas project in Ethiopia’s Somali region, according to locals and officials who spoke to the Guardian. Poly-GCL, a partly state-owned Chinese company, has been prospecting for oil and gas in the Ogaden Basin, as the vicinity is known, since 2014. It “is suspicious that the sickness is caused by hazardous chemical waste that has poisoned the water supply.” A doctor from the referral hospital in Jijiga surveyed the area but wished to remain anonymous, said most of the symptoms locals exhibited in the clinics he visited were life-threatening. The Guardian story was then picked up by other news agencies, including the Voice of America (VOA), which reported on March 17, 2020, that “More than 2,000 nomads in Ethiopia’s Somali region have died since 2014 after falling ill from a mysterious disease that caused bleeding from their mouths and noses.

Von Batten Montague York, L.C. represents the Ogaden Community and will continue to work to raise awareness of the plight of the Ogaden people in Congress and the Biden Administration. The firm will also continue to push for US measures to provide humanitarian assistance and counter the adverse public health and environmental effects of Chinese commercial activities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Source Links

Two-minute video clip of Representative Young Kim’s question to members of the Biden Administration: House of Representatives Hearing: China in Africa:

https://twitter.com/batten_von/status/1648428894767452162?s=20

The mystery sickness bringing death and dismay to eastern Ethiopia:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/feb/20/the-mystery-sickness-bringing->

[death-and-dismay-to-eastern-ethiopia](#)

Mystery Illness Kills Ethiopian Nomads: https://www.voanews.com/a/africa_mystery-illness-kills-ethiopian-nomads/6185976.html

Villagers in Ethiopia are bleeding from their noses and mouths before dropping dead as mystery sickness is blamed on toxic waste from Chinese oil drilling:

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8062709/Villagers-Ethiopia-bleeding-noses-mouths-dropping-dead.html>

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