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## [Support the struggle against mining in Thailand!](#)

**In North-eastern Thailand, an anti-mining community struggle needs your support. We call organizations around the world to adhere to this letter of solidarity with the women and men human rights defenders (W/HRDs) of Khao Lao Yai-Pha Jun Dai Forest Conservation Group.**

26 years ago, a quarry mining company Thor Silasitthi Co. started operating inside a forest area in the Dong Mafai Sub District of Nong Bua Lamphu Province. Since then, at least six villages that depend on this forest area for their livelihoods have been bearing the negative impacts of the company's activities. They have lost access to food they used to find in the forest, and face daily explosions in the mining area which causes noise pollution and damage to households due to falling debris. Important archaeological sites are located inside the mining area; according to the new Mining Act from 2017, these should be exempted from mining.

Women play a crucial role in this struggle which is led by a group called **"the women and men human rights defenders (W/HRDs) of Khao Lao Yai-Pha Jun Dai Forest Conservation Group"**.

Knowing that the company's use permit for the mine was going to expire on September 3, 2020, the community group intensified their struggle to reclaim the forest in the past months. Among the demands is a call to the authorities for rehabilitation of the damaged area. Without a positive reply from the government on their demands, and the company attempting to renew its permit, the communities started an occupation.

Guided by traditional rituals and ceremonies, the planting of seedlings of flowers and trees, 300 women and men from the communities have been occupying part of the mining area since 4 September. They declared the mining area a "Community Forest Zone" and called for justice for the four villagers who in the period 1995-1999 were killed in this struggle. Until now, no one has been held responsible or punished for these killings. On September 25, community members occupied another area, the stone mill. The permit for this location expired on September 24. During the mobilization, community activists as well as a human rights activist supporting them have received death threats.

**We ask you to sign the following letter in support of the communities' struggle.** Read the complete letter below the form.

**[emailpetition id="25"]**

Letter:

**To: The Women and Men Human Rights Defenders (W/HRDs) of Khao Lao Yai-Pha Jun Dai Forest Conservation Group**

We, undersigned organisations, social movements, and activists, from different regions of the world, have learned about your important struggle of reclaiming the land and forests you care for. We

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understand that the Thor Silasitthi mining company encroached on this land 26 years ago. Many of us are engaged in grassroots struggles against mining and other destructive projects, and have faced similar indifference from government authorities and provocations from companies as you have in your struggle.

First, we want to express our support and solidarity with your struggle to reclaim the land and forest. In particular, we learned about the recent important actions in September by which you have successfully reclaimed the mining zone and the stone mill.

We are impressed by your staying power and that you are engaged in this struggle already for 26 years. In this process of reclaiming your lives, livelihoods, land and homes, you have lost four comrades. We are inspired by the rituals and ceremonies you have celebrated during the occupation actions. These ceremonies demonstrate a profound care and respect for the area and speak to how important these places are for the present and future well-being of your communities.

We stand with you. We join you in demanding from Thai authorities to defend the collective interests of the communities, not the private and profit-driven interests of mining companies. They must attend your demands and close the mining activities in the area. They must ensure the safety and wellbeing of all involved in the recent actions, in particular those who have received death threats. And they must not forget the call for justice for those community activists who were killed in the past. On this matter, too, we stand with you.

Although many of us are far away from Thailand, be sure that we are connected with your struggle. We are committed to continue monitoring closely the situation and give visibility to your struggle through our own communication networks. Your struggle is not only important to ensure your communities' future, but it also encourages the struggles in other countries and regions. You are an example for the world of what a strong movement is about.

You are not alone in your important struggle. May it be victorious soon. It is already a strong and inspiring example for other struggles in Thailand, and for all of us who are in other countries around the world.

In solidarity,