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**Statement re:**

**Mkuju River Uranium Project and Selous Game Reserve World Heritage site.**

In July 2012, the World Heritage Committee, chaired by Ms. Mitrofanova from Russia, had made a decision to accept the application of the Government of Tanzania for a "minor boundary change" of World Heritage site Selous Game Reserve (SGR), in order to allow a uranium mining project, Mkuju River Project, majority owned by Russian state-owned company ARMZ, to go ahead under conditions specified by the World Heritage Committee.

Several indications show the Government of Tanzania and interested companies have no interest to comply with the requests of the World Heritage Committee, they intend to open up World Heritage site Selous Game Reserve for further mining and exploitation of resources, and to allow Selous Niassa-Wildlife Corridor to be transformed into an "emerging energy district" – in stark violation of the WHC's requests.

As we are convinced that

1. the decision to accept the so-called "minor boundary change" – and thus to allow uranium mining inside a World Heritage site - was made in faulty way and
2. requests made by the World Heritage Committee in its July 2012 decision towards the State Party. i.e. the Government of Tanzania, are not met.

we request that the July 2012 decision and its consequences need to be reconsidered.

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June 16, 2013

For further substantiation see the explanations given below.

## **Explanations:**

- The decision had been made in defiance of the advice of organizations consulting the World Heritage Committee, such as IUCN.
- The decision had been made in defiance of the World Heritage Committee's 2011 – and before – clear and repeated position that prospecting for minerals, oil, gas und uranium is not compatible with the Selous Game Reserve's status as a World Heritage site.
- **In the same year (2012), the World Heritage Centre (WHC) states** (in "State of conservation of World Heritage properties", WHC12/36-CM/7B.Add) **that mining is incompatible with the status of Selous Game Reserve as a World Heritage property and suggested in its *Draft Decision* (36COM 7B.5) "to enact specific legislation to prohibit prospecting, oil exploration and mining" (Point 5 of the Draft Decision), in line with its 2011 Decision.**

### WHC Decision 2011 (34 COM 7B.3)

(The World Heritage Committee ...)

**4. Urges the State Party to implement the following actions in order to protect the property's Outstanding Universal Value:**

**d ) Enact specific legislation to prohibit prospecting and mining within Selous Game Reserve on the basis of its World Heritage status.**

**5. Reiterates that any decision to go forward with oil exploration, mining or dam construction inside the property would constitute a clear case for inscribing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger;**

**6. Strongly encourages the State Party to provide an appropriate protection status to the Selous-Niassa corridor as its inclusion within the property is vital to the long-term integrity of the property and the corridor is progressively fragmented;**

In the final decision made in St. Petersburg in July 2012, the WHC's position is completely turned over, and a "minor boundary change" of Selous Game Reserve is accepted in order to allow Mkuju River uranium project to proceed.

- A blatant conflict of interest was ignored by all parties involved:  
The decision to accept the boundary change was made while Russia was chairing the 2012 WHC session in St. Petersburg - WHEREAS the company owning the majority of the Mkuju River Project being enabled through this decision, ARMZ, is a Russian state-owned company.
- No scientifically or otherwise founded reasons are given as to WHY the WHC's consistent standpoint that mining is incompatible with World Heritage sites has been overturned.

\* \* \* \*

**In its 2012 decision** (36 COM 8B.43 see attached), the WHC reiterates different statements, it urges and requests that these are followed up after the 'minor boundary

change' has been accepted.

However, these statements and requests are ignored to a large extent. Three examples:

### **(1) No mining in World Heritage area after exclusion of Mkuju River Mining site**

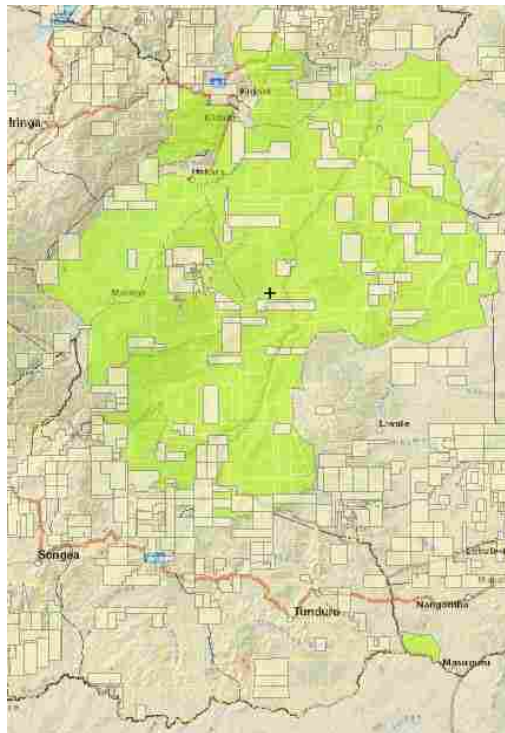
The World Heritage Committee ...

7. (...) requests (...)

c) Not to engage in any mining activity within the Selous Game Reserve World Heritage property after exclusion of the Mkuju River Mining site as per the decision of the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee,

However, maps show that a number of companies still hold exploration licenses inside the Selous Game Reserve area. (Map from website of Ministry of Mines for purpose of reviewing exploration licenses (<http://www.flexicadastre.com/tanzania/> <http://www.spatialdimension.com/News/2012/TanzaniaOnlineMiningCadastrePortalLaunched/tabid/177/Default.aspx> ).

The map displays Selous Game Reserve (light green) and the exploration licenses granted to mining and exploration companies (greyish rectangles).



**Obviously**, the request of the **WHC 2012 decision** that there shall be no further mining activity in Selous Game Reserve after exclusion of the Mkuju River Mining site, **is not taken seriously by the Government of Tanzania**.

Although the map displays only "exploration licenses", it is clear that exploration aims at and leads to mining. Granting exploration licenses - knowing that later exploitation / mining would not be allowed – would not make any sense.

## **(2) Enhancement of the effectiveness of Selous- Niassa corridor**

The World Heritage Committee ...

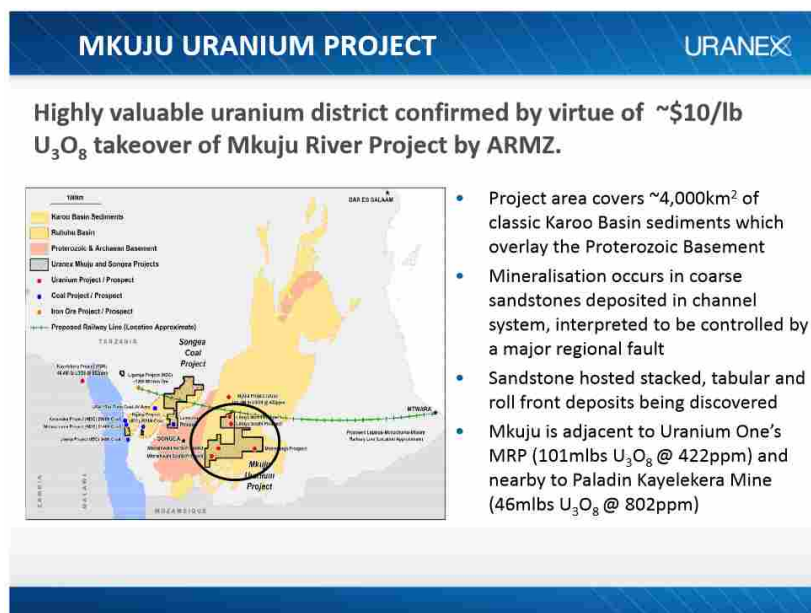
6. Recalls in particular the commitments made by the State Party at the 35th session of the Committee to secure and **enhance the continued effectiveness of the Selous-Niassa corridor** as a key feature to maintaining the long-term integrity of the property, as well as to make proposals for the inclusion into the property of additional land to the effect of further maintaining and enhancing the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;

(see also 7. b.)

(bold and underlined added by author of press release)

**Companies** such as URANEX, Australia (active in Tanzania) **advertised publicly** at their 2011 AGM, on their February 2012 North America Roadshow as well as on the "Australian Uranium Conference", Perth, July 2012, **that they would be "Developing an emerging energy district in Africa"**.

**The area referred to as an "emerging energy district" is located exactly in the area of the Niassa-Selous Wildlife Corridor.**



(from: URANEX, presented at its November 2011 AGM, on its North America Roadshow February 2012, and at the "Australian Uranium Conference" July 2012, Perth <http://www.uranex.com.au/IRM/Company/ShowPage.aspx/PDFs/1257-47648990/InvestorPresentationNorthAmerica>)

URANEX's advertising is only one example of developments set to change the area of the Niassa-Selous Wildlife Corridor into an industrial complex with mines of different kinds, roads, industrial activities etc.

**These developments are in defiance of the WHC's request of the July 2012 decision on World Heritage site Selous Game Reserve to " ... enhance the continued effectiveness of the Selous-Niassa corridor – a commitment, the Government of Tanzania had made earlier to the World Heritage Committee.**

### **(3) Social needs and conditions of workers and local population**

The World Heritage Committee ...

9. Urges the State Party to ensure:

(...)

b) that economic and social needs of the local population and workers are respected and that social conditions in and around the Selous Game Reserve, in particular linked to the Mkuju River Mining site, are subject to monitoring, ...

Although mining itself has not yet started at a larger scale at Mkuju River Project (as of mid-July 2013), reports from local people in the Mkuju River area, documented in writing as well as by video, show that in reality on the ground these requests are not met:

- Local people have not been appropriately informed about the project; in meetings held to 'inform' local people, the communication was described by participants as a "one way traffic". Only positive aspects of the mining activities were advertised, whereas any factual information about possible adverse effects to health or environment were neglected and people silenced.
- Local people living in houses close to the main roads on which trucks to / from the mine will pass by, are about to have their houses demolished in order to make space for a wider road.
- It is completely unclear HOW local people's economic and social needs shall be met, any monitoring is not in place.

### **Conclusion**

Obviously, the Government of Tanzania and interested companies have no interest to comply with the requests of the World Heritage Committee, they intend to open up World Heritage site Selous Game Reserve for further mining and exploitation of resources, and to allow Selous Niassa-Wildlife Corridor to be transformed into an "emerging energy district" – in stark violation of the WHC's requests.

Thus, we request:

3. The decision to accept the so-called "minor boundary change" – and thus to allow uranium mining inside a World Heritage site - was made in faulty way; it needs to be reconsidered, and the excision of the Mkuju River mine site from the World Heritage site needs to be revoked.
4. Requests made by the World Heritage Committee in its July 2012 decision towards the State Party. i.e. the Government of Tanzania, are not met.  
This contributes to and enforces further our request to reconsider the July 2012 decision.

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July 16, 2012

## World Heritage Committee Decision July 2012

### EXAMINATION OF MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS OF NATURAL, MIXED AND CULTURAL PROPERTIES ALREADY INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST NATURAL PROPERTIES

#### Decision: 36 COM 8B.43

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-12/36.COM/8B.Add and WHC-12/36.COM/INF.8B2,
2. Recalling Decisions 33 COM 7B.8, 34 COM 7B.3, 35 COM 7B.6 and 35 COM 8B.46;
3. Reiterates that the modifications to boundaries of World Heritage properties that are related to mining activities have to be dealt with through the procedure for significant modifications of boundaries, in accordance with para. 165 of the *Operational Guidelines* given the potential impact of such projects on the Outstanding Universal Value;
4. Takes note and regrets that the State Party did not submit the application as a significant but as a minor boundary modification on 1 February 2011 as stated in Decision 35 COM 8B.46;
5. Considers that through the referral process a completed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been submitted which demonstrates that the impact of the mining project on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is limited and can be mitigated;
6. Recalls in particular the commitments made by the State Party at the 35th session of the Committee to secure and enhance the continued effectiveness of the Selous-Niassa corridor as a key feature to maintaining the long-term integrity of the property, as well as to make proposals for the inclusion into the property of additional land to the effect of further maintaining and enhancing the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
7. Considering the reiteration of the commitments of the State Party to the protection and conservation of the property, as stated in the letter of the State Party received on 1 July 2012, requests it to:
  - a) Provide additional valuable wildlife forest area to compensate for the excised area of Selous Game Reserve for inclusion into the property to the effect of further maintaining and enhancing the OUV of the property,
  - b) Ensure enhanced and effective protection of the Selous-Niassa corridor,
  - c) Not to engage in any mining activity within the Selous Game Reserve World Heritage property after exclusion of the Mkuju River Mining site as per the decision of the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee,
  - d) Ensure that the investors contribute to the Protection Fund (provided for in the Wildlife Conservation Act N°5 of 2009),  
Decisions report - 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (Saint-Petersburg, 2012) page 215
  - e) Complete the process of establishing a Tanzanian Wildlife Authority by November 2013 which will ensure 100% retention scheme for the management of the Selous Game Reserve,
  - f) Not to undertake any development activities within Selous Game Reserve, and its buffer zone without prior approval of the World Heritage Committee in accordance

with the *Operational Guidelines* for the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*;

8. Decides in an exceptional and unique manner to approve the proposed boundary modification of the **Selous Game Reserve, United Republic of Tanzania**;

9. Urges the State Party to ensure:

a) That the environmental management and monitoring plan is implemented,

b) that economic and social needs of the local population and workers are respected and that social conditions in and around the Selous Game Reserve, in particular linked to the Mkuju River Mining site, are subject to monitoring, and

c) that the mining activity and processing of the uranium is carried out corresponding to state of the art international standards in adherence to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) rules governing the processing of uranium materials,

10. Further urges the State Party to submit before **1 February 2013** a proposal for the extension of the property to strengthen the integrity in the context of the greater Selous ecosystem;

11. Further reminds the State Party of its obligations to ensure that all measures to address the impact of the approved boundary modification to the property identified in the environmental impact assessment are timely and properly implemented to assure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is maintained and effectively protected;

12. Requests the State Party to submit a progress report by **1 February 2013** on the implementation of this decision for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 37th session in 2013.

(end of decision)