

Response to the Guardian's article on land grabs

15th April 2015

Response to the Guardian article titled, [*Ethiopians talk of violent intimidation as their land is earmarked for foreign investors*](#), published on 14th April 2015.

“With the country poised to surpass almost all the Millennium Development Goals, Ethiopia’s development efforts have been widely endorsed.

This has not prevented one or two international advocacy organizations and individuals, trying to question these results, claiming these developments are non-existent and, when the evidence has become impossible to deny, claiming they were driven by abuse and violence. Organizations such as the Oakland Institute continue to propagate an image based on flawed methodology, built up from unverified and unverifiable information, with inaccurate and exaggerated accounts drawn from externally-based politically-motivated sources and seldom, if ever, checked on the ground.

Most of the criticisms and accusations against these projects and programs consistently fail to provide sufficient details for them to be checked by independent investigation. This appears to be deliberate policy by the advocacy organizations as they persistently refuse to provide the Government, Ethiopian Human Rights organizations or other bodies with any of the necessary details and, indeed, deliberately obfuscate the details to avoid any checking.

Ethiopia does not engage in land grabbing and, as our economic track record clearly shows, the vast majority of Ethiopians have benefitted from the growth and sustainable development programme under implementation, the facts and figures of which have been verified on the ground by institutions with the know-how and hands-on experience to produce credible reports.”

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