

MY HOME MY LAND



Acknowledgements

Abner Hauge, Intern Scholar at the Oakland Institute, is the illustrator artist of *My Home, My Land*. Abner is pursuing a BA in International Studies and a BFA in Fine Arts at CSU East Bay. He looks forward to a career combining journalism in international relations with production of comic books. He has storyboarded for a film, drafted a textbook proposal, and drawn countless pages of comics in his life as an illustrator.

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THE IMAGE OF AFRICA SEEN BY PEOPLE ELSEWHERE
IN THE WORLD HAS OFTEN BEEN TWO-FOLD:

IT IS A CONTINENT TEEMING WITH LIFE AND OVERFLOWING
WITH RESOURCE-RICH, FERTILE LAND...



...AND A CONTINENT RAVAGED BY DISEASE,
POVERTY, WAR AND CORRUPTION.

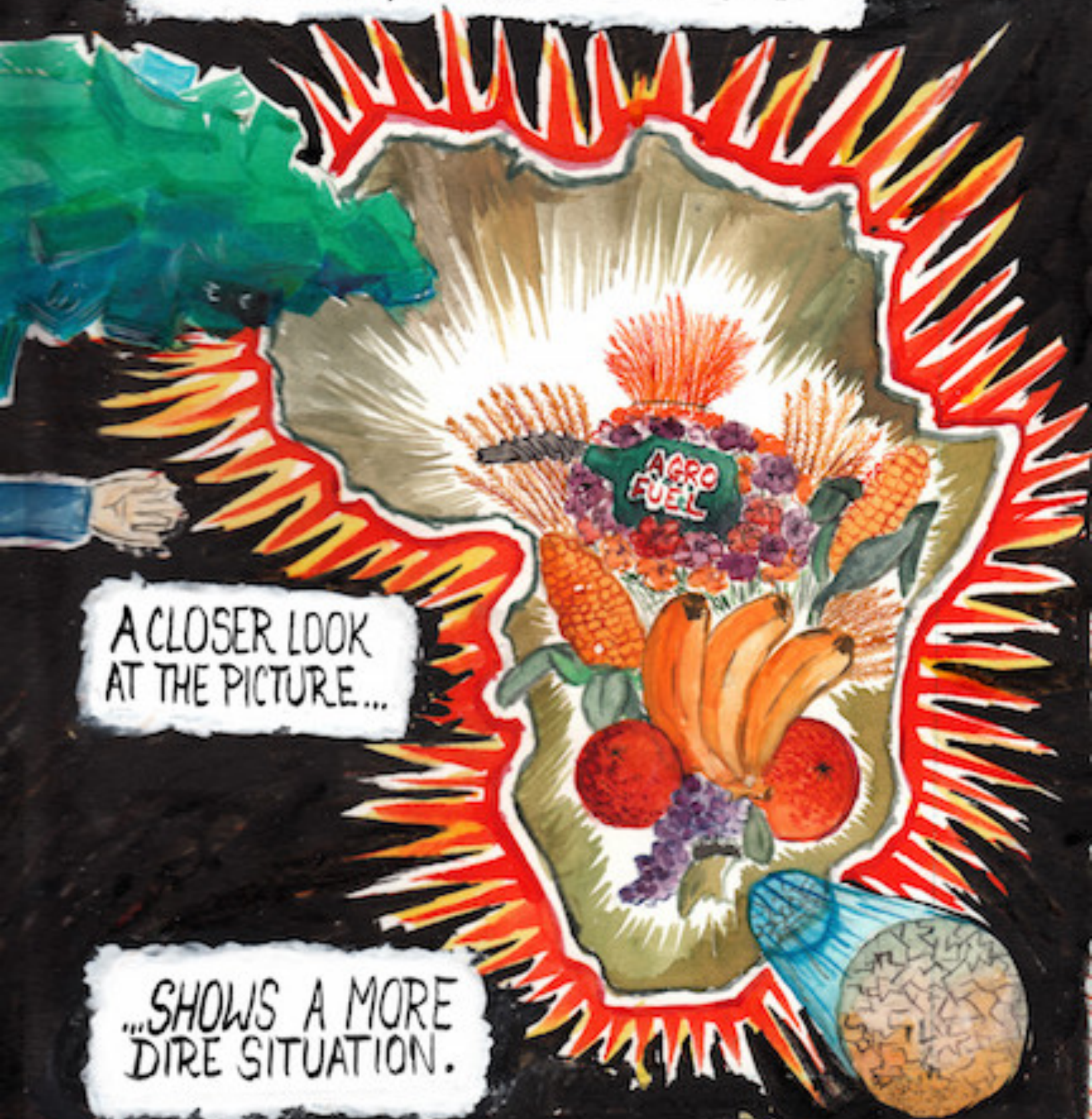
WHILE AFRICA IS IN FACT
VIBRANT AND DYNAMIC,
THERE ARE MANY URGENT
PROBLEMS FACING THE CONTINENT
THAT NEED LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS.



MANY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, LIKE THE WORLD BANK, ARE PROMOTING AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT DEALS AS SOLUTIONS FOR AFRICA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. INVESTORS HAVE BEEN POURING INTO THE CONTINENT, BUYING LAND FOR CHEAP IN ORDER TO GROW CROPS FOR EXPORT AND ENERGY PRODUCTION.



INVESTORS AND COMPANIES CLAIM
THESE PROJECTS WILL HAVE VAST ECONOMIC,
SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ENERGY BENEFITS NOT JUST
FOR AFRICA, BUT FOR THE WHOLE WORLD.



A CLOSER LOOK
AT THE PICTURE...

...SHOWS A MORE
DIRE SITUATION.

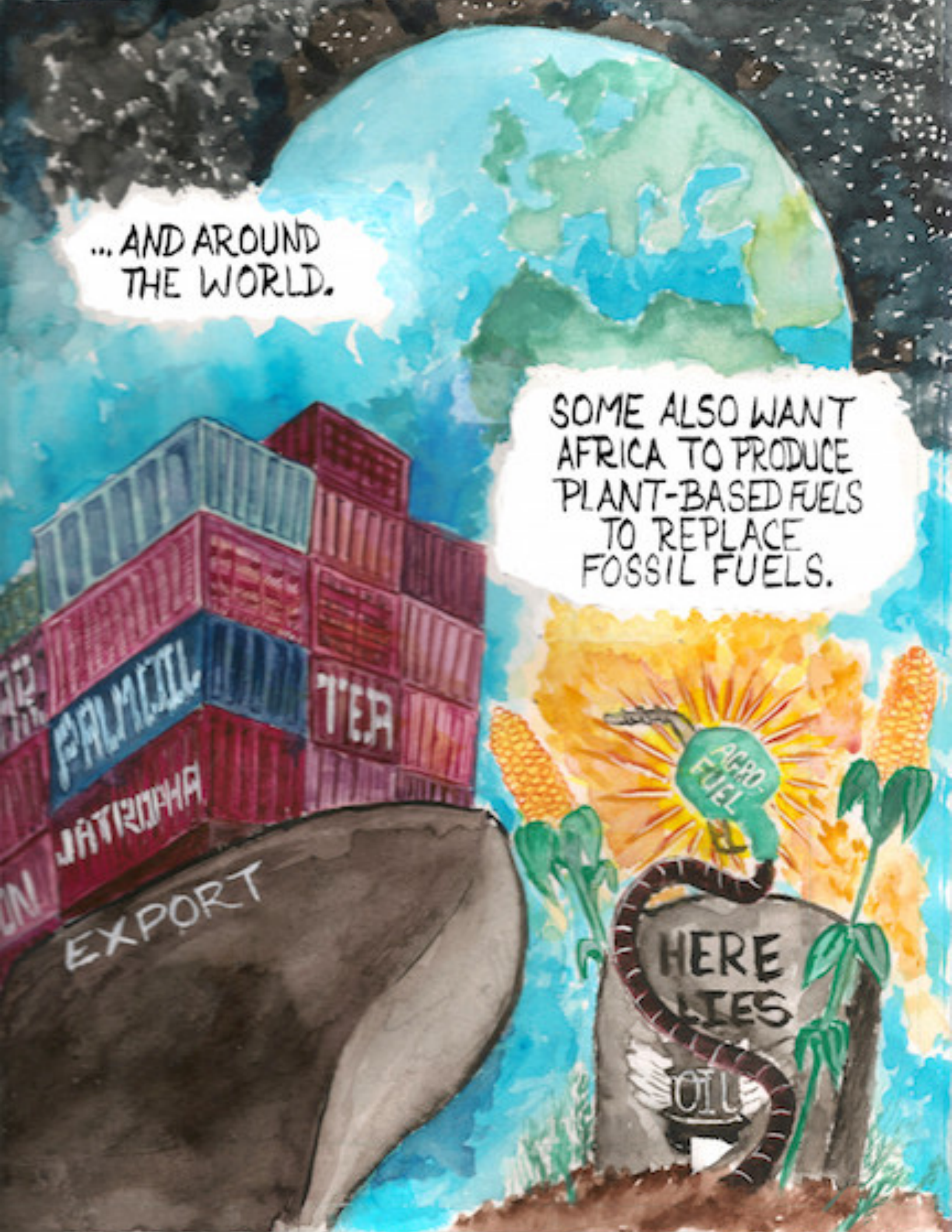
INVESTORS AND
COMPANIES PROMISE
THEY WILL BUILD
INFRASTRUCTURE,
MODERNIZE
AGRICULTURE
AND PROVIDE
JOBS AND BENEFITS
TO LOCAL
POPULATIONS.





THEY WANT TO USE THE LAND FOR INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE,
WHICH THEY CLAIM WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HUNGER
IN AFRICA...





... AND AROUND
THE WORLD.

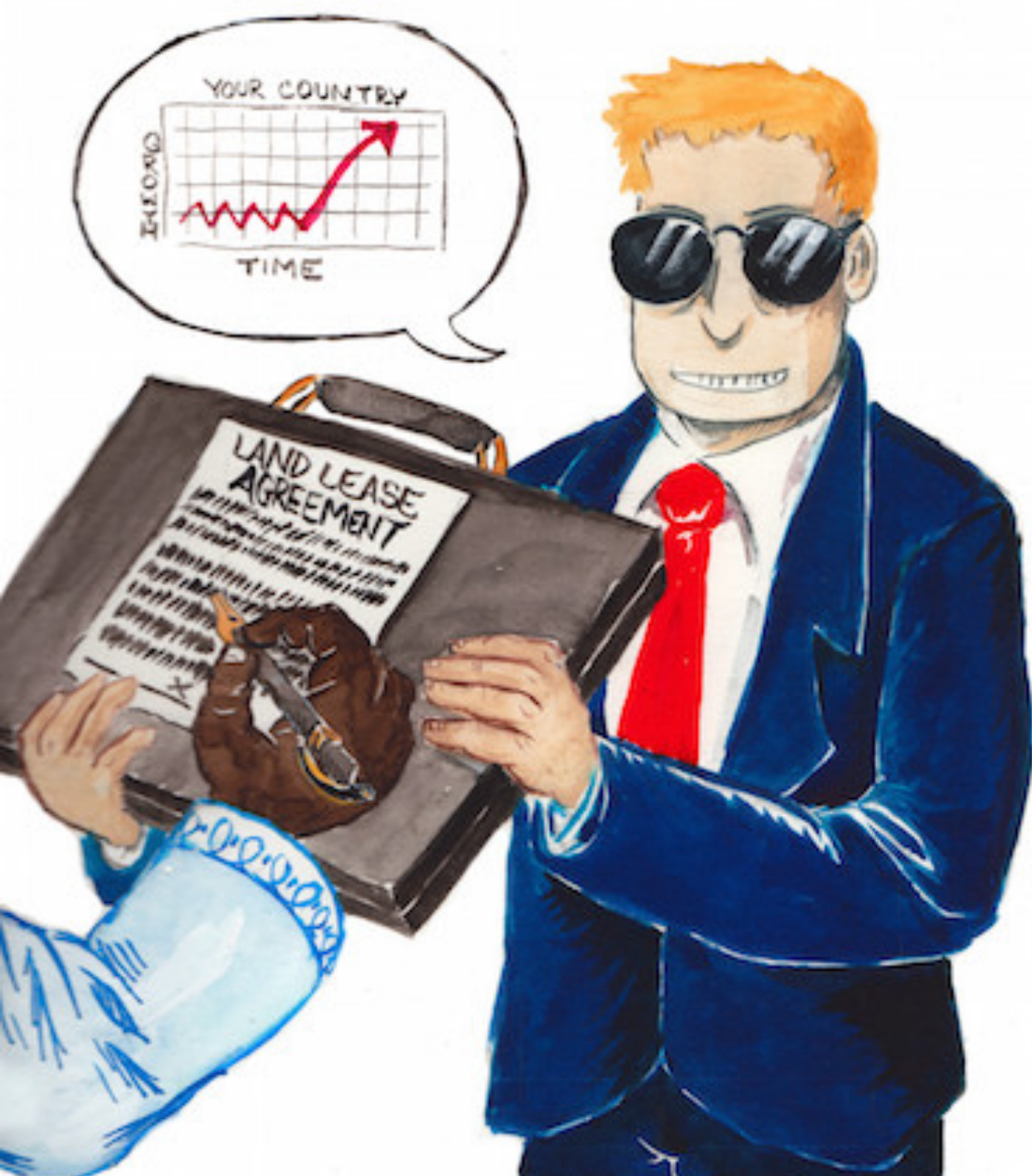
SOME ALSO WANT
AFRICA TO PRODUCE
PLANT-BASED FUELS
TO REPLACE
FOSSIL FUELS.

IN ORDER TO ATTRACT THE BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT THAT SUPPOSEDLY WILL SAVE AFRICA'S ECONOMY AND FEED THE WORLD, AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS ARE TOLD TO PROVIDE MASSIVE INCENTIVES:

- ① LAND IS LEASED FOR PENNIES TO DOLLARS PER HECTARE AND GRANTED FOR 50-99 YEARS AT A TIME.
- ② ACCESS TO WATER AND RIGHTS TO EXPLOIT RESOURCES LIKE TIMBER ARE OFTEN UNLIMITED AND PROVIDED WITH FEW OR NO FEES.
- ③ LABOR LAWS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS ARE OFTEN LAX OR NOT PRESENT AT ALL.



THE ARGUMENT IS THAT BY MAKING THEMSELVES
ATTRACTIVE TO INVESTORS WITH TAX BREAKS, INCENTIVES
AND LAX LABOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS,
COUNTRIES WILL BE REWARDED WITH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.



NONE OF COMPANIES' AND INVESTORS' CLAIMS
ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF LAND DEALS AND DEVELOPMENT ARE TRUE.



FAR FROM BRINGING DEVELOPMENT,
THESE MONUMENTAL LAND GRABS ARE
DEVASTATING THE
CONTINENT.



LAND INVESTMENT DEALS ARE DRIVING MILLIONS
OF PEOPLE OFF THEIR LAND. MOST OF THEM ARE
PASTORALISTS, FAMILY FARMERS, AND
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WHO FOR GENERATIONS
HAVE GROWN FOOD AND MANAGED THEIR LAND
AND NATURAL RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY.




MOST PRODUCTS ARE CASH CROPS
FOR EXPORT, NOT FOOD FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION.
LOW TAXES AND CHEAP LAND AND WATER ALLOW
INVESTORS TO SIPHON MOST OF THE PROFIT.



INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE USES MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF CHEMICALS AS FERTILIZERS AND PESTICIDES AND FOSSIL FUELS FOR PRODUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION.





IT ALSO USES TREMENDOUS
AMOUNTS OF WATER, THREATENING
THE ENVIRONMENT...

...AND COMMUNITIES'
WATER SUPPLIES.

INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE PLANTATIONS
TRANSFORM FARMERS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
INTO LOW-PAID AND OFTEN SEASONAL FARMWORKERS, WHILE
RENDERING MANY MORE LANDLESS AND JOBLESS
AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR LIVELIHOODS.



BECAUSE ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION
IS SEEN AS BAD FOR INVESTMENT, COMPANIES
CAN OFTEN RUN LOGGING AND OTHER DESTRUCTIVE
OPERATIONS THAT STRIP AWAY THE RESOURCES
COMMUNITIES DEPEND ON FOR
FOOD, SHELTER, AND CULTURE.



THERE ARE VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE DEVELOPMENT
MODEL IN PLACE. FAMILY FARMS EMPLOY FAR MORE
PEOPLE, PROVIDE FOOD SECURITY, AND
PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY
BETTER THAN INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE.



THEY USE FAR LESS WATER AND
CENTER ON TECHNIQUES THAT DO
NOT RELY ON CHEMICALS, MINIMIZING
HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND PRESERVING
LONG-LASTING SOIL FERTILITY.



AROUND THE WORLD, PEOPLE ARE RESISTING
THE TAKEOVER OF THEIR LAND. MUCH IS
BEING DONE AND MUCH MORE
CAN BE DONE TO HALT LAND GRABS.

THE TIME TO ACT IS
NOW!

