
[DRC: Communities in Lokutu once again demanded full reparation for the occupation of their lands by oil palm company PHC](#)

On 1 April 2024, eight representatives chosen by communities from Lokutu, in the Tshopo province of the DR Congo, to represent them in the mediation process with the oil palm company PHC presented [a letter](#) rejecting the outcome presented by the mediation.

After a last round of 'negotiations' and the final agreements, in January 2024, the representatives went back to present the outcome of the mediation negotiations to the communities and asked them to validate the proposed agreement.

The communities rejected the proposal and reiterated their demand for reparations to be paid to them for unauthorized use of their ancestral land for over 100 years. They also reiterated their demand that the company hands back all illegally obtained concessions and that only then negotiations can start over future use of the land, including the terms under which the company can continue to operate on the land. Those are exactly the demands the communities formulated in November 2018 at the start of the mediation – demands that have been marginalised by the development banks' complaints panel and the mediator over the course of the mediation.

The conflict goes back to the early 1900s, when Unilever set up massive plantations on 100,000 ha in what was then the Belgian Congo. (See [here](#) for the background.)