Press Release

Subject: Withdrawal of some villages of Nguti Sub Division from the Sithe Global Sustainable oils Cameroon Ltd project.

October 25th, 2016. On October 24th 2016 the chiefs and community representatives of 7 villages (Ayong, Badun, Babensi I, Babensi II, Ebanga, Nguti and Sikam) in Nguti subdivision affected by the Sithe Global Sustainable Oils Cameroon (SG.SOC) oil palm plantation project held a meeting to discuss major problems and impacts of the SGSOC project and identify key solutions.

On November 25th2013 President Paul Biya signed a decree of provisional concession to Sithe Global Sustainable Oils Cameroon limited for 13,195 hectares in 7 villages in Nguti sub division. Unfortunately this decree was signed without sufficient consultation of the affected communities and upon the recommendations of a rigged "enlarged land consultative board meeting" which held on May 8th, 2013. However, the minutes of this meeting which was for preliminary consultation and not for communities to cede their customary land rights to SGSOC, was submitted to the Presidency as consent given by the community leaders each to cede an exorbitant amount of land per community to SG.SOC. Unfortunately, recommendations have never been respected.

"During the enlarged land consultative board meeting, the local administration promised to do village by village consultation to resolve existing and potential land use conflicts and a participatory identification and demarcation of the portion of land communities want to cede to the government. This recommendation has never been respected as neither the administration nor the company officials have visited any of our communities for consultation. What is worse is that all complaints to the company and local administration have fallen on deaf ears" HRH Chief Fobia V of Nguti.

Given that the 2013 decree will expire in one month – 25th November 2013, we the undersigned chiefs want to call the attention of the government, the Cameroonian people and the international community on some of the major problems facing our community vis-à-vis the unscrupulous installation and impact of the SGSOC project on our communities:

1. **Illegal and corrupt method of land acquisition without adequate consultation with the affected communities.** ***"The attendance sheets of participants of the 'enlarged land consultative board meeting were wrongly used as declaration of consent to cede land'*** **HRH Chief Tambe John Bita of Ebanga.**
2. **Non respect of the resolutions of the enlarged land consultative board minutes by local administration and the company; the village by village consultation, resolution of existing land use conflicts and participatory identification and mapping of the area were never done**
3. **Encroachment and destruction of farmlands in villages such as Babensi I and Babensi II that are not part of the 2013 presidential decree.**
4. **Presence of several farmlands in the area designated in the decree as SGSOC concession**
5. **Destruction and trespassing into several farmlands in other affected communities**
6. **Absence of mutual communication and dialogue between the company and communities. Despite efforts of several communities to request for dialogue with the company to resolve the existing problems the company has persistently ignored the communities for the past three years.**

Based on these and other salient problems highlighted above, we the undersigned chiefs hereby advise that the government should carefully analyze the activities and behavior of the company, carry out a detailed evaluation and investigation of SGSOC activities as laid down in the law before making a decision to issue a definite lease to the company.

Most importantly we the undersigned chiefs declare that SG.SOC should withdraw its activities from BABENSI I and BABENSI II communities that were not mentioned in the 2013 Presidential decree.

HRH Chief Fobia Julius V
Chief of Nguti

HRH Chief Ejuba Joseph
Chief of Babensi II

HRH Chief Abel Ekwe
Chief of Badun

HRH Chief NHUASOH Abia
Chief of Babensi I

HRH Chief Akum Basua
Chief of Sikam

HRH Chief Asek Lordson
Chief of Ayong

HRH Chief Tambe John Bita
Chief of Ebanga