

Collective Letter from the Symposium “Voices of the Territories Beyond the Green Curtain”

LIQUIT Project - Voices of the Territories
London South Bank University
London, September 2025

On 25 and 26 September 2025, gathered at London South Bank University in London, we participated in the International Symposium *Voices of the Territories Beyond the Green Curtain*, organised by the project LIQUIT - Voices of the Territories.

During the symposium, both localised and interconnected readings of the current expansion of energy systems were presented, examining the conflicts surrounding lithium mining. We listened to voices from Indigenous communities, *quilombola* communities and other traditional communities that are often silenced, with the aim of sharing experiences and ideas that would allow us to reflect collectively on possible paths towards an eco-socially viable and diverse future.

We sought to occupy an academic space in which the cultural and political strength of territories located on the frontiers of so-called green extractivism could be made visible, reversing conventional perspectives on the production of knowledge. We established and strengthened connections between very different territories, all affected by simultaneous extractivist pressures. Researchers from communities and/or universities in Minas Gerais (Brazil), Portugal, the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, the United States, Serbia, Nigeria and Chile came together in this exchange.

We debated the energy transition as it is currently being framed and implemented, through the entanglement and intensification of a colonial form of extractivism justified by the demand for decarbonisation as the sole solution to the global climate crisis, without considering structural alternatives such as transformations in transport systems.

In this sense, we position ourselves against this model, which is imposed upon the same communities historically harassed by the advance of the urban-industrial fabric as the inevitable way of inhabiting space and time. It is a model that crushes the

eco-socio-diversity of entire territories where communities live, confront, resist and, at times, dismantle and remake themselves in the quiet resilience of those who inhabit the margins. These are communities that continue to sustain relationships grounded in ancestry, fraternity, communal life and a form of radical hospitality that embraces all beings and becomes visible in their ways of relating to the elements of Nature, understood not as resources but as entities with which symbiotic relationships are maintained. For these communities, recognising the rights of Nature simply translates, in political and legal terms, their own cosmologies.

We defend the preservation of these relationships of care and belonging to the cosmos, as we believe they hold the strength to reveal another way of inhabiting the Earth, one that sustains the sky. In this sense, minerals are not critical; critical are the territories that sustain life. These territories resist as fireflies resist, illuminating paths towards a future imagined collectively, as in the political dreams of the Yanomami peoples. May we learn from what we cannot see but can feel, through the collective construction of knowledge capable of nourishing struggles and, ultimately, allowing a real possibility of utopia to shine.

On this occasion, we also express our protest at the absence of Oluwatosin Akinjola, collaborator of the Nigerian organisation Spaces for Change. Invited to speak in person about the Nigerian experience of confronting extractivism and with sufficient resources secured for her travel and stay, Tosin was not granted the visa required to travel to the United Kingdom, a reminder of how silencing continues to operate.

Participants of the International Symposium

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