

# PHASE OUT FOSSIL FUELS AND FAST TRACK CLEAN ENERGY

*HOW TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE, FOSSIL  
FUEL THREATS AND THE NEED FOR A FAIR ENERGY  
TRANSITION IN KENYA*

**2022**

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September 2022



### **About the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a global initiative to phase out fossil fuels and support a just transition. The world is beginning to recognise that unprecedented levels of international cooperation will be required to prevent the proliferation of fossil fuels, to phase out existing stockpiles and infrastructure, and to fast-track a just and peaceful transition to sustainable development and greater wellbeing for all.

[www.fossilfuel treaty.org](http://www.fossilfuel treaty.org)



### **About Climate Access**

Climate Access is a nonprofit organization focused on building political and public support for climate and clean energy solutions by developing and promoting the adoption of effective communication and engagement approaches. Climate Access draws from social science, best practices in the field and its in-depth climate communication and public engagement experience to make complex issues easy to understand and involve stakeholders in decision making and supporting policy and program implementation. Climate Access offers strategic framing, narrative, activation and engagement services and runs a resource and training center for more than 3,700 members from nonprofit, government, academic and community organizations.

[www.climateaccess.org](http://www.climateaccess.org)

*The “Phase out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Clean Energy Kenya Playbook” was produced by Climate Access on behalf of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative with contributions from Power Shift Africa.*

*Project support from the Quadrature Foundation*

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# introduction

## BACKGROUND

Fossil fuels are responsible for more than 80 percent of the emissions causing climate change to date. Climate policies and programs focus on reducing emissions from the burning of fossil fuels but largely ignore the source of the problem – the production of coal, oil and gas – which governments and fossil fuel companies are expanding unchecked. Their plans, if allowed to continue, would generate more than twice the amount of emissions allowable to avoid catastrophic climate change.

This is not surprising given the influence of the fossil fuel industry and its government proponents in shaping the narrative around coal, oil, and gas, undermining support for impactful supply side policies. They amplify arguments about the necessity and inevitability of fossil fuels (despite their threat to humanity), the economic benefits they deliver and their role as innovators in advancing progress. Most recently, they claim the industry is part of the solution to climate change with hollow net zero commitments that rely on unproven, expensive technologies and timelines that undermine our efforts to preserve a livable planet.

The movement in Africa and around the world to shift from fossil fuels to clean energy and low-carbon technologies is growing and successfully blocking some of the expansion of new coal, oil and gas and coal projects despite being David in a fight with the ultimate Goliath. Yet fossil fuel expansion plans and existing production levels remain inconsistent with survival. Those advocating for a fossil fuel phase out and fair energy transition must scale up efforts to tell a new story about the imperative and benefits of a fossil fuel free world and how we get there.

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAYBOOK

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative aims to change the narrative around fossil fuels and climate change as one of its core goals. This means elevating the risks associated with existing and planned fossil fuel production, connecting the need for a phase down of fossil fuels with the imperative of a global, fair transition to clean energy and outlining a pathway to achieve it.

In 2021, on behalf of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Climate Access in partnership with Drive Agency conducted media, social media and polling analyses and in partnership with Drive Agency message testing in five countries - the United States, India, Brazil, Philippines and Kenya. This was done to inform the Initiative's communication efforts and share with organizations addressing supply side issues including the network of groups advocating for a Fossil Fuel Treaty. In addition, Climate Access and the Climate Narratives Initiative conducted similar research in Canada and developed [framing guidance](#).

The Phase Out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Clean Energy Kenya Framing Playbook offers guidance on how to talk about fossil fuel supply side issues, a fair transition and the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. A summary of key trends from the research sources listed below are included in an appendix.

## METHODOLOGY

Recommendations in the *Phase Out Fossil Fuels and Fast Track Solutions Playbook* are informed by the following research:

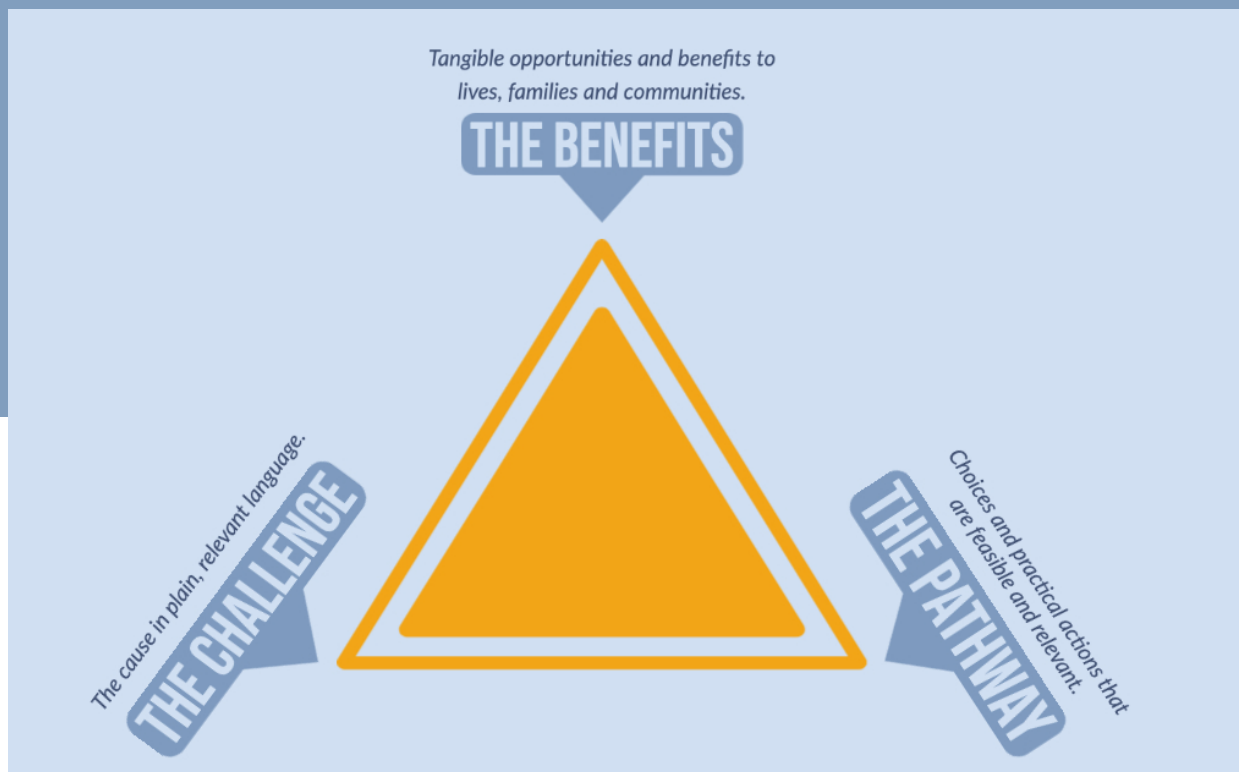
**Kenya media analysis:** Climate Access used Google News to track coverage in seven national news outlets including *The Standard*, *Business Daily*, *People Daily*, *The Star*, *Citizen Digital*, *The East African* and *The Elephant* as well as *Citizen Radio*, *Radio Maisha*, *Radio Jambo* and *Capital Radio*.

**Kenya message testing:** Climate Access worked with Drive Agency on message testing via social media. Drive Agency also conducted a social media analysis.

# recommendations

## TOP LEVEL FRAMING RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Lead with or incorporate a positive vision of a world without fossil fuels where health and the environment are protected from fossil fuels and people have access to affordable, green energy.
- ▶ Highlight why fossil fuel companies cannot be trusted and why government accountability is needed.
- ▶ Emphasize that fossil fuels are not needed for African development given its renewable energy capacity and the risks oil, gas and coal present.
- ▶ Provide tangible examples of how fossil fuels harm public health with health professionals as messengers.
- ▶ Amplify that it's not an energy transition if fossil fuel producing countries keep growing the problem - oil, gas and coal production. The first step is to end expansion.
- ▶ Push back on Europe's demand for gas expansion in Africa due to the war in Ukraine as the next wave of neo-colonization of Africa for the Global North's benefit. Emphasize that gas expansion in Africa will not address energy security needs yet will leave lasting air and water pollution and make extreme weather from climate change worse.
- ▶ Point out the need for a plan to achieve energy, climate and economic security while protecting nature and health via a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty where the Global North takes responsibility for their fair share of the climate crisis and supports Africa to move to clean energy.
- ▶ Elevate the availability, affordability and reliability of clean energy and low-carbon technologies and Africa's potential to be a renewable energy powerhouse.



## THE MESSAGE TRIANGLE

A message triangle can help guide you to create a story that sticks. This tactic helps to keep things simple amidst the noise and connect the dots between what people care about and what can be done. It highlights key themes to integrate and amplify in communications while allowing room for specific messages to be tailored for different stakeholders and audiences.

When you hit each of the points, you remove barriers to engagement and create a complete narrative for your audience with a clear challenge, pathway forward and benefits of taking action.

**The challenge** - the cause in plain, relevant language.

**The pathway** - choices and practical actions that are feasible and relevant.

**The benefits** - tangible opportunities and benefits to lives, families and communities.

You can start at any point, depending on where your audience is on the issue and cares about, then link to the other two points.

The benefits — the vision of what a fair shift away from fossil fuels will be like — is often left out or downplayed yet is needed to generate a sense of hope and momentum. Consider leading with it. All three components are needed. Individuals must feel a challenge to want to engage yet it must be balanced. If you dial up the threats, also dial up the pathway and the opportunity.

# THE MESSAGE TRIANGLE IN ACTION

## Fossil Fuel Treaty Meta-Narrative

Here is an example of how to bring the three points of the message triangle together into a cohesive narrative. This is a high-level framework offering key themes to integrate and amplify across fossil fuel supply side campaigns.

### ► Vision/Benefits

Clean air and water is critical for a healthy life. Phasing out polluting coal, oil and gas and accelerating the adoption of clean, renewable energy from the sun, wind and water means every Kenyan will have access to reliable energy while protecting the environment and our well-being. There's enough clean energy potential in Africa and every region of the globe to affordably power our homes, businesses, communities and lives. The solutions are here now. Kenya can achieve its development goals and improve the quality of life for everyone by generating good jobs and lasting economic opportunities in clean energy and low-carbon technologies today and for generations to come.

### ► Challenge

Coal, oil and gas companies are holding us back. They're making windfall profits while Kenyans struggle to make ends meet as energy and other costs rise. All the while, the oil, gas and coal sector blocks progress to clean up air and water pollution and cut the carbon emissions driving extreme flooding, wildfires and heat waves that are harming communities across the country. An industry that continues to ignore its role in conflicts in Africa and around the world. Fossil fuel companies have plans to expand production, locking in climate, security and economic risks. It's not an energy transition if the problem keeps expanding. The countries most responsible are in the Global North. Countries such as the United States, Canada, Norway, the UK and Australia that created most of the climate pollution and have benefitted the most from fossil fuel production. Now with the war in Ukraine, there is pressure on African nations to increase fossil fuel production in order to compensate for the loss of Russian gas.

### ► Pathway

It's time to improve the lives of all Kenyans by making a plan to make health, energy access, environmental protection and economic opportunities a reality. A plan to fast-track the adoption of clean energy and low-carbon technologies while starting to phase out coal, oil and gas. The three products that cause the greatest harm to our future. A plan that ensures countries most responsible for the climate crisis and with the greatest capacity to accelerate a clean energy transition lead and support nations in Africa and other parts of the Global South to be part of it. That's why a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is needed so countries work together to move to clean energy, end the expansion of fossil fuels and start to wind down production to keep extreme weather from getting worse in a way that is fair and fast.



## Unpacking the Triangle

Lead with the vision/benefits of a fair and fast energy transition. Choose which points to highlight based on the stakeholders you aim to reach (i.e. health, economic, climate, equity). Be sure to link to oil, gas and coal as the main driver of the challenge and the risk of fossil fuel expansion.

### The Vision/Benefits

- ▶ Make the benefits clear and tangible.
  - *Renewable energy from the sun, wind and water can give all Kenyans access to affordable, reliable energy and power Kenya's development into the future.*
  - *Kenya is already moving to clean, renewable energy but more can be done. Kenya and Africa's renewable energy potential is great and can be tapped to create jobs and economic opportunities.*
  - *Clean air and water is possible by moving away from polluting coal, oil and gas. Those living on the frontlines of fossil fuel production facilities will have options for healthier, better lives and secure livelihoods.*
  - *We can protect our health and forests by using renewable energy for clean cooking.*
  - *The path to global security is moving away from fossil fuels that drive conflict and fund wars in Africa and around the globe.*
  - *Kenya has an opportunity to leverage its leadership in renewable energy and inspire other countries on the continent and around the world to work together to expand renewable energy capacity and move away from fossil fuels.*
- ▶ Make the case that the benefits of action outweigh the costs of inaction. We have more options and it will take fewer resources to make a shift now, rather than spending more each year to respond to and recover from extreme weather events. Moving money out of fossil fuels will protect assets from being stranded as the world moves away from oil, gas and coal.
- ▶ Provide examples of how the transition is already underway and gaining momentum in Kenya and around the world. Include local examples as much as possible. For example, geothermal is the biggest source of energy for electricity in Kenya or that the Lake Turkana Wind Farm is the largest in Africa.

## The Challenge

- ▶ Lack of access to energy in Kenya and Africa is holding people and communities back from reaching their full potential.
- ▶ Coal, oil and gas are not the solution. These fossil fuels pollute our air and water (1 in 5 deaths globally each year is due to pollution from fossil fuels) and are driving the climate crisis and the extreme heat, flooding, fires and storms we are experiencing as a result. These extreme weather events are harming and displacing people and cost more each year to respond to.
- ▶ Point out that despite being home to more than 17 percent of the world's population, Africa is responsible for less than 4 percent of emissions causing the climate crisis and is facing some of the worst impacts. Oil, gas and coal are responsible for more than 85 percent of the climate pollution driving these extreme weather events.
- ▶ Make the point that scientists (IPCC) and energy experts (IEA) agree there can be no new fossil fuel projects and we need to accelerate the adoption of clean energy and other low-carbon solutions or we will lock in catastrophic climate impacts. Yet the evidence is being ignored as countries pledge climate action while building out more of the problem.
- ▶ Highlight that countries have plans for expansion that would lock in two times the amount of climate pollution than the levels needed to have a safe climate. Cite the United States, Canada, U.K. and other wealthy fossil fuel producing countries as examples of who is behind the problem and that have benefited the most from fossil fuels. ***It's not an energy transition if fossil fuel producing countries keep expanding the problem.***
- ▶ Reference the pressure on African nations to expand fossil fuel production to respond to Europe's need for an alternative to Russian supplies due to the war in Ukraine. Talk about how this is the next wave of neo-colonialism as doing so would not meet Africa's energy security needs and would leave lasting air and water pollution and emissions driving extreme weather due to climate change.
- ▶ Pivot to who is responsible for the problem - the fossil fuel industry.
  - *Fossil fuel companies and their executives are making record profits as people face higher prices for energy and rising costs across the board.*
  - *The fossil fuel industry cannot be trusted. It has deceived the public for decades, burying evidence that their products cause climate change just as tobacco companies lied about cigarettes causing cancer. Now oil, gas and coal companies are saying they can continue to expand,*

*misleading the public with empty promises based on false solutions. Take net zero pledges where the emphasis is capturing emissions through technologies that don't work, are expensive and not at scale.*

- ▶ Elevate the gaps in government action and international cooperation.
  - *Governments around the world are letting oil, gas and coal companies off the hook. Most climate policies have ignored the production of fossil fuels. Even the global Paris Agreement where nations committed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius avoids the issue by not even mentioning the words oil, gas and coal.*
  - *Wealthy fossil fuel countries in the Global North are driving dangerous fossil fuel expansion including pressuring Africa to develop dirty energy projects for export. The Global South has paid the social, environmental and economic price for fossil fuels yet haven't gained the benefits.*
  - *With nothing to hold them accountable, most countries are not willing to move away from oil, gas and coal, assuming their products will be among the last in the climate era or arguing if they cut production, others will up theirs.*
  - *Wealthy countries are not contributing their fair share to address the climate crisis. Support for accelerating a transition to renewable, clean energy as well as dealing with the impacts of climate change has been lacking.*
  - *Investors and increasingly countries are moving away from fossil fuels. In little more than a decade, close to half of the financial assets sunk into oil, gas and coal are at risk of being worthless.*

## The Pathway

- ▶ Identify the present as the crossroads moment to address mounting security, energy climate and health risks. We either expand the source of the problem (fossil fuels) or we move to what we know is needed (clean energy and low-carbon economies) for our prosperity and security.
  - *While we need to foster the growth of renewable energy, we need to weed out the source of the problem - oil, gas and coal - at the same time.*
  - *The pathway forward to economic, health, climate and global security is investing in clean energy from the sun, wind and water. Kenya and Africa leapfrog over the pollution, health risks, and economic instability associated with fossil fuels.*
- ▶ Amplify that there are enough fossil fuels already in production to support us through a transition and enough [renewable energy capacity](#) in every part of the world to deliver energy security for every Kenyan and person around the world. Africa is particularly well positioned to take advantage

of solar power. Focus on the fact that the solutions we need to power our businesses, homes, communities and lives from clean energy are available now and affordable.

- ▶ **Pinpoint that now what's needed is a plan to phase out fossil fuels and fast track clean energy and other low-carbon solutions.**
  - *What the world needs now is a coordinated plan where every country contributes their fair share.*
- ▶ Call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty as the vehicle to create a global plan.
  - *A Fossil Fuel Treaty would bring countries together to agree to accelerate a transition to clean energy and low-carbon solutions where no country, community or worker is left behind; end the expansion of fossil fuels and wind down existing production to levels that ensure a safe climate.*
- ▶ Emphasize that Kenya has the ability to play a leadership role in calling for a Fossil Fuel Treaty, inspiring other African nations to join and putting pressure on the Global North to do its fair share to accelerate a shift to clean, renewable energy and weed out the threat of oil, gas and coal.
- ▶ Showcase the momentum underway in Africa and globally
  - *With the Treaty proposal putting the notion of equity at the heart of its fossil fuel exit strategy, the initiative is gaining traction within both civil society and institutional structures.*
  - *There are now more than 100 organizations supporting the Treaty demands, ranging from think tanks such as Power Shift Africa (Kenya) – the leading organization for the Treaty campaign in Africa – to resistance movements against oil and gas mega-projects such as [Okavango](#) (Namibia).*
  - *Powerful voices of African youth mobilized for climate justice also joined the global call for a Treaty, including Vanessa Nakate (Rise Up Movement, Uganda) and Elizabeth Wathuti (Green Generation Initiative, Kenya) who opened our [Stockholm+50 Pre-Summit on the Global Just Transition from Fossil Fuels](#) and called on world leaders to adopt a Fossil Fuel Treaty as a plan to fairly phase-out.*
  - *The number of African parliamentarians supporting Treaty pillars is also growing with over 50 African elected officials who signed the [call for a fossil fuel free future](#), that 25 MPs from Sierra Leone have just signed on.*

## THE PATHWAY TO A TREATY

- **Reference examples of when the world has come together to take on great challenges such as closing the hole in the ozone layer, phasing out asbestos, banning landmines or winding down nuclear weapons.**
- **Outline how the campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty is as important as achieving a binding agreement.**
  - ➔ The campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty is generating the pressure and social norms needed to spur a phase out of oil, gas and coal and fair expansion of clean energy. Since its launch in late 2020, the campaign has already prompted local and state governments to call on higher levels of government to act, compelled 101 Nobel Laureates to demand international cooperation to address fossil fuels and activated hundreds of scientists and academics and more than 1,300 civil society organizations to advocate for government leadership.
  - ➔ Not every country needs to sign on. In fact, this was the case with the Mine Ban Treaty where a small group of countries were willing to lead and compel others to join.
- **Lay out the steps to a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.**
  - ➔ A critical first step is mobilizing a broad and large cross-section of civil society organizations as well as academics and government, Indigenous, youth, business and other leaders around a common global call for action: Phase out fossil fuels and fast track clean energy in a fair way.
  - ➔ Local, state and national governments endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and compel other governments to join.
  - ➔ It is also important to increase transparency and accountability related to emissions from fossil fuels. A new Global Registry of Fossil Fuels is being developed which will be the first publicly accessible database of all current, planned and potential oil, gas and coal production and the climate pollution they would lock in. This can be used by governments as a basis for negotiating countries' fair share of the responsibility for action, by advocates to demand government action and investors assessing the risk of stranded assets.
  - ➔ *The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative is calling for a Global Commission on Fossil Fuels to create an initial group of first mover countries, enhance transparency and develop a formal process for a legal agreement. This can draw on the World Commission on Dams as one of many examples.*

# resources

For more information on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, visit [www.fossilfueltreaty.org](http://www.fossilfueltreaty.org) or reference these [FAQs](#).

Check out communication resources available at [Climate Access](#), [Fossil Free Media](#) and [Potential Energy](#).

## appendix

### ▶ Health is a Major Concern

- In message testing, the need to transition away from fossil fuels to protect health by addressing air and water pollution resonated the most. Health was the second most voluminous topic on social media, following clean energy solutions. In particular, the health impacts of air pollution and natural disasters were discussed.
- In the national media, the disproportionate impact of extreme weather on women due to the roles they play in farming, livestock production and water collection was a major topic.
- The need to move to “clean cooking” because of emissions from household fuel use in Kenya was also covered in the media. At the same time, the coverage included arguments that doing so would lead to health risks for women, children and damage the environment because of having to resort to the use of wood fuel due to higher energy costs.
- Another theme was that rising energy costs could lead to less water boiled which would increase the likelihood of water-borne diseases.
- There are few campaigns on social media connecting the dots between fossil fuels and health.

### ▶ Conversations About Climate Solutions are Emerging yet Some Solutions Being Discussed are False

- Climate solutions are a major topic of discussion in the media and on social media. Kenya’s potential to transition to electric vehicles was a key theme as well as Kenya’s leadership on renewable energy and plan to achieve a full transition to green energy by 2030. Clean cooking goals were mentioned as part of the transition plan.
- Ensuring a just transition for all via a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty performed well in message testing when tied to the health impacts of fossil fuels. Talking about a just transition via a Fossil Fuel Treaty in the context of protecting workers and communities affected by fossil fuels was very effective with climate activists but not as powerful with other audiences.

- Liquefied Natural Gas which is also used for cooking is positioned as a sustainable solution in the media. Arguments are that LNG protects forests being depleted for charcoal and firewood production, preserving the environment and capturing carbon emissions.
- Carbon credits are presented as an important solution to achieve carbon neutrality by government leaders.

▶ **You Cannot Trust Fossil Fuel Companies yet Oil, Gas and Coal are Needed for Development**

- The impact of coal, oil and gas on the environment and the need to address it via a Fossil Fuel Treaty given fossil fuel companies cannot be trusted was a message that tested well.
- A recurring theme in the media was that fossil fuels are needed for development in Africa and that Africa should be able to exploit its resources as those in the west have.
- The impact of fossil fuels is discussed on social media mostly due to civil society efforts to highlight the dangers of coal and campaigning for fossil fuel divestment.

▶ **Climate Impacts**

- As mentioned above, the impacts of climate change on health and women were discussed in national media. The need for climate friendly agricultural solutions was another theme as well as the challenge of climate information being too technical and therefore inaccessible to communities, households and individuals.
- The climate impacts conversation in social media is moderate compared to energy and health issues and is largely being fostered by civil society organizations. Climate change and environmental protection are often talked about together.
- Concern over how to transition workers out of fossil fuel jobs are common in media coverage and social media discourse. Also, fossil fuel proponents are quick to use events such as the Texas power outage, to falsely blame renewable energy and climate activists for the problem.



 **FOSSIL  
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**TREATY**