

South Africa's indigenous groups protest Amazon HQ on ancestral land

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Cape Town, June 17 (RHC)-- Indigenous communities and activists in South Africa have demanded authorities repeal a decision to allow the American digital services giant Amazon from building its Africa headquarters on sacred heritage land. Amazon has earmarked South Africa for its base, but protestors describe the move as a new form of colonialism.

Protesters say Amazon is not bringing smiles to any faces here. Instead the multinational digital services giant has raised the ire of local communities. Observers say that there is one simple reason: the expanse of land. Amazon has been granted permission to build its new mega headquarters for Africa in Cape Town.

Those marching against the move are among the poorest communities, their ancestors having been evicted from prime land by colonial powers. And to this day they have been kept out. But as they point out big corporations such as Amazon are allowed access to their lands.

The land has further significance. It was where the aboriginal peoples fought their first battles against the Portuguese invaders and defeated them. But despite its historical significance and being an environmentally sensitive area, authorities in the city of Cape Town okayed the development.

The communities have handed memoranda to President Cyril Ramaphosa and the Mayor of Cape Town, together with a petition signed by over 50,000 people demanding that the development is halted. But as gentrification continues in some of the oldest communities, activists are planning to take up the matter through the courts. Having fought against colonialism and the Apartheid regime, this fight, demonstrators say is about the future of the country's youth.

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