

Frazer solar rejects 'baseless' DCEO charges



...demands update on investigation of controversial Chinese solar power project

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MASERU – German company Frazer Solar GmbH has labelled as ‘trumped-up and baseless’ charges made by the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offences (DCEO) against its managing director, Robert Frazer. Frazer Solar also demands the DCEO to provide them with the status of its investigation into the controversial M2.8 billion deal awarded by the government in April 2019 to a Chinese contractor for the Ha Ramarothole Solar PV Park in Mafeteng. The company maintains that the decisions taken by former Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro clearly link its own solar power project with the expensive Chinese alternative preferred by Majoro, which is plagued by allegations of overpayments and corruption estimated at M1.7 billion. As Majoro supported the costly Mafeteng project instead of Frazer Solar’s proposal, the company further seeks for the DCEO to combine the two investigations into one as it is obvious they are inextricably linked.

Concerning the charges brought against Frazer, a statement released this week by Fraser Solar indicates that the DCEO initially contacted them and their lawyers in December 2021, and they offered to provide further information or assistance that may be required. “The DCEO never contacted us again. Therefore, it is mysterious how the directorate can have prepared any charges against Frazer, without asking a single question, without seeking any clarification on any issue, and without ever updating us on the progress of its case at any time during the last 12 months.

They knew where and how to contact Frazer at all times, but chose not to. To say otherwise is disingenuous, dishonest and blatantly false,” the statement reads. They further note that unfortunately, it seems clear that DCEO has brought up these ‘trumped-up’ charges against Frazer solely in an attempt to pressure the company from enforcing its lawful award for €50 million, damage his reputation and restrict his liberty, as no evidence has ever been provided to substantiate these ‘ridiculous allegations,’ including in the recent High Court case in Lesotho.

“We advise the DCEO to stop these proceedings and to cease threatening the arrest of our personnel, including Frazer. Any attempt to carry out these senseless actions will be met with a full legal response, exposing Lesotho to even more unnecessary expense as well as causing further damage to the Kingdom’s international standing,” they further noted. Frazer Solar confirms that the DCEO’s actions will have no effect on the company’s ongoing enforcement proceedings to seize assets owned by Lesotho in jurisdictions around the world. The company and its personnel will not be covered by the use of coercive and corrosive tactics usually employed by failing authoritarian regimes. Frazer Solar strongly calls upon the DCEO to provide an update on its investigation into the government’s decision to award the Mafeteng solar power project to Chinese contractor Sinoma Tbea Consortium.

Shortly before the DCEO began this investigation in December 2020, serious allegations were made linking government officials to overpayments and bribes. The company maintains that the decisions taken by Majoro when serving as finance minister and prime minister are at the heart of both the Frazer Solar and Sinoma Tbea controversies. Frazer continued: “Majoro has never explained why he ignored the wishes of his cabinet colleagues and refused to sign the financing agreement for Frazer Solar’s project, which stopped it from proceeding, nor why he readily signed the Mafeteng project’s financing agreement, which allowed it to proceed, without ever attempting to clarify or justify how this over-priced scheme was a better alternative.

“During Majoro’s time as Prime Minister, the Mafeteng investigation did not move forward and the allegations of bribery and corruption involving government officials remained unanswered. It should be clear to everyone, including the DCEO, that Majoro’s conduct raises serious questions. Basotho deserve to know the truth, and we hope that the new Prime Minister Ntsokoane Matekane will take steps to stop his officials’ conduct from spiraling further out of control, and ensure the facts concerning all decisions made by previous administrations about the Frazer Solar and Mafeteng projects are finally brought to light,” Fraser Solar said in the statement.

In a statement issued on November 11 by the DCEO, it noted that on April 28, a warrant of arrest against Frazer was issued for him to appear before the court. According to the statement, efforts are being made for the arrest of Frazer through relevant International bodies. The statement was issued to update the nation on Temeki Tšolo and Frazer, charged with fraud, corruption, and abuse of power.