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# Compromis

**4<sup>TH</sup> SURANA & SURANA AND RGNUL  
INTERNATIONAL LAW MOOT COURT  
COMPETITION, 2021**

**20 – 22 AUGUST 2021**

*John and others (Workers) vs.*

*Indic-Empire company and Afric-Cotton company*

**Facts:**

1. Indic- Empire company is one of the richest conglomerates in the world, with businesses in cotton, oil, textile, telecommunications, and roads across the world. It is incorporated and domiciled in Mumbai, India. It has signed the UN Global Compact on the requirement for businesses to have socially responsible policies.
2. Indic-Empire owns 51% of the shares of a company named Afric-Cotton company, which has its operations in Mozambique, Africa. The remaining 49% is held by the Mozambique government. Afric-Cotton company is incorporated in Mozambique, Africa.
3. The Afric-Cotton company has cotton plantations and engages over 15,000 local African workers on a seasonal basis. It also produces yarn which is exported, with the biggest purchaser being India. Cotton production requires hard and intensive labour and the supervisors employed by Afric-Cotton are very tough, possibly leading to the death of three workers over the past four years who were forced to work while pregnant. The workers live in prison-like barracks and are not permitted to leave the vicinity of the plantations. They are frequently short of food supplies and have no option but to remain hungry. They are beaten when they attempt to escape. A few journalists have written about their plight in the local papers which got a lot of national attention. Researchers have produced a document on the inability of Mozambique's judicial system to handle violations of human rights by powerful industrial conglomerates.
4. The Mozambican government investigates the complaints, and orders Afric-Cotton to improve labour relations, but there has been no change. Afric-Cotton company states that it provides employment to a very large number of people and their wages are double that of any other employer in the country for unskilled labour. Afric-Cotton has to be strict in order to control a nomadic workforce which will not stay in one place unless it is forced

to do so. Its operations provide 20% of the export revenue of Mozambique. It says that Mozambique government has also benefited from the shares of the company.

5. As a result of public pressure, the Mozambican government publicly threatens to expel Afric-Cotton from Mozambique altogether, and take over its holdings. It also begins legal proceedings. Based on a valid **Bilateral Investment treaty (BIT)** between Mozambique and India<sup>1</sup>, the Mozambican government commences Arbitration proceedings against Afric-Cotton under the **Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, 1965** and Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Mozambique for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.
6. Afric-Cotton also separately lodges a claim under the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, 1965 against Mozambique.
7. The workers, meanwhile, hear about recent cases in the world where workers in a similar situation have successfully been able to fight a Civil Suit for compensation in the country of the parent company. They file a Civil Suit in Mumbai against Indic-Empire company and Afric- Cotton company. The workers do not want Afric- Cotton to close its operations but they want it to completely change the work conditions. They want all the supervisors replaced. They also want compensation for the injuries, deaths and pain caused by the behaviour of the supervisors and management of the company.
8. The Trial Judge of Mumbai finds that the Civil Suit is not maintainable as there are already proceedings underway in ICSID (it is an “abuse of process”); and that the Indian courts cannot accept a case filed by foreign workers on a cause of action that has taken place outside India and which was governed by foreign law. The Judge finds that terrible violations have occurred to reach the threshold of “torture” and that the Indic-Empire company closely manages Afric-Cotton, but the case must be concluded in ICSID and/or tried in Mozambique, Africa.

The workers file an Appeal at the Bombay High Court on the following three issues:

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<sup>1</sup> The text of BIT is found in the Appendix [the original BIT has been modified for the purposes of this Moot].

- A. Whether the present Suit before the Bombay court is maintainable when an arbitration has already been initiated at ICSID;
- B. Whether the Indian courts can accept this case of foreign workers;
- C. The liability of Afric-Cotton and Indic-Empire companies, as according to domestic tort law and/or international Conventions.

Each team should prepare both sides (workers, the two companies jointly represented) of each issue.

**Note:**

1. This Moot raises the question whether human rights/labour abuses by subsidiary companies abroad can be tried in the country of the parent company. The areas of law include tort law, company law, and public international law principles such as customary international law, international human rights law, United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, etc., and whether these can be applied alongside domestic civil law.
2. Any other connected legal issues may also be included.
3. Recent relevant cases of the Supreme Courts of Canada and the UK may also be used to argue the case.
4. ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930, and other Conventions may be cited. Note that India and Mozambique have signed and ratified some but not all of the major International conventions of labour welfare adopted by the nations of the world.
5. Article 9 of the ICCPR, Convention against Torture, etc.

**Appendix**

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA  
AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE FOR THE RECIPROCAL PROMOTION  
AND PROTECTION OF INVESTMENTS**

The Government of the Republic of Mozambique and the Government of the Republic of India (hereinafter referred to as the “Contracting Party”); Desiring to create conditions favourable for fostering greater investment by investors of one State in the territory of the other State; Recognizing that the encouragement and reciprocal protection under international agreement of such investment will be conducive to the stimulation of individual business initiative and will increase prosperity in both States; Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

**Definitions**

For the purposes of this Agreement:

(a) The term “Companies” means:

Corporations, firms and associations incorporated or constituted or established under the law in force in any part of either of the Contracting Party.

(b) The term “investment” means every kind of asset established or acquired, including changes in the form of such investment in accordance with the national laws of the Contracting Party in whose territory the investment is made and in particular, though not exclusively, includes:

- (i) movable and immovable property as well as others rights such as mortgages, liens or pledges;
- (ii) shares in and stock and debentures of a company and any other similar forms of participation in a company;
- (iii) rights to money or to any performance under contract having a financial value;
- (iv) intellectual property rights, in accordance with the relevant laws of the respective Contracting Party;
- (v) business concessions conferred by law or under contract, including concessions to search for and extract oil and other minerals;

- (c) The term “investors” means any national or company of a Contracting Party.
- (d) The term “nationals” means:
- (i) In respect of the Republic of India, persons deriving their status as Indian nationals from the law in force in India;
  - (ii) In respect of the Republic of Mozambique, any Mozambican citizen, in accordance with the Constitution in force in the Republic of Mozambique.
- (e) The term “returns” means the monetary amounts yielded by an investment such as profit, interest, capital gains, dividends, royalties and fees;
- (f) The term “territory” means:
- (i) in respect of India: the territory of the Republic of India including its territorial waters and the airspace above it and other maritime zones including the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelf over which the Republic of India has sovereignty, sovereign rights or exclusive jurisdiction in accordance with its laws in force, the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and International Law.
  - (ii) in respect of the Republic of Mozambique: the land territory as well as the maritime areas, including the exclusive economic zone, the seabed and subsoil, over which the Republic of Mozambique exercises, in accordance with international law, sovereign rights or jurisdiction.

## **Article 2**

### **Scope of the Agreement**

This Agreement shall apply to all investments made by investors of either Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party, accepted as such in accordance with its laws and regulations, whether made before or after the coming into force of this Agreement. It shall however not be applicable to claims or disputes which occurred prior to its entry into force.

## **Article 3**

### **Promotion and Protection of Investment**

(1) Each Contracting Party shall encourage and create favourable conditions for investors of the other Contracting Party to make investments in its territory, and admit such investments in accordance with its laws and policy.

(2) Investments and returns of investors of each Contracting Party shall at all times be accorded fair and equitable treatment in the territory of the other Contracting Party.

#### **Article 4**

##### **National Treatment and Most-Favoured-Nation Treatment**

(1) Each Contracting Party shall accord to investments of investors of the other Contracting Party, treatment which shall not be less favourable than that accorded either to investments of its own or investments of investors of any third State.

(2) In addition, each Contracting Party shall accord to investors of the other Contracting Party, including in respect of returns on their investments, treatment which shall not be less favourable than that accorded to investors of any third State.

(3) The provisions of paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall not be construed so as to oblige one Contracting Party to extend to the investors of the other the benefit of any treatment, preference or privilege resulting from:

- (a) Any existing or future customs unions or similar international agreement to which it is or may become a party; or
- (b) Any agreement or matter related to taxation.

#### **Article 5**

##### **Expropriation<sup>1</sup>**

(1) Investments of investors of either Contracting Party shall not be nationalized, expropriated or subjected to measures having effect equivalent to nationalization or expropriation (hereinafter referred to as “expropriation”) in the territory of the other Contracting Party except for a public purpose in accordance with law on a nondiscriminatory basis and against fair and equitable compensation. Such compensation shall amount to the genuine value of the investment expropriated immediately before the expropriation or before the impending expropriation became public knowledge, whichever is the earlier, shall include interest at a fair and equitable rate until the date of payment, shall be made without unreasonable delay, be effectively realizable and be freely transferable.

(2) The investor affected shall have the right, under the law of the Contracting Party making the expropriation, to review, by a judicial or other independent authority of that Party, of his or its case and of the valuation of his or its investment in accordance with the principles set out in this paragraph. The Contracting Party making the expropriation shall make every endeavour to ensure that such review is carried out promptly.

1 The term ‘Expropriation’ in this Article shall be interpreted as per Annexure-I.

(3) Where a Contracting Party expropriates the assets of a company which is incorporated or constituted under the law in force in any part of its own territory, and in which investors of the other Contracting Party own shares, it shall ensure that the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Article are applied to the extent necessary to ensure fair and equitable compensation in respect of their investment to such investors of the other Contracting Party who are owners of those shares.

## **Article 6**

### **Compensation for Losses**

Investors of one Contracting Party whose investments in the territory of the other Contracting Party suffer losses owing to war or other armed conflict, a state of national emergency or civil disturbances in the territory of the latter Contracting Party shall be accorded by the latter Contracting Party treatment, as regards restitution, indemnification, compensation or other settlement, no less favourable than that which the latter Contracting Party accords to its own investors or to investors of any third State. Resulting payments shall be freely transferable.

## **Article 7**

### **Transfer of Investments and Returns**

(1) Each Contracting Party shall permit all funds of an investor of the other Contracting Party related to an investment in its territory to be freely transferred, without unreasonable delay and on a non-discriminatory basis. Such funds may include:

- (a) Capital and additional capital amounts used to maintain and increase investments;
- (b) Net operating profits including dividends and interest in proportion to their share-holdings;
- (c) Repayments of any loan including interest thereon, relating to the investment;

- (d) Payment of royalties and services fees relating to the investment;
  - (e) Proceeds from sales of their shares;
  - (f) Proceeds received by investors in case of sale or partial sale or liquidation;
  - (g) The earnings of citizens/nationals of one Contracting Party who work in connection with investment in the territory of the other Contracting Party.
- (2) Nothing in paragraph (1) of this Article shall affect the transfer of any compensation under Article 6 of this Agreement.
- (3) Unless otherwise agreed to between the parties, currency transfer under paragraph (1) of this Article shall be permitted in the currency of the original investment or any other convertible currency. Such transfer shall be made at the prevailing market rate of exchange on the date of transfer.

## **Article 8**

### **Subrogation**

Where one Contracting Party or its designated agency has guaranteed any indemnity against noncommercial risks in respect of an investment by any of its investors in the territory of the other Contracting Party and has made payment to such investors in respect of their claims under this Agreement, the other Contracting Party agrees that the first Contracting Party or its designated agency is entitled by virtue of subrogation to exercise the rights and assert the claims of those investors. The subrogated rights or claims shall not exceed the original rights or claims of such investors.

## **Article 9**

### **Settlement of Disputes Between an Investor and a Contracting Party**

- (1) Any dispute between an investor of one Contracting Party and the other Contracting Party in relation to an investment of the former under this Agreement shall, as far as possible, be settled amicably through negotiations between the parties to the dispute.
- (2) Any such dispute which has not been amicably settled within a period of six months may, if both Parties agree, be submitted:

- (a) for resolution, in accordance with the law of the Contracting Party which has admitted the investment to that Contracting Party's competent judicial, arbitral or administrative bodies; or
- (b) To international conciliation under the Conciliation Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.
- (3) Should the Parties fail to agree on a dispute settlement procedure provided under paragraph (2) of this Article or where a dispute is referred to conciliation but conciliation proceedings are terminated other than by signing of a settlement agreement, the dispute may be referred to Arbitration. The Arbitration procedure shall be as follows:
- (a) If the Contracting Party of the investor and the other Contracting Party are both parties to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, 1965 and the investor consents in writing to submit the dispute to the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes, such a dispute shall be referred to the Centre; or
- (b) If both parties to the dispute so agree, under the Additional Facility for the Administration of Conciliation, Arbitration and Fact-Finding Proceedings; or
- (c) to an ad hoc arbitral tribunal by either party to the dispute in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, 1976, subject to the following modifications:
- (i) The appointing authority under Article 7 of the Rules shall be the President, the Vice-President or the next senior Judge of the International Court of Justice, who is not a national of either Contracting Party. The third arbitrator shall not be a national of either Contracting Party.
- (ii) The parties shall appoint their respective arbitrators within two months.
- (iii) The arbitral award shall be made in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and shall be binding for the parties in dispute.
- (iv) The arbitral tribunal shall state the basis of its decision and give reasons upon the request of either party.
- (4) Any dispute arising out of action taken under Article 12 (Applicable Laws) and all pre establishment disputes shall be excluded from the purview of international arbitration.

## **Article 10**

### **Disputes Between the Contracting Parties**

- (1) Disputes between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement should, as far as possible, be settled through negotiation.
- (2) If a dispute between the Contracting Parties cannot thus be settled within six months from the time the dispute arose, it shall upon the request of either Contracting Party be submitted to an arbitral tribunal.
- (3) Such an arbitral tribunal shall be constituted for each individual case in the following way. Within two months of the receipt of the request for arbitration, each Contracting Party shall appoint one member of the tribunal. Those two members shall then select a national of a third State who on approval by the two Contracting Parties shall be appointed Chairman of the tribunal. The Chairman shall be appointed within two months from the date of appointment of the other two members.
- (4) If within the periods specified in paragraph (3) of this Article the necessary appointments have not been made, either Contracting Party may, in the absence of any other agreement, invite the President of the International Court of Justice to make any necessary appointments. If the President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he is otherwise prevented from discharging the said function, the Vice-President shall be invited to make the necessary appointments. If the Vice-President is a national of either Contracting Party or if he too is prevented from discharging the said function, the Member of the International Court of Justice next in seniority who is not a national of either Contracting Party shall be invited to make the necessary appointments.
- (5) The arbitral tribunal shall reach its decision by a majority of votes. Such decisions shall be binding on both Contracting Parties. Each Contracting Party shall bear the cost of its own member of the tribunal and of its representation in the arbitral proceedings; the cost of the Chairman and the remaining costs shall be borne in equal parts by the Contracting Parties. The tribunal may, however, in its decision direct that a higher proportion of costs shall be borne by one of the two Contracting Parties, and this award shall be binding on both Contracting Parties. The tribunal shall determine its own procedures.

## **Article 11**

### **Entry and Sojourn of Personnel**

A Contracting Party shall, subject to its laws applicable from time to time relating to the entry and sojourn of non-citizens, permit natural persons of the other Contracting Party and personnel employed by companies of the other Contracting Party to enter and remain in its territory for the purpose of engaging in activities connected with investments.

## **Article 12**

### **Applicable Laws**

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, all investment shall be governed by the laws in force in the territory of the Contracting Party in which such investments are made.
- (2) Parties will not waive or otherwise derogate from or offer to waive or otherwise derogate from its labour laws. *The Parties will also adopt the fundamental principles of the International Labour Organization.*
- (3) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this Article nothing in this Agreement precludes the host Contracting Party from taking action for the protection of its essential security interests or in circumstances of extreme emergency in accordance with its laws normally and reasonably applied on a non discriminatory basis.

## **Article 13**

### **Application of other Rules**

If the provisions of law of either Contracting Party or obligations under international law existing at present or established hereafter between the Contracting Parties in addition to the present Agreement contain rules, whether general or specific, entitling investments by investors of the other Contracting Party to a treatment more favourable than is provided for by the present Agreement, such rules shall to the extent that they are more favourable prevail over the present Agreement.

## **Article 14**

### **Entry into Force**

This Agreement shall enter into force on the day when both Contracting Parties have notified each other in writing that they have complied with their internal legal requirements for the entry into force of this Agreement.

## **Article 15**

### **Duration and Termination**

(1) This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of ten (10) years and thereafter it shall be deemed to have been automatically extended unless either Contracting Party gives to the other Contracting Party a written notice of its intention to terminate the Agreement. The Agreement shall stand terminated one year from the date on receipt of such written notice.

(2) Notwithstanding termination of this Agreement pursuant to paragraph (1) of this Article, the Agreement shall continue to be effective for a further period of fifteen (15) years from the date of its termination in respect of investment made or acquired before the date of termination of this Agreement.

In witness whereof the undersigned, duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement. Done at New Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009, in two originals, each in the Hindi, Portuguese and English languages, each text being equally authentic. In case of divergence the English text shall prevail.

## **ANNEXURE**

### **Interpretation of “Expropriation” in Article 5 (Expropriation)**

1. A measure of expropriation includes, apart from direct expropriation or nationalization through formal transfer of title or outright seizure, a measure or series of measures taken intentionally by a Party to create a situation whereby the investment of an investor may be rendered substantially unproductive and incapable of yielding a return without a formal transfer of title or outright seizure.

2. The determination of whether a measure or a series of measures of a Party in a specific situation, constitutes measures as outlined in paragraph 1 above requires a case by case, fact based inquiry that considers, among other factors:

(i) the economic impact of the measure or a series of measures, although the fact that a measure or series of measures by a Party has an adverse effect on the economic value of an investment, standing alone, does not establish that expropriation or nationalization, has occurred;

(ii) the extent to which the measures are discriminatory either in scope or in application with respect to a Party or an investor or an enterprise;

(iii) the extent to which the measures or series of measures interfere with distinct, reasonable, investment-backed expectations;

(iv) the character and intent of the measures or series of measures, whether they are for bona fide public interest purposes or not and whether there is a reasonable nexus between them and the intention to expropriate.

3. Except in rare circumstances, non-discriminatory regulatory actions by a Party that are designed and applied to protect legitimate public welfare objectives including health, safety and the environment concerns do not constitute expropriation or nationalization.

4. Actions and awards by judicial bodies of a Party that are designed, applied or issued in public interest including those designed to address health, safety and environmental concerns do not constitute expropriation or nationalization.