Testimony submission regarding Thirty Meter Telescope

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Testimony of J. Malia Buck, Volcano, Hawaii, Moku o Kāwea

In opposition of the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope atop Mauna a Wākea

Though I am from the Islands, my perspective on this whole issue is also a global one, i.e. that nations who tout themselves as democratic and sympathetic to myriad cultures do at the same time turn their back on their own supposed doctrine in the name of "progress." If something like the TMT was proposed to be built in Vatican City, on the Dome of the Rock, in Mecca, on Mt. Fuji or Mt. Kailash, how would those respective countries and cultures respond? I suspect not very favorably.

As a scientist, I hold a degree from UH Hilo in anthropology, archaeology, and cultural resources management. I am also a retired investigative journalist and newspaper editor. That said, I am not against science; what I am against is irresponsible development and cultural and environmental insensitivity. It is unethical and there is no excuse for it. Time and time again I have seen the Hawaiian people and the 'āina trampled under the feet of corporate interests and ignored and disrespected by the emplaced government that has continued to illegally occupy the sovereign Kingdom of Hawai‘i in direct violation of the Lili‘uokalani-Cleveland Agreement and international law. It has to stop - and I wholeheartedly support the shutting down of the TMT project. There are absolutely no valid reasons for the TMT be built atop Mauna a Wākea, despite statements to the contrary by TMT.

Right now the eyes of the world are upon what is happening here in our own back yard. I believe that we must stand together and set an example for the world that peoples and cultures of the earth MUST be respected and that the power and voices of many can stand in unity and triumph over the corporate interests of the few. This is a human issue, and I am proud that kānaka maoli are standing up loud and proud around the world and saying "No more!" I support them. Kū Kia‘i Mauna a Wākea!

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