

**OIL REFINERY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION; KYAKABOGA-BUSERUKA,
HOIMA**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hoima, Uganda

**REFINERY-AFFECTED PEOPLE ASK COURT FOR EXPEDITED HEARING TO END
INJUSTICE AGAINST KYAKABOGA COMMUNITY**

As the refinery-affected people face the judge this Monday March 4, 2019 for hearing of the case they brought against government in March 2014 over delayed and under-compensation, the people are faced with another injustice and challenge.

The land that government claimed to have bought 73 families that were displaced from Kabaale and relocated to Kyakaboga, Hoima is being disputed over.

Tulinde Veterans Association has laid claim to the land yet government bought it from two businessmen in Hoima. The veterans association is also based in Hoima.

“When Ministry of Energy displaced us from Kabaale and forced us into a camp settlement at Kyakaboga-Buseruka in December 2017, we hoped that the land belonged to the government.

We had promised never to relocate before we get land titles and to a camp but the cut-off date of June 2, 2012 through which government stopped us from using our own land before compensation made us destitute. This forced us to accept relocation to the Kyakaboga camp.

However, last month, we were told that part of the land in Kyakaboga is being claimed by Tulinde Veterans Association and that the Association is in talks with Ministry of Energy,” Mr Christopher Opio, the General Secretary of the Oil Refinery Residents Association says.

The dispute means that the refinery-affected people are considered trespassers on the land at Kyakaboga where they were relocated by government. They may be evicted at any time.

Moreover, as the land ownership dispute rages on, seven families, including some that are in court over the above case, are being displaced again. They are being displaced even before they get titles for their land.

Government and Total E&P (U) want to acquire and use the land for feeder pipelines.

“When Total E&P (U), which is acquiring the land on behalf of government, was doing a property disclosure exercise last month in Hoima, it told the seven families that are to be displaced that because their land title is in another person’s name, they are qualified as squatters and will only sign for their property, not land,” Opio says.

As they go to court today, the refinery-affected people hope that the judge in their case will expeditiously hear and conclude it this month.

“We are faced with too many challenges and we pray that court can lighten our burdens by hearing and concluding our case this month. We can then have time and peace of mind to engage with Ministry of Energy to give us our land titles,” Mr Innocent Tumwebaze, the ORRA chairperson says.

WASTAGE OF TAXPAYERS’ MONEY

Mr Dickens, the CEO of Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO), says government wastes taxpayers’ money when it fails to undertake due diligence and buys disputed land.

“Huge amounts of taxpayers’ money was spent on the resettlement of the refinery-affected people. Over Shs 70 billion for the refinery project was budgeted and Ugandans hoped that this money would be well spent.

However, when you see government failing to give the refinery-affected people their land titles for over five years and other people claiming ownership of the land given to the people, you know that the vice of corruption is destroying this country.

We hope that court will be part of the solution of stopping the impunity and pain Ministry of Energy has caused the refinery-affected people. Court can do this through speedy hearing of the refinery-affected people’s case.”

AFIEGO is supporting the refinery-affected people in court.

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For more information, contact:

Mr Christopher Opio,
Secretary General, ORRA
+256 (0)779 983101

OR

Ms. Diana Nabiruma
Senior Communications Officer, AFIEGO
dnabiruma@afiego.org or +256 (0) 782 280073