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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kampala, Uganda

Oil refinery-affected people back to court tomorrow Thursday December 10, 2020

Tomorrow on Thursday December 10, 2020, the oil refinery-affected people will appear in court for hearing of their case against government. The case hearing will take place at the Kampala High Court, Civil division.

At the case hearing, government and the petitioners' lawyers are expected to conclude cross-examination and re-examination of the oil refinery-affected people.

"At the last case hearing on September 23, 2019, the presiding judge committed to conclude hearing of the refinery-affected people's case by March 2020. However, because the judge wasn't available due to scheduling conflicts, the case wasn't concluded in March.

We hope that court will make up for the lost time by concluding the case hearing tomorrow. The people have waited for justice for over eight years and any more delays will further constitute a miscarriage of justice," Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, Africa Institute for Energy Governance's (AFIEGO) CEO, says.

With support from AFIEGO, the refinery-affected people filed a court case against government in March 2014. The case was filed following government commencing to acquire the oil refinery-affected people's land in 2012.

At the time of the case filing, government was perpetrating injustices such as payment of delayed, inadequate and unfair compensation to the people. Community rights such as that to food, education in addition to access to clean and safe water were also being abused.

"We ran to court because we felt that it was too much. We had hoped that court would expeditiously hear our case through which we wanted court to compel government to pay us prompt, fair and adequate compensation. This would have stopped the abuses against us.

However, till today, hearing of the case is still ongoing. The last batch of our people received **inadequate compensation** in 2018 based on 2010/2011 compensation rates.

This was unfair. Court failed us and today, government even commenced activities such as developing the Hoima International Airport on our land.

We hope that court will right the wrongs against us by concluding hearing of our case tomorrow," Mr. Christopher Opio, the coordinator of the Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA) says.

Ms. Fausta Tumuhairwe who is one of the oil refinery-affected people who sued government adds, "Women suffered many abuses such as family break-downs, gender-based violence and others because of unfair and inadequate compensation. We had hoped that court would help and end these abuses against women but court failed.

However, we hope that a ruling on our case will ensure that women that have been affected by the Tilenga, Kingfisher, East African Crude Oil Pipeline [EACOP] and other oil projects never have to suffer the abuses we did because the law and courts will protect them."

Among others, the refinery-affected people want court to:

- Declare that the oil refinery compensation process by government violated Article 26 of the 1995 Uganda Constitution leading to delayed, unfair and inadequate compensation of the oil refinery-affected people.
- Declare that the use of cut-off-dates through which project-affected people (PAPs) are stopped from using their land for new developments before compensation is unconstitutional.
- Order government to pay adequate and fair compensation to the oil refinery-affected people.
- Order government to formulate regulations for the assessment and payment of compensation as is provided for under section 20 of the 1965 Land Acquisition Act to prevent the delayed compensation and under-compensation of PAPs that partly arises due to lack of the aforementioned regulations.

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