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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
KAMPALA, UGANDA**

**STOP GOV'T FROM TAKING OUR SOLE SOURCE OF SUSTENANCE: EACOP-
AFFECTED PEOPLE ASK MASAKA HIGH COURT**

The Masaka High Court will on Monday August 18, 2025 hear two cases filed by East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project-affected persons (PAPs).

The cases, which include an interim and temporary/main stay of execution, were filed by the PAPs on December 11, 2024 with support from Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO). The cases are seeking to halt execution of a court ruling delivered in October 2024 by Justice Lawrence Tweyanze of Masaka High Court.

In the ruling, the judge granted government permission to deposit compensation for 41 EACOP-affected households from the Greater Masaka sub-region with court. Court also granted government eviction and demolition orders against the people.

The affected households that sought AFIEGO's support to appeal the above ruling are requesting court to suspend the eviction and demolition orders against them until the appeal they filed following the aforementioned ruling is heard and concluded.

BACKGROUND

In August 2024, the Attorney General of Uganda filed a case against 80 people with interest in 41 EACOP-affected parcels of land in Lwengo, Rakai and Kyotera districts.

The people that were sued included: those that rejected compensation on grounds that it was low, those that lacked letters of administration due to government's own administrative failures, and absentee landlords.

Vulnerable persons including the terminally sick, elderly, women-headed households and others formed the vast majority of those that were sued.

On September 11, 2024, the case was heard at Masaka High Court, and on October 1, 2024, court ruled in favor of government.

Unsatisfied with the ruling, seven households filed an appeal, citing violation of their constitutional rights including the right to prompt, fair, and adequate compensation as guaranteed under Article 26 of Uganda's 1995 Constitution.

The people also filed two applications seeking to stay/stop their eviction and demolition of their property. These applications include an interim and temporary/main stay of execution.

PRAYES BEFORE COURT

The above cases should have been heard quickly to prevent government from acting on the October 1, 2024 court ruling.

Unfortunately, over eight months after the urgent cases were filed, they are yet to be heard. Yet government's case against the affected people was filed, heard and concluded in about three months!

Be it as it may, in their applications, the affected people are asking for the following orders from court:

- a) Suspension of the execution of orders including eviction, demolition, and depositing of PAPs' compensation in court until the aforementioned appeal filed by the affected people is heard;
- b) Upholding of the affected people's right to due process; and
- c) Protecting the affected people from the imminent harm that will result from their eviction.

The EACOP-affected people argue that unless the stay of execution is granted, they risk irreparable harm including loss of their homes, livelihoods, and access to food. For many families, the EACOP-affected land that government wants to forcibly take is their sole source of sustenance and shelter.

HEAR US OUT

As they head to court on Monday, **Mr. Cosmas Yiga**, a PAP, and one of the applicants, says that if their application is unsuccessful, *"our people will be left in absolute poverty ... and will be left to live like animals."*

He calls on the judge to exercise fairness and justice while issuing a judgement, following hearing of the cases.

Ms. Kizza Nambatya, another PAP and one of the applicants, adds: *"The government is taking our land for an oil pipeline and offering little compensation. This isn't a public good like a school or hospital, it's a commercial project. Why should the poor pay the price for a private project? I ask the judge to protect vulnerable families like mine, especially us women."*

Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, the CEO of AFIEGO, emphasizes the broader implications of the case. He says, *"This hearing is not only about a stay of execution. It is also about upholding the rights of ordinary Ugandans in the face of powerful interests. Forcibly taking poor people's property*

without adequate compensation is not only immoral, but is also unjust. This practice must be stopped by courts holding government accountable.”

.....ENDS.....

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