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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
KAMPALA, UGANDA**

INTIMIDATION, DIVIDE & RULE ON DISPLAY AS EACOP-AFFECTED PEOPLE'S PROPERTY IS DEMOLISHED

Representatives acting on behalf of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) Company between September 15 and 20, 2025 demolished property belonging to three EACOP-affected households in Lwengo and Kyotera districts.

The angry representatives, who indicated that they wanted to make an example of persons resisting low compensation, were accompanied by security personnel from Uganda's security forces.

The affected households from Kyotera include those belonging to Mr. Ismail Bwowe and Hajji Asumani Lubega, who are residents of Kituntu and Lyabuguma villages respectively.

Mr. Bwowe, who is a person with a disability (PWD), says, "The EACOP people and security went to my garden and found my wife there. She was digging. They indicated that they were there to demolish our property. They destroyed coffee, cassava, potatoes, yams, and others. They kept saying that I was being targeted because I need to be an example for the people that are resisting low compensation."

Mr. Bwowe notes that the spectacle created by the demolition exercise that happened on September 15, 2025 and ridicule accompanying it turned him into a pariah, making him feel rejected and dejected by society.

Mr. Dickens Kamugisha of Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) says, "The actions of the EACOP Company representatives are consistent with the tactics that the company has used to take poor people's land amidst low compensation. The EACOP Company uses divide and rule tactics, while also using intimidation or acting high-handedly against those that resist low compensation to stomp down any dissent."

He adds, "Thereafter, the company writes beautiful reports indicating how they have improved the lives of affected people. Meanwhile, on the ground, the affected people say that their lives are worse as low compensation resulted in many failing to replace the land that they lost to the

EACOP. Without adequate land, the people, whose livelihoods are land-based live amidst hard conditions.”

On the day that Mr. Bwowe and Hajji Lubega’s property was demolished, the EACOP Company held a meeting in Kyotera district and informed other EACOP-affected people who were not sued by government that they should have harvested their crops in two months’ time from the date of the meeting.

Further, five days after Mr. Bwowe and Hajji Lubega’s property was demolished, that of Ms. Nambatya Kiiza of Lwengo district was also demolished.

Ms. Nambatya owns the affected land alongside three other family members including two sisters and a brother.

She says, “On September 20, 2025, EACOP’s representatives went to our land and cleared a small part. They said that they did that to show us the things that are going to come. It is as if they wanted to create fear within us and other community members so that they don’t resist any bad things done by EACOP.”

BACKGROUND

The demolition exercises came after court battles between government and the affected people.

In August 2024, the Government of Uganda (GoU) sued 80 people with interest in 41 parcels of EACOP-affected land in Lwengo, Rakai and Kyotera districts. The case was filed at the Masaka High Court.

In October 2024, the court granted government orders to deposit the affected people’s compensation in court. The court also granted government eviction and demolition orders. Government had sought the above and other orders from court.

In December 2024, seven households filed two cases, or stay-of-execution applications, before the Masaka High Court. Through the cases, they sought to stay their eviction and the demolition of their property by government or its representatives including the EACOP Company. The people were supported by AFIEGO.

Their cases came up for hearing in August 2025 but were not heard, with court officers indicating that the case file was missing.

Instead, court heard another case that government filed against 11 of the aforementioned 41 EACOP-affected households in August 2025. Government sought eviction and demolition orders against the people.

On August 27, 2025, Masaka High Court judge, Justice Victoria Nakintu, issued a ruling granting the above orders.

The demolition of Mr. Bwowe, Mr. Lubega and Ms. Nambatya's property stems from the above orders.

CASES IGNORED IN DEMOLITION EXERCISE

The affected people's lawyers filed an application seeking review of Justice Nakintu's judgement. They also filed another application seeking to stay execution of Justice Nakintu's judgement pending the review of her judgement. The two applications were filed at the Masaka High Court on September 19, 2025.

Those that demolished the affected people's property ignored the applications.

Ms. Eva Kakuma, a lawyer representing the affected people, says, "The cases filed by government are prioritised to the detriment of the affected people, whose cases are filed first. In addition, the demolitions that are ongoing render the stay-of-execution cases filed by the affected people redundant, which is a gross miscarriage of justice."

DEMANDS

The affected people are calling for the following:

- The EACOP Company should immediately halt evictions and demolition of EACOP-affected people's property until all the cases filed by the affected people are heard and judgements are issued. The people's cases include an appeal, a judicial review application and others;
- The affected people filed complaints against Justice Nakintu with the Chief Justice and other relevant offices. These offices should expedite investigations into the conduct of judges handling oil-related cases and promote professionalism and fairness for the benefit of all; and
- Civil society organisations and development partners among others should work with the affected people to defend their rights.

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