



EVICTIIONS MONITOR

Housing Rights for Everyone, Everywhere

Newsletter of the COHRE Global Forced Evictions Programme

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FOCUS ON AFRICA

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Editorial

Unlike most of the major human tragedies that go unnoticed in Africa, the mass forced evictions perpetrated over the past few months by the Government of Zimbabwe have attracted worldwide attention and outrage.

It is horrifically destructive to forcibly evict some 700 000 residents and informal traders and destroy their shelters — whether to wipe out unsafe and unhealthy homes, as well as illegal trading, which is what the Government would have us believe, or in an attempt to disrupt political opposition, as others claim. Not surprisingly, there has been widespread condemnation of the Zimbabwe evictions.

On 23 June 2005, a coalition of more than 200 African and international NGOs coordinated by Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Amnesty International and COHRE held simultaneous press conferences in Harare, Johannesburg, Windhoek, Lagos and Cairo, declaring the evictions “a grave violation of international human rights law, and a disturbing affront to human dignity”. The coalition stressed: “There can be no justification for the Government of Zimbabwe’s action which has been carried out without prior notice, due process of the law or assurance of adequate alternative accommodation. We condemn it in the strongest terms”. [http://www.zlhr.org.zw/media/releases/press_con_23_jun.htm] Prominent African figures also spoke out, including Nigerian author and Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka, who called on the African Union to impose sanctions on the Government. Mr Soyinka commented: “Bulldozers have been turned into an instrument of governance and it is the ordinary people who are suffering ... it is a disgrace on the continent.” [<http://www.zimonline.co.za/headdetail.asp?ID=10233>]

In contrast to these voices of protest, African political leaders have, almost without exception, been ominously silent. This should surprise no one. COHRE has been monitoring forced evictions in Africa for over a decade and has found that human rights violations of this kind are increasing in many African countries, even in post-apartheid South Africa. Although Zimbabwe with its mass evictions in their national post-colonial political context is quite different from South Africa with its urban development schemes in their post-apartheid setting – indeed, all African nations differ from each other in terms of socio-economic circumstances – the common factor is the growing tendency to undertake and justify forced evictions for ‘development purposes’. Forced evictions violate international law, yet many African governments are justifying them on the grounds that they are essential for the development of infrastructure, housing and office buildings, or in preparation for international events. The tragic outcome in most of these cases is that the poorest and most vulnerable members of society are placed at even greater risk — when evictees are made homeless or are relocated far from sources of employment.

In the past decade there has been increasing recognition, globally, of the right to adequate housing and the right to protection against forced eviction. In practical terms, more and more communities – aided by support organisations including COHRE – have achieved concrete results in resisting forced eviction and formulating alternatives. In Kenya, for example, communities and other groups scored a major victory in the first half of 2004, convincing the Government of the National Rainbow Coalition to shelve its plans to evict hundreds of thousands of shack dwellers living on land reserved for new roads or too close to railway tracks, roads and power lines in the informal settlements of Nairobi. Since then, Nairobi community groups and the national and international organisations that support them have been

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formulating and, in some minor but nonetheless significant cases, have started implementing alternative *eviction-free* development plans for some of the affected areas.

The potential for such advances is severely compromised by the silence of African leaders – and, indeed, the African Union (AU) as their representative institution – vis-à-vis the increasing use of forced evictions throughout Africa. It is particularly disturbing to note that the present chair of the AU, Nigeria, has been one of the worst violators of the right to adequate housing and one of the most prolific users of forced eviction as an instrument of control and, ostensibly, development. While the African Union has refrained from condemning evictions in Zimbabwe, some political leaders have gone as far as openly supporting them. For example, Kenyan Housing Minister Amos Kimunya expressed sympathy with the Government of Zimbabwe saying: “However painful, evictions are necessary” and adding that “In Kenya’s experience, slum dwellers would move only when they saw a government bulldozer.” [*Business Day*, 5 July 2005] Unfortunately, since the Zimbabwean mass evictions started, COHRE has received reports of a number of new implemented and planned evictions — in Malawi, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa.

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As promised in the previous edition of *Evictions Monitor*, we had planned to devote this third edition to good news by highlighting cases of averted evictions, as well as successes achieved by communities in formulating and negotiating practical alternatives to forced eviction, all around the world. Unfortunately, these shining examples were eclipsed by the recent events in Zimbabwe, so we decided to concentrate on evictions in Africa in the period 2000-2005, in order to provide a context within which the Zimbabwean crisis can be better understood, analysed and addressed.

As part of this focus, we provide an overview of reported evictions over the past five years, and give details of some selected examples. Among other countries, we look at South Africa, which illustrates the persistence of the problem of forced evictions — even in a country hailed for its progressive housing laws, jurisprudence, policies and programmes. With their experience of apartheid, most South Africans are acutely aware of the consequences forced evictions have on the lives and livelihoods of the victims. So it is very surprising to find that, albeit on a smaller scale than prior to 1994, forced evictions are being implemented frequently and for a variety of reasons, including inner city regeneration, alleged criminal activities, health and safety conditions in buildings, and alleged illegal occupation. We also look at Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia and other African countries.

Finally, to provide a little global perspective, this edition of *Evictions Monitor* reports on forced evictions in China and India. As two of the world’s fastest-growing economies, it is significant that they are also forcibly evicting huge numbers of people for their own development purposes. In preparation for the 2008 Olympics, the Government of China has evicted 400 000 people in Beijing; since 1990, over 2.5 million people have been forcibly evicted in Shanghai to make way for office blocks and highly-priced apartment buildings. In India, meanwhile, Mumbai is following China’s example by evicting over 300 000 people this year in its urban development plans officially dubbed as a bid “to become the next Shanghai”. Unfortunately, many African countries, over-eager for development, are looking to these Chinese and Indian cities for inspiration and, tragically, are also employing some of their methods in pursuit of development. It is not surprising that, in a desperate attempt to secure a loan that would prevent Zimbabwe’s expulsion from the IMF, President Robert Mugabe turned to China for assistance, even as forced evictions were continuing on a massive scale in his country.

Jean du Plessis, Coordinator
COHRE Global Forced Evictions Programme



AFRICA SUMMARY
Implemented evictions reported
2000-2005

COUNTRY	CITY/AREA	YEAR	NUMBER AFFECTED	COUNTRY	CITY/AREA	YEAR	NUMBER AFFECTED
Angola	Luanda	2001-03	5 000 households	Nigeria	Lagos State	2001	thousands of people
Botswana	Central Kalahari Game Res.	2000-05	over 1000 people		Lagos	2001	5 000 people
Burundi	Ruyigi	2001	2 500 people		Port Harcourt	2000	1.2 million people
Cote d'Ivoire	Abidjan	2002	hundreds of people		Abuja	2000	30 squatter settlements
DRC		2001-02	1.3 million people	Senegal	Baraka slum	2001	1 200 people
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	2002	10 000 people		various settlements	2002	4 200 people
The Gambia	Brikama	2003	30 houses & 300 compounds	South Africa	Jo'burg	2004-05	thousands of people
Kenya	Mau Forest	2005	50 000 people		Desmond Park	2003	200 households
	Sururu Forest	2004	over 2 000 households		Nelspruit	2000	200 households & small businesses
	Baklozi Estate	2004	thousands of people	Sudan	Darfur	2003-05	1.6 million people displaced
	Raila Village, Kibera	2004	2 000 people		Bahr-el-Ghazal	2001	50 000 people displaced
	Mombasa	2002	8 000 people		southern Sudan	2001	150 000 to 300 000 people
	Government-owned forest	2001	867 people	Swaziland	Manzini	2000	2 chiefs & their subjects
	Mombasa	2001	5 000 people	Tanzania	Serengeti	2000	700 people
	Mombasa	2001	100 civil servants & families	Uganda	Kampala	2003	600 people
	Macla	2000	over 2 000 people		Kabalagala slum	2003	100 people
Liberia	Upper Lofa	2001	70 000 persons displaced		Haima & Hoima Districts	2002	6 000 people
Namibia	Windhoek	2003	30 households		Kampala	2002	50 people
Nigeria	Agip Waterside	2005	5 000 - 10 000 people		Mount Elgon National Park	2002	300 households
	Kubwa	2005	numerous homes and businesses		Sironko District	2002	550 households
	Aboru Abesan, Ikeja	2005	6 000 people		Mbale municipality	2002	150 households
	Delta State	2004	over 60 households		Naluwondwa	2001	2 041 people
	Ogunbiyi village, Ikeja	2004	300 households		Luzira	2000	120 households
	Badiya	2003	6 000 people		Nakivale	2000	not available
	Kano State	2002	over 23 000 households	Zambia	Katuba	2003	30 households

Source: COHRE research

Zimbabwe

In its Operation *Murambatsvina* (which means 'drive out rubbish'), the Government of Zimbabwe has forcibly evicted over 700 000 people from their homes and/or their source of income. The UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe recently reported that a further 2.4 million people have been affected to varying degrees by disruption of their education and access to food, water and healthcare.

Police and armed forces have destroyed homes and kiosks with sledgehammers, bulldozers, flamethrowers and torches, even

"These refugees are meant to be there only temporarily while waiting for transport to take them to their rural areas where heaven knows how they will survive. I was told that if the NGOs feeding these poor souls don't move them soon, the police will 'deal' with them."

Ruth Bolnick Feigenbaum
 concerned Bulawayo resident
 20 July 2005



forcing some occupants at gunpoint to destroy their own homes. In many cases, these abuses were committed without regard for the Government-issued permits that many residents and informal traders possessed. Police have also arrested approximately 40 000 people for 'illegal trading', even though many of them had the necessary permits.

The Government of Zimbabwe claims that Operation Restore Order is intended to eradicate illegal, unhealthy homes and settlements and to stop illegal trading. Community and human rights groups, however, have argued that the operation is actually intended to disorganise the urban poor, and disrupt opposition to the Government's policies and programmes. [<http://www.cohre.org/zimbabwe>]

The UN report states that the "failure to meaningfully address the land question and governance problems" after Zimbabwe gained independence has led to the current crisis. Post-colonial land struggles and rapid urbanisation are problems that many African governments have attempted to address, but few with such dramatic tactics as this mass forced eviction in violation of international law. According to the UN Special Envoy, "while the liberation struggle was against the 'white settlers' and the economic and political power they monopolized, the Government was not able to reverse the unequal and exploitative nature of colonial capitalism itself."



Hatcliff Extension evictions
Photo courtesy of Dialogue on Shelter

With unemployment estimated at 70 percent, food and fuel shortages, and night-time winter temperatures close to freezing, these evictions have further endangered the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

The Government of Zimbabwe has reacted to international pressure with Operation *Garikai* (Rebuilding and Reconstruction), but this is merely a propaganda ploy: there are no funds to pay for it, nor will it address the need at any meaningful scale. Many organisations, including COHRE in partnership with Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights and Amnesty International, have called on the Government to provide emergency relief to those now homeless and restitution, compensation and access to justice to all those affected.

Nigeria

More than 5 000 residents (some estimates put the figure as high as 10 000) have recently been forcibly evicted in Port Harcourt; earlier, more than 6 000 people were evicted from Aboru Abesan in Lagos State; and a number of homes and businesses were demolished in Kubwa, Federal Capital Territory.

With actions such as these, and evictions on an even more appalling scale, Nigeria has earned its reputation as one of the world's worst violators of the right to adequate housing. The most extreme case occurred in 2000, when the Rivers State Government forcibly evicted some 1.2 million people from Rainbow Town, Port Harcourt. The community's history is complex. In 1964, an estate of 750 housing units was built there to house soldiers (Biafran soldiers during the civil war of the 1960s; later, federal troops). Soon, a market developed outside these barracks and informal traders began moving into the area. Soldiers were allowed to build houses wherever they wanted and to rent them out. The tenants paid rents to these landlords and several taxes to the State Government. [<http://www.cohre.org/downloads/westafrica.pdf>]



In the late 1990s, as the Federal Government of Nigeria was trying to democratise the nation and reduce military control, the Port Harcourt City Council declared that Rainbow Town was Government property. With ownership of the land at issue, youths from three different neighbouring communities began raiding the settlements, attacking people and claiming ownership. Using this violence as justification to take control, the Rivers State Government announced plans to demolish the settlement and build modern housing units. [*The Post Express*, 2 August 2000] On 24 April 2000, the State Government served a 30-day notice to the Rainbow Town residents.

Although demolition was postponed briefly, officials began evicting the community in earnest on 21 July 2000. With bulldozers and 1 000 armed police, they demolished housing, locally owned businesses, health clinics, private nurseries and primary schools, and a private secondary school. The State Government claimed that all this destruction was necessary for urban renewal. However, it provided no alternative housing or compensation and gave much of the land to wealthy local residents.

[Social Watch, *Country by Country Report 2004*]

In another major case in Rivers State, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) estimates that some 80 to 90 percent of houses in the once densely populated Agip Waterside area were demolished in April 2005. Bulldozers destroyed wood and concrete-block homes, as well as a church sheltering 28 children, their mothers and ten pregnant women. Witnesses stated that police whipped bystanders. Thousands of Ogoni and people of other ethnic groups were evicted without adequate notice or compensation. A large proportion of the residents had been living in the Agip Waterside area for 10 to 15 years, and many had certificates of occupancy. For many of the Ogoni residents, this was their second or third forced eviction, having previously been evicted from their homes in Ogoni territories. There have been reports of police harassment and the arbitrary arrest of residents, a group of armed youths attacking and wounding others with machetes, and the death of one resident. Community groups and rights organisations have accused the State Government and the Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) of demolishing the homes to make way for the NAOC's expansion. The State Ministry of Lands claims that the forced eviction was in the interest of urban development. Agip denies any involvement.

[Sources including: <http://www.unpo.org>]

In the last 15 years, reported forced evictions in Nigeria have included, among others;

- 300 000 people evicted in Maroko, Lagos State, in July 1990;
- 1 200 000 people evicted in Rainbow Town, Rivers State, in July 2000;
- 20 households evicted in Kado/Soho area, Federal Capital Territory, in November 2000;
- 200 households evicted in Kado village, Federal Capital Territory, in July and August 2000;
- 500 households evicted in Coker village, Lagos State, in May 2001;
- 23 households evicted in Kano State in November 2002;
- 6 000 people evicted in Badiya, Lagos State, in October 2003;
- 3 000 people evicted in Ogunbiyi village, Ikeja, Lagos State, in April 2004;
- 60 households evicted in Warri Corner, Delta State, in June 2004; and
- 6 000 people evicted in Aboru Abesan, Ikeja, Lagos State, in January 2005.

All of these evictions rendered the victims homeless and most involved the use of violence against residents, including several reported deaths due to gunshots, beatings and tear-gas inhalation. These forced evictions were carried out with insufficient prior notice, irrespective of residents' documented ownership of their property, and often in cold, rainy weather conditions.

Official reasons given for such evictions have included: "urban development", "beautification", and "cleaning up" a community that was supposedly a haven for criminals. In the case of the Rainbow Town eviction of July 2000, Rivers State Governor Peter Odili simply cited "the interest of the public".



Given the sheer number and scale of forced evictions in Nigeria over the past fifteen years – along with the victims’ lack of access to legal recourse, compensation and alternative housing, as well as the utter disregard for their human rights – evictions are likely to continue unabated until local, national, regional and international strategies are developed to convince the authorities that they should be bound by the rule of State, Federal and international law.

Ghana

Recently, the Chief Director of the Ministry of Ports, Harbours and Railways announced that the demolition of hundreds of shacks and kiosks along railway lines would start in early August 2005. The Chief Director explained that the authorities would precede the eviction with an intensive public education programme, but would not offer the squatters compensation or relocation because they had settled there illegally and in violation of the regulation that all structures should be at least 100 feet (30 m) from railway lines.

However, residents claim that they are not squatters, because they paid money for their land and were given receipts by the railway authority. The Ministry has admitted that some officials may have taken money in exchange for land. Residents are asking for refunds and for a longer notice period before being evicted. The residents state that, as of 19 July 2005, the Ministry has provided no public education, despite its promise. [*The Daily Graphic*]

In the previous edition of the *Evictions Monitor*, COHRE reported on a threatened eviction in Accra, at the Agboghloshie/Old Fadama settlement. In May 2002, residents were served an eviction notice by the Accra Metropolitan Authority (AMA) to make way for the Korle Lagoon Environmental Restoration Project (KLERP). The Ghanaian division of the Centre for Public Interest Law (CEPIL) applied for a High Court injunction to stop the eviction, but this was rejected by the Accra High Court on 24 July 2002. The eviction has been postponed repeatedly, but is still scheduled to occur.

COHRE commissioned a study to evaluate the AMA’s claims and found that, while many of its statements about the poor living conditions in the settlement were true, the settlement could be developed *in situ* and could easily co-exist with the KLERP. Therefore, the removal of the settlement could not be justified. [<http://www.cohre.org/downloads/FFMagboghloshie.pdf>]

With the help of support organisations such as the People’s Dialogue on Human Settlements, residents have begun showing how this can be done. *The Daily Graphic* reports that residents have given the settlement “a facelift” by creating 15 access roads for emergency vehicles, and by using their own savings and donated funds to purchase drainage materials worth 33 million cedis (approx. US\$ 3 700). Residents are also monitoring the area to prevent people from dumping refuse into the lagoon or building structures that encroach on the KLERP boundaries.

However, the AMA insists that it will press ahead with the planned evictions in the interest of the KLERP. The Chairman of AMA’s Environmental Management Sub-Committee, Mr Phillip Nii Lante Lamptey, has said: “The place is not conducive for human settlement and any move to give it a facelift would be stopped.” He also criticised organisations supporting the residents and said they would do better to help them resettle elsewhere, because their occupation of Old Fadama was illegal.

[Ghana News Agency, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/artikel.php?ID=85569>]



South Africa

South Africa has been ambitious in its attempts to provide adequate housing to all of its citizens. Since the end of apartheid, the ANC-led Government has created an impressive amount of subsidised housing and aims to eliminate informal settlements by 2007, either by upgrading settlements or by relocating residents to places where they can access services and enjoy security of tenure.

Johannesburg

Detracting from these laudable efforts, the City of Johannesburg regularly forcibly evicts people from 'bad' buildings, citing health and safety concerns, as part of its Inner City Regeneration Strategy aimed at transforming Johannesburg into a 'world class city'. For example, 600 residents were recently evicted from Bree Chambers on Bree Street because the building was considered unhealthy due to overcrowding and poor sanitation. An investigation by COHRE and the South African Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALSA) indicates that this policy of clearing 'bad' buildings could affect at least 25 000 people.

Undoubtedly, there are many 'bad' buildings in Johannesburg, but people have chosen to live in them for lack of any real alternatives. COHRE has found that most residents of 'bad' buildings earn less than R 1 000 (US\$ 155) per month and cannot afford the low-cost housing options that the City provides. Also, the backlog for low-cost housing is now some 18 000 households. [<http://www.cohre.org/downloads/fim-johannesburg.pdf>]



Bree Chambers eviction
Photo courtesy of CALS

Residents' organisations and NGOs argue that, rather than evict those people who are already the poorest and most vulnerable members of society, the City of Johannesburg should ensure that no one is rendered homeless by eviction. The authorities should provide alternative accommodation that does not separate residents from their livelihoods and should consult with residents of 'bad' buildings and civil society groups to learn how better to address the need for low-cost housing.

Farm Evictions in KwaZulu-Natal

Farm evictions are a fact of life for many rural dwellers in post-apartheid South Africa. Accurate numbers of evictees are difficult to obtain, and will remain so until comprehensive eviction monitoring systems are put in place. Yet some disturbing trends are beginning to emerge. Large numbers of farm dwellers are being evicted from their homes due to factors including: loopholes in protective laws; farm dwellers' unawareness of their rights; lack of adequate support or appropriate legal redress from the justice system; labour disputes; restructuring of commercial farming operations; increased mechanisation; changes in land use; and coercion by farm owners. Judge Dunstan Mlambo has commented: "Although evictions, exploitation, degradation and abuse have no place in our fledgling rainbow nation, these abhorred facets of apartheid-era life continue unabated for many of our rural communities." [Rural Legal Trust]

Although the following information obtained by COHRE relates specifically to evictions in KwaZulu-Natal Province, it should not be forgotten that similar evictions are occurring throughout South Africa. In that province, evictions from commercial farms are frequent, though changing in nature. The



KwaZulu-Natal Land Legal Cluster Project offers paralegal and litigation support to farm dwellers affected by land rights infringements and evictions. In a recent report analysing a sample of cases from 2001-2004, the Project notes that so-called ‘constructive’ evictions are being used more often than forced evictions. In other words, rather than directly evicting farm dwellers, land owners are denying them access to water, grazing areas or burial space, are not allowing them to repair or build new homes, and are hiring security companies to harass them into leaving. Owners often deny knowledge of, or responsibility for, the security companies’ actions, while the companies themselves frequently change names and uniforms.

The following table gives a breakdown into types of case as a number and percentage of the 943 cases handled by the Project:

Type of case	No. of cases	Percentage of total cases
Threatened eviction	380	40%
Interference with rights	247	26%
Implemented eviction	70	7%
Labour tenant applications	18	2%
Judicial proceedings	17	2%
Unknown	47	5%
Other	164	17%

Currently, communities and support NGOs are involved in a campaign to have legislation amended so that people living on farms can enjoy secure tenure.

Kenya

Although the Government of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) has been making a concerted effort to tackle many of the socio-economic problems ignored or created by the previous administration of Daniel arap Moi, there is still much to do, as land and housing officials have openly acknowledged. However, it is particularly disconcerting that the official reasons generally cited for forced evictions relate to ‘development’ interests. The trend of evicting thousands of people who live too close to railways, power lines, roads or land set aside for roads is a development that is further impoverishing the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

Kenyan land policy is complicated by the legacy of corruption from the previous administration, which gave land to those in political favour. The NARC Government initially gained widespread public support for addressing the inequality of land distribution. However, when it threatened mass evictions in the Kibera informal settlement in early 2004, community groups protested vehemently.

The Ministry of Public Works, Roads and Housing threatened to evict all persons who had built on land reserved for bypass roads; the Energy Ministry threatened to evict all those

Kenya Total number of implemented evictions reported, 2000-2005		
Year	City/region	No. of people
2005	Mau Forest	50 000
2004	Sururu Forest	over 10 000
	Baklozi Estate, Nairobi	several thousand
	Raila Village, Kibera, Nairobi	2 000
2002	Mombasa	8 000
2001	Mombasa	5 500
2000	Macla	over 2 000
	TOTAL	over 80 500



occupying land near power lines; the Kenya Railway Corporation threatened to evict those living within 100 feet (30 m) of railway lines; and the Ministry of Local Government threatened to evict persons who had built structures near roads.

[Listening to the Poor? <http://www.cohre.org/kenya/K3-COHREKenyaReport-without-appendices.pdf>]

For these reasons, 2 000 people were evicted in Raila Village, 500 in Soweto West, and a smaller number of residents in Mukure. In Kibera, at least 354 175 people are now facing eviction (some estimates put the figure as high as 400 000) — more than 10 percent of Nairobi's population. In other informal settlements in various parts of Kenya, over 100 000 people are threatened with eviction.

In early 2005, amid an international uproar, the Government of Kenya threatened to evict over 3 000 families from the Mau Forest. In May 2005, despite a court order temporarily suspending the eviction, the Government evicted more than 300 of these families, all of whom claimed to have title deeds. Starting on 13 June 2005, over 50 000 people were evicted and their homes and several granaries were destroyed. There were also reports of violence and rape. [<http://www.cohre.org/kenya/letter-5july05-mauforest.doc>]

The Government has justified the evictions by citing the need to protect water catchment and forest areas. Environmental groups have been lobbying against logging in the area, arguing that this – and not human settlement – is devastating the ecosystem of the Mau catchment area of Lake Nakuru. Also, local community groups and residents have stressed the distinction between recent forest settlers and indigenous people who have lived in and protected the Mau Forest for generations.

The Ogiek have lived in the Mau Forest since 1800. After Kenyan independence in 1964, approximately 50 000 families, mostly of Ogiek descent, bought titles to land in Narok South. A December 2004 report found that these titles had been illegally sold by corrupt officials of the Moi regime, and the Minister of Lands and Housing announced that the holders should consider their titles cancelled. Forced evictions have continued despite two High Court injunctions to stop them.

COHRE and its partners in Kenya, including Shelter Forum and Hakijamii Trust, have called for an immediate halt to the evictions and for all concerned parties to discuss alternatives. If no feasible alternatives are identified, the Government is obligated by international law to provide alternative accommodation, compensation for all property destroyed, an investigation into the alleged rape of evictees, and the development of a lawful procedure for recovering irregularly allocated land.

Sudan

War in southern Sudan and ethnic cleansing in Darfur has displaced millions of people in the past few years. Last year, COHRE named Sudan as one of the three Housing Rights Violators of 2004 for its “persistent, systematic and unjustified violation of the housing rights of its citizens, including IDPs [internally displaced persons] in Darfur and Khartoum, and for its ongoing failure to apply international and regional human rights standards.” [<http://www.cohre.org/awards-2004/media-release.doc>]

Since 2003, approximately 1.6 million people have been made homeless in an ongoing campaign by the Janjaweed militia and the Government of Sudan to force people in Darfur off their land. This campaign of displacement has involved mass rape and cost the lives of over 50 000 people.

Amnesty International reports that, as of December 2004, there were still 1.8 million IDPs in Sudan and over 200 000 Sudanese refugees in Chad as a direct result of the violence in Darfur.



The Government has committed further human rights violations against IDPs in its attempts to relocate them. It forcibly relocated 30 000 IDPs from the El Geer camp in South Darfur to an ill-equipped location known as Sherif. In an attempt to 'redesign' the IDP camp in Khartoum, the Government demolished more than 13 000 houses, schools and health facilities, forcing thousands of people into homelessness. Government authorities also forcibly evicted more than 5 000 internally displaced families from El-Salaam and Wad el-Bashir camps in north Omdurman, and from El Salama and Soba al-Arradi squatter settlements in south Khartoum. [<http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/sudan/document.do?id=ar&yr=2005>]

In January and February 2001, armed conflict near the southern Sudanese oil fields destroyed many villages and displaced 150 000 to 300 000 civilians. Later that year, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army attacked Raga and Deim Zubeir, displacing 50 000 people who are only now returning home.

In southern Sudan, over 60 000 people were displaced after fighting broke out in Bahr al-Ghazal and the Upper Nile. Many were able to return, though at least 20 000 remained displaced at the end of 2004. Approximately 400 000 IDPs displaced in earlier years were able to return to the Bahr al-Ghazal and Equatoria regions. [Amnesty International]

Ethiopia

In September 2002, the Addis Ababa City Administration began evicting 10 000 people from the Bole Bubula area in order to develop the city's International Airport. A further 30 000 people were evicted from land being cleared by a foreign developer in preparation for sale.

From December 2003 to August 2004, soldiers of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) raided, looted and destroyed Anuak villages and neighbourhoods in Gambella State. The ENDF also destroyed over 1 000 homes in Pinyudo town, 200 in Dimma, 400 in Abobo, most of the homes in three villages in Tedo Kebele, and several homes in each of the three Anuak villages in Powatalam Kebele. Soldiers also destroyed grain mills, ransacked grain stores and fields, and stole livestock.

Human Rights Watch estimates that, as a result of such actions, eight to ten thousand people fled to Sudan and another 1 200 to Kenya. The Global IDP Project of the Norwegian Refugee Council estimated that, as of July 2004, 51 000 people in Gambella had been displaced, many seeking shelter in larger towns and many others living in the forest for days or even weeks to escape the violence. [<http://hrw.org/reports/2005/ethiopia0305/>]

The Project further estimates that, as of 13 May 2005, there were between 151 000 and 168 000 IDPs in Ethiopia. This includes those displaced in Gambella, 62 000 people displaced in the Tigray region during the 1998-2000 war with Eritrea, and tens of thousands displaced by inter-ethnic violence along the border with Somalia and within the Somali region of Ethiopia. [<http://www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/idpSurvey.nsf/wCountries/Ethiopia>]

In a bid to address the ever-present problem of food scarcity, the Government of Ethiopia has implemented a plan to resettle 2.2 million people from drought-prone areas to more fertile lands. Although resettlement is voluntary and the Government is offering health clinics, education, and shelter in the new areas, Human Rights Watch warns of higher levels of morbidity, malnutrition, and child mortality that could worsen in the next two to three years as the resettlement progresses. [<http://www.hrw.org/english/docs/2005/01/13/ethiop9833.htm>]



Angola

Between 2001 and 2003, police demolished over 5 000 houses in the Boavista, Soba Kapassa and Benfica neighbourhoods of Luanda. Residents were not given notice or compensation. Boavista residents were provided with tents. Some lived in these for two years before being given alternative accommodation; half of the evictees remain homeless. Most Benefica residents were offered alternative housing, but Soba Kapassa residents got neither compensation nor accommodation.

The Government of Angola explained that the Boavista evictions were necessary because soil erosion had made the area unsafe. However, the BBC noted a report by the Sonangol oil company calling for development of a high-end residential and leisure complex in the area.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1465207.stm>



Evictions in Boavista, Luanda
Photo courtesy of Lucia van den Bergh,
Novib (Oxfam Netherlands)

In the footsteps of India and China?

As indicated in our editorial (*see* pages 1 & 2), increasing numbers of people are being forcibly evicted in all parts of Africa. More often than not, these evictions are justified as being in the interests of ‘development’. There is a growing conviction among governments that development inevitably requires large groups of people, in most cases the poorest, to be moved out of the way. As we have seen above, this process is often described in chilling language, the poor being likened to “rubbish” or “filth”, who “move only when they see a government bulldozer”, and who need to be “swept away” so that development can take place. These increasingly prevalent practices – in urban areas all over Africa, including Johannesburg, Harare, Luanda, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Accra and Lagos – are disturbing echoes of similar, yet even larger-scale and more brutal processes in two of the world’s leading emerging economies: India and China, which are described, for comparative purposes, below.

India

In the past few decades, India has emerged as one of the world’s worst housing rights violators, responsible for eviction of many millions of people from their homes. The ongoing forced evictions in Mumbai are the most shocking recent example of such violations.

As of July 2005, the Mumbai authorities have demolished 90 000 homes and have made an estimated 350 000 slum and pavement dwellers homeless in the process of upgrading and developing the city’s infrastructure.

In Maharashtra State, of which Mumbai is the capital, the Congress-NCP Government came to power in October 2004, having promised to provide security of tenure. However, once in power it began



implementing a development programme budgeted at US\$ 36 billion, directed by the McKinsey multinational consultancy and designed to transform Mumbai into the “next Shanghai” by 2010.

This programme calls for the reduction of slums to 10% of their current extent. However, given the city’s present rate of building houses for relocation purposes – 3 000 units per year – it is obvious that there is no real plan to adequately accommodate the hundreds of thousands of people already evicted or the 2.2 million still facing eviction.

On 9 February 2005, in an interview with *The Hindu*, Maharashtra Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh stated that he did not regret demolishing slums in Mumbai: “Sometimes you have to take tough decisions,” he said, adding that people who wanted Mumbai to become a “world-class city” supported the slum demolitions and that the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, was interested in the project.

Earlier, in January, the National Alliance of People’s Movements and 22 organisations of slum dwellers had begun protesting evictions near Mantralaya. People began reoccupying and rebuilding homes in slums that had been cleared. After protests at the ruling Congress Party office, the All-India Congress General Secretary Mrs Margaret Alva publicly denounced the slum demolitions. In February 2005, slum-dweller organisations met with the State Congress Chief Mrs Prabha Rau, after which the party assured that there would be an immediate end to demolitions, as well as relief to affected persons.

However, less than a month after the meeting, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation demolished homes near the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport.

Forced evictions have continued without relief for the affected persons, despite urgent appeals for alternative accommodation in the midst of the monsoon season.

China

One of the fastest growing economies in the world, China has also been experiencing one of the largest building booms. To illustrate this, it is estimated that three-quarters of the world’s construction cranes were working in China in the 1990s. Shanghai has been at the forefront of this building explosion, putting up 5 000 buildings higher than 15 floors in the last twenty years.

[*Los Angeles Times*, <http://www.latimes.com/travel/la-tr-nushanghai27feb27.1,2718069.story?coll=la-promo-travel&ctrack=1&cset=true>]

This construction has been accompanied by forced evictions on a massive scale. In Shanghai alone, 2.5 million people have been forcibly evicted since 1990, and 40 million square metres of housing have been destroyed to make way for new buildings.

[*The Epoch Times*, <http://english.epochtimes.com/news/4-1-13/18307.html>]

Although the Government of China generally compensates and relocates evictees, they are usually moved to less valuable land that is further from urban centres and transportation options than the original location. If residents object to relocation, they may negotiate the level of compensation, but they cannot stop the eviction process once a Government panel has ruled on a compensation dispute. [HIC-HLRN/COHRE *Parallel Report*, 2005]

2008 Olympics, Beijing

In preparation for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, the Government has evicted 400 000 people, replacing well-established communities with shopping centres, office buildings, exclusive residential buildings and sports facilities. Residents have been relocated to the city outskirts, 25 to 60 kilometres from their



previous homes. The Government has also destroyed an outdoor market, displacing over 270 vendors from their sources of livelihood.

On 13 July 2003, Beijing was awarded the 2008 Olympic Games; two days later, following the purchase of land by developers, the first wave of evictions began. In September 2003, in the wake of protests – including that of a farmer who committed suicide by setting himself on fire – the Government publicly denounced forced evictions as a policy.

In March 2004, the National People's Congress approved a draft constitutional amendment to protect individual property rights. However, forced evictions have not ceased. Protests have intensified, even though many protestors have been arrested. One activist was arrested after applying for permission to hold a protest march. A lawyer advocating for tenants' rights was arrested and charged for sending faxes to the organisation Human Rights in China, which is based in New York.



Asia and the Pacific, January–July 2005

Implemented evictions reported

COUNTRY	CITY/AREA	NO. AFFECTED	COUNTRY	CITY / AREA	NO. AFFECTED
Bangladesh	Amtoli slum, Banani	thousands of people	India (cont.)		
	Babuchara, Dighinala Thana, in Khagrachari	not indicated		Railway tracks near Rabindra Sarobar	approx. 900
	Kadiani community	250 families		Amitnagar slums & a community near Tarsali water tank	not indicated
	Ahmadhiya Muslim community in Satkhira	approx. 250 families		Sugunapuram Phase I, Sugunapuram East, Kurichi, Pilayarkulam areas	not indicated
	Mahmudabad	at least 10 people		Patna	not indicated
	Malopara, Khagail Muslimpara, Matilalpara, Kholamora & Branmantista communities	2000 people in five villages		Delhi	not indicated
Cambodia	Poipet commune	approx. 218 families		Saragodu Reserve, Chikmagalur district	600 farmers
China	Beijing	approx. 400 000	Indonesia	Bongkaran, Jakarta	885 homes
	Maxingahuang village, Beijing	hundreds of farmers		Senen market, Jakarta	not indicated
	Shengyou, Hebei	not indicated	Japan	Uji City, Kyoto	approx. 200
	Beijing	two people	Thailand	Bam Nam Khem	50 families
	Chinese Christian groups (nationwide)	not indicated		Khao Lak, Phang Nga	50 households
India	Mumbai	90 000 homes est. 350 000 people		Laem Pom, Taptawan, & Rai village communities, in Phang Nga	52 families
	Bhimchaya slum, Mumbai	3 000 people	Nepal	Kathmandu	80 people
	Adivasis community in Rahata taluka, Maharashtra State	200 huts	Malaysia	Canada Hill, Kampung Lereng Bukit, Miri	not indicated
	Cuttack City	not indicated	Philippines	Quirino Avenue, Manila	78 families
	Coastal areas around India	10 000 fishermen & thousands of others		Mankina City	7 000 people
	Assam-Nagaland border	one village		Mindanao, Visayas, central & southern Luzon	not indicated

Threatened evictions reported

COUNTRY	CITY/AREA	NUMBER AFFECTED
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	4771 families
China	Shanghai	up to 60 000
	Shanghai	8 people
India	Car Nicobar	thousands of non-Nicobarese Indians
Philippines	Zamboanga	hundreds of people
Sri Lanka	Hambantota	not known
Thailand	Phi Phi Island	approx. 5 000 people

Averted evictions reported

COUNTRY	CITY/AREA	NUMBER AFFECTED
India	forest dwellers	not indicated
	Rajiv Gandhi National Park	23 000 people
Philippines	Sitio Bolabang, Boracay Island	not indicated
Singapore	Hougang	two people

**HELP US FIGHT FOR HOUSING RIGHTS
... FOR EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE**

COHRE would like to make its monitoring work more comprehensive and effective, by joining forces with your organisation. We therefore invite you to regularly inform us of any eviction you are aware of, whether threatened, planned or recently implemented. In return, we will share with you any new information we receive, both from your region and more broadly. In addition to sharing information, we will also correspond with you with regard to possible joint action on selected evictions taking place in your region, or put you in contact with partner organisations that may be well-placed to assist you. We will also publicise the information in subsequent editions of *Evictions Monitor* and in other COHRE reports.

Please note that we are interested in any information you might have about evictions, even the most basic. However, if you are in a position to provide more details, this will be extremely useful. From our experience in monitoring evictions, the following categories of information are important:

1. Name and location of the affected community;
2. Reasons given for the eviction (official and other);
3. Estimated number of families affected;
4. Background and history to the case;
5. The main events that have taken place so far, with dates;
6. Anticipated events (for example, date of a threatened eviction, date of pending court case, etc.);
7. Names and contact details of relevant community organisation(s);
8. Names and contact details of other organisation(s) assisting the community;
9. Names and contact details of the authorities implementing the eviction;
10. Existing information sources (news reports, web links, other);

We look forward to receiving your e-mail response to the above request, together with any questions and suggestions you may have, at the following address: evictions@cohre.org

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