

Our Ref: AC/037/WB 001/12

Date: 16th September 2012

Dr. Jim Yong Kim
President, World Bank
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Dear Mr. President;

REF: Appeal to Stop Funding Villagization Programme in Gambella Regional State, Southwest Ethiopia

The Anuaks Community leaders are hereby addressing this letter to the World Bank headquarters in Washington DC on behalf of the Anuaks refugees and asylum seekers based in Kenya (Dadaab, Kakuma and Nairobi). Kenya is a country in horn of Africa hosting refugees from different countries across Africa base in Dadaab, Kakuma and Nairobi in which Dadaab camp is the biggest refugee's camp in the world with more than half a million refugees. It is located in North Eastern Kenya about 500 km from Kenya capital and 90 km from Kenya Somalia border.

Out of the estimated four thousand and five hundred (4,500) refugees and asylum seekers based in Kenya around 20% fled the country due to the current forced villagization programme with an average of 2 to 3 families arriving every day. And we would like to share our thought feelings with you and appeal to stop funding of the program which brought not only the environmental destruction but also human rights abuses and misery at the hand of Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) that is supposed to secure and protect the border.

Initially before the regional government gave villagers promises they will be catered with all it takes to call their new village where to live but only to remain as empty promises. According to the newly arrived asylum seekers soldiers are turned police, judges, jury and the executors in wiping out indigenous people to pave the way for the implementation of this unpopular and unacceptable programme in the remaining few villages.

The entire process of the relocation is associated with intimidation, beating, and in the worst case scenario killing of any ones dared resisting and as a result many lives of innocent civilians has passed and many more subjected to human rights abuses in the region others have difficulties in accessing the borders of the neighboring countries to cross and seek asylum.



Most Anuaks consider this process to be the realization of the Dec 13/2003 mass killing that left more than 424 educated male civilian Anuaks; wounded more than a thousand and forced many more to seek asylum. This was done for the federal government to have total control over the region.

Male Anuak youths are the highly vulnerable group in the face of this grave situation in the region with most of them passing through ordeal at the hand of soldiers; many killed and others whereabouts remain unknown to date. We are disappointed in the way that the Ethiopian government has convinced the World Bank to support the villagization program which is not voluntary and against the will of the indigenous people and human right as a whole.

We the Anywaa Community in Kenya knew and support World Bank being at the forefront of supporting any positive developmental programmes in the region and may be not this forceful villagization which has not neither the consent nor contribution of the locals and wanted to bring this to your attention that we authorized Inclusive Development International (IDI) to represent us in the dialogue with the World Bank.

We, the Anuaks community leaders from Kenya represents the feelings of more than 4,500 victims who left the country after December 13, 2003 mass killing and more importantly feeling of those forcefully relocated to place where there is no access to clean water, health facilities, schools and fertile farmland.

We would also like to express that the programme is not voluntarily at all levels of implementation and this has lead to confrontation between the locals and the government. According to the new arrivals the indigenous people would not voluntarily move from their current locations to new locations where they have little ability to grow food and those who were forced are already going back to their former farms by risking their lives. The most affected districts are Gambella, Itang, Gog, Jor, Abowobo, Jikaw and Dimma.

The military have destroyed water pumps, dismantle clinics and health posts, burned down harvested crops and burned houses to ashes to discourage any one coming back to the place. The situation is getting worst every day given the fact that there is no media reveal the truth and the intimidating environment.

We the community leaders believe that the PBS (Protection for Basic Services) project has direct contribution to the ongoing villagization programme in Gambella region of Ethiopia in extension to the suffering of indigenous Anuaks and on top of that it has came to our attention that PBS Phase III project is being submitted to the Board for approval on September 25, 2012. We have submitted a complaint to the World Bank Inspection Panel calling for an investigation into the PBS project. We urge you to delay approval of PBS Phase III until after the Inspection Panel have completed its investigation and the Bank takes action to ensure that its policies are implemented and the rights of the Anuaks people are respected in the delivery of international aid projects in Ethiopia. Approving phase



III project without any safeguard will amount to the endorsing the human right violation and killing of Anuaks by the Ethiopian government.

We therefore notify the World Bank that the relocation of indigenous people from their ancestral land is not voluntary and strongly condemn it.

Anuaks people are still dying with many more fleeing to the neighboring countries and the increased number of asylum seeking community from Gambella can attest to this.

We would like to thank you for your attention on this matter, and we sincerely hope that the World Bank will stop supporting directly or indirectly the villagization program that is forcibly displacing the indigenous people from their ancestral land and decimate their livelihoods.

Thank you very much for your usual support and May the Almighty God blessed the works of your hands.



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High regards,



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CC: Executive Directors of World Bank Group