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MEMORANDUM

TO: Haiti Advocates
FR: TransAfrica Forum
RE: Forced IDP Relocations
DT: April 12, 2010

TransAfrica Forum works closely with the Haiti Response Coalition, a network of Haitian rural and urban civil society organizations. Prior to the January 12, 2010 earthquake many coalition members were engaged in a variety of community-based development activities throughout the country. Since the earthquake, groups have used their previously established relationships with community and neighborhood groups to assist with camp construction for internally displaced people (IDPs), relief distribution, and needs assessment production.

A Coalition report regarding forced IDP relocation in Port-au-Prince follows. With the oncoming rainy season, the need for relocation is a priority for many living in spontaneous communities. These relocations must take place with consultation of Haitian camp leadership and follow UN international guidelines for the rights of internally displaced persons facing relocation. The report is produced by members of International Action Ties (IAT), a member of the Haiti Response Coalition (HRC).

IDP Forced Removal and Relocation Updates

Produced by: Mark Snyder, Eric Brandfass, Monica Dyer, Etant Dupain

07APR10

Through our network of contacts, we received a report of a forceful removal of IDP camp in Caradeux Delmas 75, Port au Prince. Shortly after 4:15pm members of IAT/HRC/GrassRoots United (GRU) arrived to assess the situation and interview members of the community in order to better understand what the people living in the tent camp were facing.

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The encampment is comprised of four separately named, yet conjoined, camps; Camp Benediction, CCTT, Camp Canaan and Refugee Camp. The exact number of IDPs is not yet known, but we will attempt to confirm this at the scheduled 08APR10, 7:00am meeting with the community. Of those interviewed, completed in both groups and on an individual basis, all reported a complete lack of latrines in the camp, no water sources available, and no food distributions. The assessment team members also did not observe an indication of any. There was not a clear answer given as to who owned the land. The tarp houses were made of local wood materials and USAID and World Vision tarps, as well as a good deal of plastics and fabrics. With the exception of the Red Cross from Japan, who runs a once weekly mobile clinic in Camp Benediction, and Father Richard, an American priest, of Nous Petite Freres et Soeurs, that has done some small NFI distributions, there was no reported NGO presence.

The Refugee Camp community members reported that they did not receive warning before the large Conseil Nationale Equipements (CNE) bulldozers and graders came to their community with Haitian National Police escorts late on Sunday evening 04APR10, shortly after 7:00pm. With consistency, numerous individuals reported that the uniformed officers first threatened the families with violence if they did not leave their homes immediately. The assessment team was informed that anyone who argued was then forced out with violence. The use of batons were reported, and firearms were discharged into the air. The residents then reported that their homes were destroyed, first by the officers and then by the Haitian Government Bulldozers.

This continued during the evenings and mornings for the next three nights. One resident, Roselynn Lendo was found sitting in grief amongst her destroyed home. She stated that this morning she left the camp for the day and returned to find her home demolished. As she described her situation, the CNE bulldozer was shifting the earth increasingly close. Photo records were obtained of this.

Where the estimated 500 community members went to is unknown. The only answer that was given was that they were, "now living on the streets."

What development was so necessary that violating the stated rights of the IDPs was justified? (A violation that is beyond the complete neglect of the camp by international agents responsible for the area.) The team was informed that this site was going to be the relocation area for the IDP population at the Camp San Louis Gonzague. A community member from Camp San Louis Gonzague was at Refugee Camp to inspect and confirm rumors about where he family and community would possibly be relocated in order to allow the most elite school in Haiti to resume classes. Upon realizing that other Haitian families were being forcefully removed from the area, he stated, "This is not right. This can not happen." We have not received notification that further forced removal is occurring. Further investigation will continue tomorrow morning and the information will be passed on as soon as possible. And for tonight, community members of both camps will try to sleep while surrounded by fear and doubt. The possibility that their house and

their family could be next is forever present, and this is a violation of basic human rights in itself.

08APR10

Members of IAT/HRC Mobilization team attended the community meeting with the previously formed committee in the Camp Canaan. Presently the different camp committees are working together to create a collective body to represent all 4 camps in meetings, and discussions on how to get the basic needs met of sanitation, potable water, shelter, medical facilities, etc.

The team members first met with the committee of Camp Canaan, comprising of seven members of the 1000 family camp. They reported a number of notable details of life in their community post earthquake community.

On 10APR10, they received a written "Autorisation Speciale" as a camp from the local authority. This is the only camp of the four that have the special authorization that recognizes them as registered camp and secures their right to inhabit the privately owned land for two years.

- As a committee representing a marginalized IDP camp, they have been denied access to World Vision, rejected at the reception, and have not been able to obtain a meeting with OXFAM, and CERES, though numerous have been requested.
- They have no Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities and have expressed this as one of their immediate needs.
- The Red Cross completed a two page demographic PDNA survey of every family in mid-March. The committee has a paper and an electric copy of the information gathered.
- They report 46-47 children that live in the camp without family members.
- The closest water source to the community is about 500 meters from the camp. The water must be purchased at this location.
- Though not confirmed by a physician, the community members report a man starving to death in the camp this week.

There was not reports of the police entering the camp and forcefully removing community members on the evening of 07APR10.

As the Mobilization team prepared to exit the community, Save The Children monitors entered the camp. Further information of their operations there has been requested via email.

Camp Canaan agreed to meet with the committee of Camp Refugee in order to decide how they could work together, increase capacity, and determine the best course of action to avoid the forced removal that they seemingly face, the other two camps to do the same. After much deliberation, all four committees decided that they would host their first inter-camp committee meeting with representatives from all four areas, collectively organize, and work together to increase their capacity.

After leaving the camp, the mobilization team members received notification that a WASH meeting with most of the large international NGO's and the Delmas Mayor office will take place at 3:00 pm at the Mayor's office. The communities were notified, and at the morning meeting on 09APR10, they will choose a representative to attend the meeting with support of two members of the IAT/HRC mobilization team.

The mobilization team will continue to work with the communities in order to assist in organizing, collecting data, and monitoring the continued human and IDP specific rights violations.

09APR10

While assessing the situation this morning at Camp San Louis Gozague members of the community reported that they have again been told that they need to prepare to be removed from their homes. This warning came from one of the committee's presidents, Mr. Remy. From observation, the community members are not preparing for a move. Maintenance on their tents, tarps, and the grounds was still underway, including the digging of a drainage trench and laying of gravel in walkways. The community has small markets, vendors, restaurants, Save the Children Child Friendly Spaces, and Concern Worldwide Nutrition center for Pregnant Women and Infants.

Contact was established with Mr. Remy and a meeting has been scheduled with the Mobilization in Camp San Louis for 4:00 pm, 09APR10 in order to obtain further information.

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