



**Bureau des Avocats
Internationaux**

**Institute for Justice &
Democracy in Haiti**

For Immediate Release

October 20, 2010

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**ADVOCATES TESTIFY BEFORE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION
ON UNLAWFUL FORCED EVICTIONS IN HAITI**

Group calls on the Government of Haiti to respect human rights and comply with its obligations under the Inter-American Convention by respecting the rights of displaced people

October 20, 2010, Washington, D.C.: For the 1.5 million people still living in displacement camps, forced evictions pose an immediate threat of grave and irreparable harm, according to a coalition of human rights advocates who will testify on October 26 before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on unlawful forced evictions being carried out in displacement camps across Haiti.

Entire settlements have been destroyed and residents who refuse to vacate their camps are routinely terrorized and beaten by the police. Hundreds of camps have been threatened with eviction or actually evicted as people purporting to be land owners stake claim to the land. Most of the time, communities are left homeless again without any other place to go.

“Forced expulsions of the internally displaced violate Haitian and international law,” says lawyer Mario Joseph with [Bureau des Avocats Internationaux](#), who will testify at the hearing, “This is just the beginning of a problem we’ll be facing for years to come unless the Haitian government immediately puts a moratorium on forced expulsions, verifies land ownership titles, and nationalizes by decree all empty and idle lands in the hands of purported landowners.”

The coalition of human rights advocates, which includes the [Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti](#), [Bureau des Avocats Internationaux](#), the [International Human Rights Law Clinic at American University’s Washington College of Law](#), the disaster law center [You.Me.We.](#), and the [University of San Francisco School of Law Center for Law and Global Justice](#), will also be filing a Request for Precautionary Measures with the Inter-American Commission, demanding an immediate moratorium on forced evictions, an investigation into these violations, and implementation of human rights monitoring mechanisms that will protect the rights of Haiti’s most vulnerable population.

Hearing Details: *Human Rights Situation in the Camps for Internally Displaced Persons in Haiti*

Tuesday, October 26, 2010, 9 a.m.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 1889 F Street, NW, Washington DC, Ruben Darío Room (GSB 8th Floor) (<http://www.cidh.org/Comunicados/English/2010/Schedule140eng.htm>)

Evening Event: *Haitians without Homes: Forced Evictions, Hurricanes and Aid*

The misery in Haiti once again multiplied as the island is being soaked by heavy rains and forced evictions threaten hundreds of communities. Join us for a discussion on the devastation in Haiti and hear from human rights lawyers who will testify on October 26 before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on unlawful forced evictions being carried out in displacement camps across Haiti.

Tuesday, October 26, 2010, 6 p.m.

TransAfrica Forum, 1629 K Street, NW, Washington DC

Featured speakers:

Nicole Lee, President of TransAfrica Forum

Mario Joseph, Managing Attorney at Haitian-based Bureau des Avocats Internationaux

Nicole Phillips, Staff Attorney at the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

Co-sponsored by [TransAfrica Forum](#), [Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti](#), [Bureau des Avocats Internationaux](#), the [International Human Rights Law Clinic at American University's Washington College of Law](#), the disaster law center [You.Me.We.](#), and the [University of San Francisco School of Law Center for Law and Global Justice](#).