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Threatened or Planned Forced Evictions

Africa

Botswana

- Since April 2006, residents of the Letoreng settlement near Sefhare in Tswapong South have been living under the threat of forced eviction from their ancestral land. When neighbouring farmers began to expand their farms beyond their boundaries and into the Letoreng settlement, the Government threatened the Letoreng with eviction, as their settlement had never been recognised. The opposition party (Botswana Congress Party), however, supports the residents and asked the National Land Board to instead upgrade the settlement and issue residents with plot certificates.³⁹¹

Cameroon

- On 22 March 2005, the State Property and Land Tenure Minister announced that they would evict people residing in the marshlands in the Bastos and Njongolo neighbourhoods in Yaounde. The Government stated that the marshlands are an ecologically sensitive area and that the settlements are illegal. The Minister said that those who had constructed permanent buildings would be evicted without compensation even if they are in possession of land titles. He argued that the land titles are null and void because they were issued in contravention of the law.³⁹²

Ethiopia

- In November 2005, the Ethiopian Government signed an agreement with the Dutch preservation organisation African Parks Foundation on the management of the Omo National Park. Government officials legalised the Park's boundaries, thus making it illegal for the 50 000 tribal people living in the Park to remain. World Rainforest Movement reports that Ethiopian Park officials persuaded tribal people to sign away their land, without compensation, on documents they could not read. The African Parks Foundation states that it cannot interfere with the plans of a sovereign government.³⁹³

Ghana

- In May 2002, the Accra Metropolitan Authority (AMA) served an eviction notice to the residents of the Agbogbloshie/Old Fadama settlement 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

³⁹¹ 'BCP opposes Letoreng evictions', *Daily News Online* [online newspaper], (19 Apr. 2006), www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20060419

³⁹² 'Yaounde marshland residents face eviction', *The Post* [online newspaper], (25 March 2005), http://www.postnewsline.com/2005/03/strongyaounde_m.html

³⁹³ The World Rainforest Movement, *Ethiopia: Dutch conservation organization involved in eviction of thousands of tribal people* [article on website], (Apr 2006), <http://www.wrm.org.uy>

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.³⁹⁴

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 (approximately 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. The AMA has continued to insist 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.³⁹⁵

- In 2005, 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 metres) 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 had provided no public education, despite its promise.³⁹⁶

Kenya

- In February 2004, various Kenyan Ministries announced an unprecedented series of mass evictions that threatened over 300 000 residents of Kibera, Nairobi's largest informal settlement. The planned evictions were justified on the grounds that the informal settlements were illegally situated either on 'dangerous' public land (rail reserves or areas under electrical power lines) or on land reserved for future road-construction. That meant that all structures illegally built on land set aside for road reserves and all settlements built near roads, railway tracks, or power-lines faced eviction. Raila Village in Kiberia was the first eviction to be implemented. But the sheer number of people to be affected by the evictions provoked strong local, national, and international criticism. To its credit, the Government did respond to the concerns and suspended its eviction plans. Nevertheless, some uncertainty was created when various Ministers declared that the

³⁹⁴ Centre On Housing Rights and Evictions(COHRE) [pdf on website], *A Precarious Future: The Informal Settlement of Agbogbloshie*, www.cohre.org/ghana

³⁹⁵ 'AMA rejects move by Sodom and Gomorrah Squatters to give the place a facelift' [online news service], Ghana News Agency, (11 July 2005), <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/regional/artikel.php?ID=85569>

³⁹⁶ Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), *Evictions Monitor* [pdf on website], vol. 1 no. 3, (Aug. 2005), http://www.cohre.org/view_page.php?page_id=176; 'Railway company issues ultimatum' [online newspaper], *Daily Graphic*, (5 Oct. 2006).

suspension did not apply to their departments. In the eyes of many, it is just a matter of time before the evictions proceed.³⁹⁷

Malawi

- In August 2005, Malawi housing officials announced that the Government would be evicting hundreds of people from illegal settlements in Malawi's capital Lilongwe, and would use force if necessary. The Housing Department announced that the Government would evict those living illegally on land meant for industrial development.³⁹⁸ In Lilongwe about 70 per cent of the population live in illegal settlements.³⁹⁹

Morocco

- In January 2006, the Moroccan Delegate Minister in charge of housing announced that all houses that were built illegally or do not meet construction norms would be destroyed due to urban development projects. The planned evictions would affect some 500 000 people all over the country.⁴⁰⁰

Niger

- Authorities of Niger's capital Niamey decided on the eviction of hundreds of families living in the forest, or greenbelt, which surrounds Niamey. The local government gave the squatters an ultimatum to vacate the area by April 2006, but people did not leave. Some have lived in the area for over 20 years, and are not willing to move without being provided alternative accommodation. The forest area was set up with support from the United Nations and the World Bank to protect the city from desertification and the extremes of Niger's climate.⁴⁰¹

Nigeria

- Under the orders of the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory, Mallam Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) has been carrying out mass forced evictions in Abuja in an attempt to re-initiate a Master Plan that was approved in 1979. The Plan was designed to guide the creation of the new capital and development of the capital territory until 2000. The Master Plan was developed when the Government of Nigeria decided to move the national capital from Lagos to Abuja. The aim of the Master Plan was to create an orderly capital as a solution to the chaotic, rapidly expanding Lagos. The Master Plan called for the

³⁹⁷ COHRE, *Listening to the Poor? Housing Rights in Nairobi, Kenya* [pdf on website], (Mar. 2005), pp. 38–40, http://www.cohre.org/view_page.php?page_id=120

³⁹⁸ 'Deadline for Malawi demolitions', *BBC News* [online news service], (5 Aug. 2005), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4748279.stm>

³⁹⁹ The World Bank, 'World Bank Says World's Worst Slums Can Be Transformed' [article on website], (3 June 1996), <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/MALAWIEXTN/0,,contenMDK:20011723~menuPK:355892~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:355870,00.html>

⁴⁰⁰ 'Some 500 000 Moroccans live in houses due for demolition, Minister', *Maghreb Arabe Presse* [online newspaper], (5 Jan. 2006), http://www.map.ma/eng/sections/social/some_500000_morocca/view

⁴⁰¹ 'City Takes Step to Protect Forest', *Inter Press Service News Agency* [online news service], (2 Aug. 2006), <http://ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=34210>

resettlement of people living in traditional villages in the capital territory to neighbouring states. However, the Government never fully carried out the resettlement plan. Instead, those living on the land when the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) was created – generally termed ‘indigenes’ – were allowed to remain. These settlements have expanded in the past 30 years as indigenes allocated land or rented housing to non-indigenes who moved to Abuja for employment and were unable to access affordable formal housing. This resulted in the formation of extensive informal, unplanned and unauthorised settlements within the area designated for the capital city.

The FCDA has targeted over 49 such settlements in Abuja for demolition, arguing that land was zoned for other purposes under the Master Plan and, in some cases, has already been allocated to private developers. However, the FCDA draws a distinction between indigene and non-indigene residents when carrying out evictions and demolitions. The FCDA has a policy to provide full resettlement to indigenes, in keeping with the original intentions of the Master Plan. Because the FCDA has not yet been able to complete resettlement sites for indigenes, it has refrained from evicting them. But there is no such policy for non-indigenes. Evictions of non-indigenes commenced as early as 2003, but the most contentious demolitions began in late 2005 and have been ongoing weekly. Approximately 25–28 of the 49 targeted settlements in Abuja remain under threat of demolition for non-indigene residents. All of the indigenes in the 49 settlements remain under threat of eviction. Although the FCDA has assured them that they will provide resettlement, residents have not been consulted on the plans and are concerned that the resettlement will not be adequate

After public outcry, the FCDA has been attempting to enumerate non-indigenes before demolitions and has offered those affected with access to a plot of land in relocation sites that are currently under construction. However, non-indigenes must pay 21 000 Naira (approximately US \$170) for administrative fees, and a further 600 Naira (approximately US \$4.88) per square metre of land. Thus access to a 500 square metre plot would cost 321 000 Naira (approximately US \$2,612). They would further be required to build a home based on certain planning standards within two years or lose their rights to the relocation plot. In a country where over 70 per cent of the population lives under a dollar day, this is a difficult feat, particularly for those who have recently had their homes and possibly much of their property destroyed.⁴⁰²

- Twenty-six local communities in Lagos State are threatened with forced eviction by the planned Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ) project. The LFTZ project is a multi-billion dollar joint venture between the Lagos State Government and a consortium of Chinese businessmen. The Lagos State Government is planning to create the Free Trade Zone on the land of the pastoral and fishing villages. If the project is implemented, hundreds of thousands of people will be removed from their ancestral land and their means of livelihood. To date, there has not been an offer of compensation or an adequate resettlement site. Furthermore, the local residents have not been consulted on the issue.⁴⁰³

South Africa

- Johannesburg’s Inner City Regeneration Strategy could lead to the forced eviction of a minimum of 25 000 people, or as many as 70 000 people, from dilapidated buildings in poverty-stricken inner city slums. The city authorities seek urgent eviction orders, using Apartheid-era

⁴⁰² COHRE interviews with affected communities, FCDA officials, and Nigerian organisations, 1–11 November 2006.

⁴⁰³ Social and Economic Rights Action Center, ‘Imminent Forced Eviction of Twenty-six Communities under the Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ) Project in Lagos, Nigeria’, (13 Sep. 2006).

laws, on the basis of concerns for the health and safety of residents.⁴⁰⁴ The High Court of South Africa ruled that the City of Johannesburg's housing policy fails to comply with section 26 of the Constitution, which provides for the right to have access to adequate housing. This was due to the City's failure to provide suitable relief for, and to give adequate priority and resources to the inner city poor living in a crisis situation or otherwise in desperate need of accommodation. The Judge dismissed the eviction applications brought by the City against the residents. He also interdicted the City from evicting or seeking to evict the residents until adequate alternative accommodation in the inner city area has been provided. However, the City of Johannesburg is currently appealing this decision and the residents are counter-appealing.

- Wynberg residents in Johannesburg – approximately 1 000 people who have been renting rooms in disused factories for almost 20 years – are threatened with losing their dwellings because the owners of the land are applying for eviction orders in order to sell the properties to developers.⁴⁰⁵

Swaziland

- In January 2006, Swazi authorities began to clamp down on illegal urban settlements and unplanned housing. The Swaziland National Provident Fund earmarked 40 houses for demolition in the Madonsa settlement outside the commercial town of Manzini in order to construct new houses. The Madonsa community has taken the Fund to court to stop their evictions.⁴⁰⁶

- Another 100 homes in the royal village of Ludzidzini face destruction. The Government will evict the residents to make way for an extension of King Mswati's home. The land will be used to accommodate the King's growing number of wives and their children.⁴⁰⁷

- In May 2006, the Swazi Observer reported that hundreds of residents living within Masundwini and Lusekwaneni areas face eviction for settling illegally and constructing structures on 'sacred' land. The settlers were notified of the planned evictions, and said they would comply with the decision, even if they had nowhere to go.⁴⁰⁸

Tanzania

- As of September 2006, the Government of Tanzania is planning to evict the residents of over 100 bungalows from the Arumeru district of Arusha to make way for the construction of a road. The almost 600 affected people have been given notice to vacate their home, and the construction of the road could start at any time. Some of them have lived in the area since the

⁴⁰⁴ Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), *Any Room for the Poor: Forced Evictions in Johannesburg, South Africa*, (Mar. 2005)

⁴⁰⁵ 'Threat of Mass Eviction of Alexandra Residents from Wynberg factories', *Indymedia* [article on website], (25 Apr. 2005), http://southafrica.indymedia.org/archives/archive_week_redirect.php?category_id=1&day=17&month=4&year=2005

⁴⁰⁶ 'Swaziland: Urban cleanup response to unplanned settlements', *IRIN news* [online newspaper], (31 Jan. 2006), www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=51457&SelectRegion=Southern_Africa&SelectCountry=SWAZILAND

⁴⁰⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁸ 'Hundreds face eviction', *The Swazi Observer* [online newspaper], (23 May 2006), <http://www.observer.org.sz/main.asp?id=21950&Section=main>

1960s. Although the residents have been demanding compensation for the loss of their homes, they have not been allocated any alternative accommodation or compensation.⁴⁰⁹

Uganda

- In January 2005, the Uganda Railways Corporation alerted people residing in its reserves that all structures built less than 30 metres from the railway line would face demolition. People have been issued several warnings to vacate the buildings, but they have refused to leave. The Uganda Railways Corporation has contracted a private firm, Muziira Auctioneers Limited, to demolish the structures. It is unknown how many people will be affected by the forced eviction.⁴¹⁰

Zimbabwe

- In June 2006, the Government of Zimbabwe announced that it will evict about 4 000 black farmers who illegally occupied commercial farms in the Masvingo province. Among the affected people are many war veterans. Residents argue that the Government had encouraged them to occupy farms belonging to white farmers in 2000.⁴¹¹

The Americas

Argentina

- The Government of Argentina, The City Government of Buenos Aires, and the Puerto Madero Corporation are planning a city development project in Buenos Aires – known as ‘Retiro 2010’. Approximately 4 640 families living in Villa 31 and Villa 31 bis, Buenos Aires will be evicted to make way for a commercial area, which will include office buildings, hotels, shops, and public spaces. At this point, there has been little official information concerning plans for the future resettlement of the current inhabitants, but reportedly, they will be offered an alternative option. The affected community has not been consulted and has not been informed about possible alternatives. People have lived in Villa 31 and 31 bis for several decades.⁴¹²

- In 2001, the City of Buenos Aires proposed a plan to redevelop the AU3 area within the framework of the *Programa de Recuperación de la Traza de la Ex AU3*. In the 1970s and 80s, Argentina’s military junta planned on constructing a freeway (the AU3) in the area and intend to take over the area. The project was, however, aborted, and the area was illegally occupied primarily by low-income families. Now, the City Government is planning to sell the land to private investors for development. Some 1 600 families are threatened with eviction. The Municipality proposes different alternatives to the citizens in forms of credits and subsidies. But not all settlers will be able to access the program. The credits and subsidies are planned particularly for those who occupy strategic places of the AU3. Critics argue that in Argentina’s

⁴⁰⁹ ‘Tension high as Arumeru residents prepare for eviction’, *Ipp Media* [online newspaper], (21 Sep. 2006), <http://www.ippmedia.com/ipp/guardian/2006/09/21/74849.html>

⁴¹⁰ ‘Bantafiza’s house faces demolition’, *The Daily Monitor* [online newspaper], (21 Jan. 2005), <http://www.monitor.co.ug/archives/a2005/jan/news/0121/news01214.php>

⁴¹¹ ‘Harare to evict 4 000 black farmers’, *Mail & Guardian* [online newspaper], (2 June 2006), http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=273459&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_africa

⁴¹² ‘La zona a urbanizar en Retiro cubre un total de 18 hectáreas’, *Clarín* [online newspaper], (16 Feb. 2006), <http://www.clarin.com/diario/2006/02/16/elpais/p-01001.htm>

precarious housing situation, the Government should not develop commercial and high standard housing, but rather affordable houses for low-income residents.⁴¹³

- As of May 2004, approximately 65 families who had occupied a building on Solis Street in Buenos Aires were threatened with eviction. The building belongs to the National Administration of Social Security (ANSES). Residents proposed that they pay rent for the rooms they occupy, but ANSES did not want to negotiate.⁴¹⁴

- In 2004, a court ordered the eviction of nearly 250 families, who live under precarious conditions in the settlement 5 de Maio, in Barcena, Jujuy Province. The settlers have lived in the area since 2001. The eviction order has been postponed several times, and after negotiations, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment has committed itself to the relocation of the families. However, no place has been provided to them as yet.⁴¹⁵

- A community of over 100 families living in Barrio Tarapaya in Santiago del Estero Province are threatened with eviction, as the army claims ownership of their land. The settlers have title deeds for the land given to them in 1999 by the previous Governor, Carlos Juárez. However, the army and the courts do not accept the validity of the title deeds, and the families were served with eviction notices in December 2005.⁴¹⁶

- In February 2006, 42 families (approximately 130 persons) living in a building in Nuevo Alberdi, Santa Fe Province received eviction notices ordering them to vacate the building. The District's Court of Appeal ordered the eviction of the building because it belongs to the real estate company Zanni. The families had occupied the building many years ago, but now the owner has plans to redevelop the area. There have been discussions concerning the relocation of the families to a settlement at Ibarlucea Canal.⁴¹⁷

- The eviction of some 30 families was announced in the district of La Voz del Interior in Cordoba. A court ordered the eviction of the residents due to delays in payment. The company charged with the construction of these public buildings (Rubín Diseños y Construcciones) asked for a much higher price and interest rates, which residents are unable to pay. Moreover, the houses were unfinished and the area lacks infrastructure.⁴¹⁸

- A large deposit of precious stones was discovered on a area in Wanda at the Parana River where approximately 200 families live. The families now fear eviction because developers want to mine the area. The Municipality had provided the land to low-income families.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹³ 'Aceleran la recuperación de la ex AU 3 para hacer parques y casas', *Clarín* [online newspaper], (27 Oct 2005), <http://www.clarin.com/diario/2005/10/27/laciudad/h-03815.htm>

⁴¹⁴ 'Desalojo en puerta, y con una causa federal', *Página 12* [online newspaper], (17 May 2004), <http://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/elpais/1-35451-2004-05-17.html>

⁴¹⁵ 'Inminente desalojo del asentamiento 5 de Mayo', *Ciudad Jujuy* [online newspaper], (5 May 2005), http://elindep.ciudadjujuy.com.ar/leernoticia.php?ed=ed_05_05_2005&id=1

⁴¹⁶ 'Tierras del Tarapaya: vecinos en lucha', *Indymedia* [online newspaper], (7 Dec 2005), <http://argentina.indymedia.org/news/2005/12/356078.php>

⁴¹⁷ 'Inminente desalojo en Nuevo Alberdi', *DERF* [online newspaper], (29 Dec 2005), http://www.derf.com.ar/despachos.asp?cod_des=55487

⁴¹⁸ 'Temer desalojos masivos en barrio Los Boulevares', *La Voz del Interior* [online newspaper], <http://www.lavozdelinterior.net/nota.asp?nrc=383117>

⁴¹⁹ 'Temer desalojo por denuncia de que bajo el barrio hay piedras valiosas', *Territorio Digital* [online newspaper], (13 Jan 2006), <http://www.territorioidigital.com/nota.aspx?c=5699557621595196>

- The company Madera Dura del Norte S.A. claims to be the owner of some 156 000 hectares of forest land in Sol de Mayo in Santiago del Estero Province. Local farmers have reported that the company has committed numerous violent acts against them. In February 2006, workers of the company and police arrived with earthmovers and started burning forest and shooting at the farmers with rubber bullets. Several people were injured. The farmers, whose ancestors have lived on the land for over a century, have asked for an investigation of the incidents.⁴²⁰

Brazil

- Approximately 900 families belonging to the Landless Workers' Movement, (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, MST*) occupied unproductive land known as 'Chico Mendes' in Engenho São João in the Municipality of São Lourenço da Mata in 2004. The property belongs to one of the largest industrial conglomerates of Latin America, the company Votorantim. The Movement attempted to negotiate with representatives of Votorantim, but they claim that the company was unwilling to cooperate during the negotiations. More than 600 policemen arrived on the land in July 2005 and threatened the settlers. But they resisted and have been cultivating the land since that time. As of July 2006, the inhabitants of Chico Mendes are again threatened with forced eviction.⁴²¹

- Approximately 350 families have occupied the farm Cabanha Dragão in Eldorado do Sul with the support of the MST. They had demanded a resettlement on this land within the framework of the Agricultural Reform, but the National Land Reform Agency (INCRA) refused their demand.⁴²²

- Some 1 300 landless families occupied the Someco farm in the Municipality Novo Horizonte do Sul. The farm belongs to the Someco Company (*Sociedade de Melhoramento de Colonização*), and the Company has asked the local court for an eviction order. The families report that they will continue occupying land in the area.⁴²³

- In October 2005, approximately 1 000 families occupied an area belonging to an entrepreneur in Taboão da Serra. The families asked for the land to be reclaimed, but a regional court ordered the eviction of the families. The occupiers, however, say that they are determined to stay until some land is ceded to them.⁴²⁴

- Some 800 indigenous families are threatened with forced eviction from a farm close to the city of Miranda, which they had occupied a few months prior to the threat. The farm had already

⁴²⁰ 'El MOCASE denuncia violenta represión policial y parapolicial a campesinos', *Prensa de Frente* [online newspaper], (9 Feb. 2006), <http://www.prensadefrente.org/pdfb2/index.php/a/2006/02/09/p1053>

⁴²¹ Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, *Acampamento Chico Mendes (PE) é ameaçado de segundo despejo* [article on website], (25 July 2006), <http://www.mst.org.br/informativos/minforma/ultimas2193.htm>

⁴²² 'PM gaúcha aguarda Justiça para desocupar fazenda invadida por sem-terra em Eldorado do Sul', *Radio Bras* [online news service], (12 July 2005), www.radiobras.gov.br/materia_i_2004.php?materia=232079&q=1&editoria

⁴²³ 'Quatro mil sem-terra invadem fazenda em Novo Horizonte', *Midiamax* [online news service], (4 Apr. 2006), http://www.midiamax.com/view.php?mat_id=209016

⁴²⁴ 'Acampados em Taboão da Serra aguardam reunião com governos estadual e federal', *Panorama Brasil* [article on website], (30 Nov. 2005), www.panoramabrasil.com.br/noticia_completa.asp?p=conteudo/txt/2005/11/30/21469415.htm

been recognised as aboriginal land; however, local authorities do not respect this decision and have ordered an eviction.⁴²⁵

- In February 2006, Indymedia reported that the ‘Prestes Maia’ in Sao Paolo, the largest squatter building in South America is under threat of eviction. The building will be returned to its owner Mr Hamuche & Co who has not shown interest in the building for the last 15 years. Approximately 470 families – including some 400 children – will be left homeless through the eviction.⁴²⁶

- Approximately 70 families living in the area known as ‘Vila Itororó’ in Sao Paolo are threatened with forced eviction. The City Hall intends on ‘revitalising’ the area through the construction of new bars, restaurants and cinemas. The Municipality is planning to relocate the residents or to offer them compensation if they return to their places of origin. However, some of the residents have lived in the area all their lives and spent great effort on building their houses and the area’s infrastructure.⁴²⁷

- To make way for the expansion of the Space Launch Centre in Alcântara State of Maranhão, several Quilombo communities are threatened with eviction. Quilombolos are members of an ethnic minority that trace their lineage back to slaves who were brought to Brazil in the seventeenth century. The implementation of the expansion of the Centre will result in the forced displacement of more than 1 500 inhabitants. At the moment, no resettlement projects have been presented or discussed with the affected communities. Since 1991, Quilombolos have suffered forced resettlements and threats of forced evictions as a consequence of a Federal Government led effort to install the Space Launch Centre in Alcântara. During the 1990s, some 1 350 people were resettled to locations with poor agricultural and subsistence conditions. The Government did not provide families with any financial compensation, and did not adequately consult them to find a mutually agreeable solution.⁴²⁸

- The 400 members of the Quilombo community located at Mata Cavalo, in the Municipality of Nossa Senhora do Livramento are also threatened with forced eviction. The community had received the right of the land in 1999. However, farmers requested the ownership of the land and for the court of Mato Grosso to evict the Quilombo community.⁴²⁹

- In July 2004, 350 members of the Quilombo community occupied the São Miguel farm located in the Municipality of São João da Ponte, Minas Gerais State. The Court of the Minas Gerais State conceded the land to the alleged owner of the São Miguel farm. The Quilombo community, however, refused to obey the court order.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁵ ‘Índios reúnem-se na Capital para evitar despejo em Miranda’, *Midiamax* [online news service], (16 Jan. 2006), http://www.midiamax.com/view.php?mat_id=194679

⁴²⁶ ‘South America’s largest squatted highrise building is under threat’, *Indymedia* [online news service], (9 Feb 2006), <http://www.indymedia.org/or/2006/02/833052.shtml>

⁴²⁷ ‘“Revitalização” da Vila Itororó’, *Centro de mídia independente* [online news service], (11 Apr. 2006), <http://www.midiaindependente.org/pt/blue/2006/04/350870.shtml>

⁴²⁸ UN- HABITAT, *Forced Evictions – Towards Solutions?* [pdf on website], (2005), <http://www.unhcr.org/pmsd/getPage.asp?page=bookView&book=1806>

⁴²⁹ ‘Quilombolas apelam contra despejo determinado pela Justiça Federal’, *24Horas* [online newspaper], (26 Jan. 2006), <http://www.24horasnews.com.br/index.php?mat=166044>

⁴³⁰ ‘Justiça de MG determina o despejo de quilombolas’, *Folha* [online newspaper], (4 Aug. 2004), <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/brasil/ult96u62999.shtml>

Bolivia

- Approximately 50 farmer families occupied 500 hectares in various areas of the forest reserves known as El Choré in Sara Province. The Municipal Department of Natural Resources has made efforts to obtain the legal instruments to evict informal settlers from the forest area. Police have been negotiating with the settlers to find a peaceful solution to the occupation.⁴³¹

Chile

- The prosecutor of the City of Temuco ordered the eviction of 30 people of the indigenous ‘mapuche’ Levio community in November 2005. The eviction order has created much tension. The land allegedly belongs to the State Company Ferrocarriles del Estado. The families, however, claim that the land belonged to their ancestors and therefore belongs to them.⁴³²

Colombia

- The army and police are attempting to evict approximately 200 families in La Victoria (formerly Yopal) in the Department of Casanare. The families had allegedly occupied the land illegally. In May 2005, violence between settlers and police broke out and left several people injured. Community leaders and the Municipality then started negotiating to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. The families demanded assistance to move to another location.⁴³³

- The residents of the neighbourhood of Cortés, in Pereira, Risaralda are threatened with forced eviction. The residents had occupied the public land in the 1990s. The Municipality decided to evict the district because the area is subject to flooding. In 2004, the residents were informed about the issue, and have been asked to leave the district voluntarily. Several families were relocated, but their houses have been reoccupied in the meantime. The Municipality announced that people who arrive in Cortés now will not be relocated or compensated. Some 70 low-income families will be affected by the measure.⁴³⁴

Cuba

- The family of a member of the Movement of Racial Integration is threatened with forced eviction. The Revolutionary National Police claims that the activities of the Movement are an open provocation against the Cuban State. Because the Movement partly organises their activities in the family’s house in La Habana, authorities have ordered the eviction of the family.⁴³⁵

⁴³¹ ‘Continúan las negociaciones para el desalojo en El Choré’, *El Mundo* [online news service], (27 July 2004), http://www.noticiasbolivianas.com/montre_herm.php?id=14041&periodico=El%20Mundo&palabras=desalojo&opt_fecha=200403

⁴³² ‘Comunidad mapuche en conflicto de tierras teme desalojo’, *El Gong* [online newspaper], (28 Nov. 2005), http://www.diarioelgong.cl/news/one_news.asp?IDNews=38643

⁴³³ ‘Violentos disturbios por el desalojo de 200 familias en Yopal’, *Noticias* [online newspaper], (13 May 2005), <http://noticias.canalrcn.com/noticia.php3?nt=20428>

⁴³⁴ ‘Desalojo del Cortés, irremediable’, *El Diario del Otun* [online newspaper], (27 Apr. 2006), www.eldiario.com.co/bodyindex.php?anteriores=2006-04-27&id_noticia=60871&nombre=noticias&padre=4

⁴³⁵ ‘Amenazados de desalojo miembros del Movimiento de Integración Racial’, *Cuba Net* [online newspaper], (5 Nov. 2005), <http://www.cubanet.org/CNews/y05/nov05/22a1.htm>

- Residents of the Casablanca district of La Habana protested in June 2006 against their possible eviction. For some time, authorities have ordered the approximately 60 persons to leave the area, because they allegedly occupy the area illegally. Most concerned people have lived in Casablanca for over a decade.⁴³⁶

Dominican Republic

- In February 2006, President Leonel Fernandez signed an order to carry out the eviction of farmers living in the Los Haitises National Park. Six villages, a total of 826 families, would be affected by the eviction. The Government argued that the farmers are damaging the environment of the National Park, which is an important water reserve of the Dominican Republic, because farmers have burned a large area of forest land in the National Park. The intention to remove the residents from the Haitises dates back to the 1980s, and several eviction efforts have already failed to be implemented.⁴³⁷

- The Department of Public Works ordered the eviction of some 20 families in Parque del Este. The houses of the affected families will be torn down to make way for the construction of the Las Americas Freeway. The land on which the families had constructed their houses is public land. The affected people were informed that they would not be provided with relocation or compensation for the loss of their houses. The affected families have protested; they are not against the construction work of the freeway, but they are asking for alternative accommodation.⁴³⁸

- Some 125 merchants at Feria Ganadera (Cattle Fair) are threatened with forced eviction, after the Department of Agriculture decided on the construction of a new square at the market place. The merchants will be moved to another site, but will be provided a much smaller space than they occupy at the moment. Compensation will not be offered to them.⁴³⁹

Ecuador

- Several homeless people occupied about 75 hectares of land in the City of Manta in August 2004. The Mayor of Manta, who allegedly owns parts of the land, ordered the eviction of the occupiers.⁴⁴⁰

El Salvador

- The Mayor's office of Antiguo Cuscatlàn evicted nine families from the La Cuchilla community in July 2005. Reports indicate that the Municipality continues to pressure the remaining 150 families living in the La Cuchilla community. The La Cuchilla community is

⁴³⁶ 'Vecinos de La Habana protestan por desalojo', *Cuba Net* [online newspaper], (15 June 2006), www.cubanet.org/CNews/y06/jun06/16o1.htm

⁴³⁷ 'Fernandez orders evictions in Los Haitises National Park', *Dominican Today* [online newspaper], (17 Feb 2006), <http://www.dominicantoday.com/app/article.aspx?id=10506>

⁴³⁸ Habitat International Coalition, *Desalojo en Parque del Este* [article on website], (Sep. 2005), <http://www.hic-al.org/noticias/desalojoparqueeste.html>

⁴³⁹ 'Comerciantes en Feria Ganadera se oponen a intento de desalojo', *Hoy Digital* [article on website], <http://www.hoy.com.do/app/article.aspx?id=63597>

⁴⁴⁰ 'Gobernadora debe cumplir con desalojo', *El Mercurio* [online newspaper], (20 Aug. 2004), <http://www.mercuriomanta.com/sistema.php?name=news&file=article&sid=6161>

located in proximity of the Multiplaza commercial centre, and several companies are interested in developing the area. The Mayor of Antigua Cuscatlàn has conceded, in the past, to developers, and the remaining inhabitants fear that they will also be evicted. Representatives of the La Cuchilla community declare that they would be ready to leave if they were offered an adequate alternative.⁴⁴¹

- The 14 families who lost their homes in the Italia district in San Salvador due to the Hurricane Stan in 2005 will have to leave their temporary shelter. The Government has failed to provide them with alternative housing or with any compensation.⁴⁴²

- The community of Los Almendros in Apopa is threatened with forced eviction due to delays of their loan repayments. The residents had benefited from loans from the Government after they had been affected by the 1986 earthquake. However, after the dollarisation (the pegging of the peso to the US dollar), the interest rose and it became too difficult for these low-income families to repay their loans. The responsible Government agency has served them with eviction notices in February 2005.

Guatemala

- Twenty-three landless peasant families of the indigenous El Palmar community occupied a plot of land in the Municipality Playa Grande Ixcán, Department of Quiché, and are now threatened with forced eviction. In August 2005, the families were served with an eviction notice. Representatives of the community asked for negotiations with the Municipality.⁴⁴³

Mexico

- Some 200 families of the indigenous community of Cantiles in Santa María del Oro in the State of Nayarit will be affected by the construction of the El Cajón dam. The construction work is advancing, and according to plan, the massive hydroelectric project will be completed by the end of 2006. Once finished, the reservoir of the dam will submerge the village of Cantiles, and also the small villages of Agua Sarca, Platanitos, and El Salto. In March 2006, military forces arrived in Santa María del Oro and announced to the affected community that they will be forced to leave their homes. They were informed that compensation would be provided only after having left the area. Residents claim that the compensation is largely insufficient. Most of them, nevertheless, signed a document accepting the compensation, out of fear that they would be evicted without compensation if they did not agree. There is no concrete resettlement plan for the villagers; they were only informed that they would be removed to another location. The Military informed them that if they do not leave voluntarily they will be evicted by force.⁴⁴⁴

- In December 2005, a private foundation (*Hospital de la Purísima Concepción y de Jesús Nazareno*) demanded the eviction of the 50 families living in the buildings on Serapio Rendón

⁴⁴¹ 'Comunidad de La Cuchilla reitera denuncia de desalojo', *Diario Co Latino* [online newspaper], (27 Mar 2006), <http://www.diariocolatino.com/nacionales/detalles.asp?NewsID=11818>

⁴⁴² 'Esperando el nuevo año y el desalojo', *La Prensa Gráfica*, (Jan 2006) <http://www.laprensagrafica.com/nacion/388105.asp>

⁴⁴³ 'Familias en riesgo', *Adital* [article on website], (31 Aug. 2005), <http://www.adital.com.br/site/noticia.asp?lang=ES&cod=18410>

⁴⁴⁴ 'Militares anuncian desalojo por la fuerza a 200 familias nayaritas', *La Jornada* [online newspaper], (8 Mar. 2006), <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2006/03/08/044n1est.php>

Street 40 and 44 in San Rafael, Federal District. Some residents have lived in the building for over 40 years. The residents have asked the Government to provide them with public housing or any other support, since they lack the resources to pay rent or obtain a loan.⁴⁴⁵

- Eleven families who settled in the environmentally protected zone of Ampliación Tlacoyaque in San Bartolo Ameyalco have been threatened with eviction. The settlers had lived in the area for more than 30 years.⁴⁴⁶

Panama

- Approximately 20 families are threatened with forced eviction from a plot of land they had occupied three years ago in Pedregal in Chiriqui Province. The Ministry of Housing is planning to build a cemetery in the area.⁴⁴⁷

Paraguay

- Several poor peasant families had occupied a private plot of land in order to grow crops in Triunfo, Department Caaguazú. But in March 2006 they were informed by the National Institute of Rural Development and Land that they would have to leave the land. If they do not comply, they face forcible eviction.

- The Public Ministry announced the eviction of some 300 landless families who occupy land in the natural reserve Capiibary in San Pedro. The Ministry has attempted to evict the families several times, but they have always resisted.⁴⁴⁸

Peru

- A pending road project, the '*Periferico Vial Norte*', will affect eight districts of the city of Lima. In the district of San Juan de Lurigancho, 430 families are immediately threatened with eviction. Approximately half of the immediately affected families do not possess any form of land title and live in inadequate housing conditions. The Municipality of Lima has contracted a commission to organise the resettlement of the residents, but city authorities have not consulted with the residents on the matter. No date for the eviction has been fixed yet.⁴⁴⁹

Trinidad and Tobago

- Over 25 families living in Woodland were served with eviction notices by the Estate Management Business Development Company in March 2006, ordering them to leave their

⁴⁴⁵ 'Con villancicos piden a GDF vivienda por desalojo de su edificio', *La Cronica de Hoy* [online newspaper], (13 Dec. 2005), http://www.cronica.com.mx/nota.php?id_notas=216465

⁴⁴⁶ 'Prevén crisis por desalojo en zona de reserva', *El Universal* [online newspaper], (23 Dec. 2005), http://www2.eluniversal.com.mx/pls/impreso/noticia.html?id_notas=73031&tabla=ciudad

⁴⁴⁷ 'Invasores se oponen a desalojo', *Prensa* [online newspaper], (24 Jan. 2006), <http://mensual.prensa.com/mensual/contenido/2006/01/24/hoy/nacionales/478598.html>

⁴⁴⁸ 'Inminente desalojo de ocupantes de reserva', *ABC* [online newspaper], (23 Feb. 2006), <http://www.abc.com.py/articulos.php?fec=2006-02-23&pid=235760&sec=4>

⁴⁴⁹ UN- HABITAT, *Forced Evictions – Towards Solutions?* [pdf on website], (2005), p. 61, <http://www.unhcr.org/pmss/getPage.asp?page=bookView&book=1806>

homes that very same day. The people, who have lived in the area for over 20 years, are supposed to make room for the construction of new houses. There had been no consultation with the affected community, and neither the company nor authorities will provide them with alternative accommodation or compensation. Residents have organised several protests against the eviction.⁴⁵⁰

Uruguay

- Fifty unemployed, landless peasants occupied a private farm in Bella Union, in the Department of Artigas, to cultivate it, but the lessee reported them, and the Supreme Court issued an eviction order. The procedures were, however, not correctly followed and residents argue that the order is not legally binding. In January 2006, police arrived on the farm and enumerated all residents.⁴⁵¹

Venezuela

- Hundreds of families occupying several apartment blocks and buildings in West Caracas are threatened with forced eviction. A group of occupiers sought an injunction from the Supreme Justice Tribunal to prevent Caracas's Mayor Juan Barreto from taking action to remove them from occupied buildings. In recent years, the Mayor has repeatedly ordered evictions from occupied buildings.⁴⁵²

- Representatives of the San Juan Bautista Temple in Caracas demand the eviction of 40 families living on land designated for the construction of a temple. The representatives allege that they have the property rights to the land. They have attempted to negotiate with the families, but families have not agreed to leave..⁴⁵³

- Approximately 570 families living in the neighbourhood of Nueva Esparta, in Caracas, are threatened with eviction. The area in which they live is considered dangerous, as a viaduct is planned to be built close to the homes of the affected families. Four hundred families were evicted in January 2006. The authorities have not offered any relocation sites for these people yet.⁴⁵⁴

- Approximately 1 500 families are threatened with forced eviction from the lands of Ciudad Guayana, in Barrio El Llanito, called UD 329. The landless people occupied the area in early 2005 and have worked to develop the sector. The settlers stated that they are not willing to leave the land and would resist non-violently.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁰ 'Woodland squatters protest State land eviction', *Trinidad and Tobago Express* [online newspaper], (29 Mar 2006), <http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article?id=146829832>

⁴⁵¹ 'La Policía entró al predio de Bella Unión e identificó a los ocupantes', *El Pais* [online newspaper], (19 Jan. 2006), http://www.elpais.com.uy/06/01/19/pecono_196526.asp

⁴⁵² 'Squatters try to stop evictions', *The Daily Journal Online* [online newspaper], (24 Feb. 2006), <http://www.thedailyjournalonline.com/article.asp?CategoryId=10717&ArticleId=226194>

⁴⁵³ 'Vecinos y representantes Pro-Templo de Villa Colombia exigen desalojo de pobladores de Villa Pradera', *Nuevaprensa* [online newspaper], (27 Mar. 2006), http://www.nuevaprensa.com.ve/ver_art.php?cod=41895

⁴⁵⁴ 'Insisten en desalojo del Nueva Esparta', *El Universal* [online newspaper], (21 Dec. 2005), http://www.eluniversal.com/2005/12/21/ccs_art_21102E.shtml

⁴⁵⁵ 'Desalojo para UD-329', *Correo del Caroni* [online newspaper], (31 Jan. 2006), http://www.correodelcaroni.com/component/option_wrapper/Itemid,162/?id=21408

- The renovation of the West-Central railroad requires the eviction of some 1 200 families in the States of Lara, Portuguesa, Yaracuy and Carabobo. The affected families live in a designated security zone along the railroad in question. There has been consultation between residents, local authorities and railway authorities. There are plans to relocate the affected people, but no detailed relocation plan has been designed yet.⁴⁵⁶

Asia and the Pacific

Bangladesh

- Civil war and persecution of religious minorities have displaced hundreds of thousands of indigenous people referred to as 'Jumma', who live in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in south-east Bangladesh. Forcible relocation of the Jumma people has been a strategy of the military since the late 1970s, and relocations and land grabbing by the military continue to this day. The Asian Centre for Human Rights reported that in March 2005, the Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachari served acquisition notices to the indigenous Jumma landowners in order to acquire 45 acres of land for the purpose of constructing headquarters for a battalion. This construction will displace around 200 families. Most of these Jumma people had been removed or had been forced to flee several times already. The Bangladesh army has also sought to establish new camps near Bandarban, which will lead to the displacement of approximately 25 000 indigenous people. Additionally, the Government is planning to relocate thousands of Bengali people into the area, which will likely cause further displacement of indigenous people.⁴⁵⁷

- Coal mining projects in the town of Phulbari in Dinajpur threaten the eviction of several thousand indigenous people from some 150 villages of the area. All houses, schools, and shops within the mining area will face removal if the planned project proposed by Asia Energy is implemented. It was reported that the people would be compensated for their loss of land and property. The indigenous people, mainly from the Santal tribe, have lived on this highly fertile land for centuries.⁴⁵⁸

- A planned 'eco-tourism' project in the Modhupur Forest will cause the displacement of several thousand indigenous people, primarily from the Garo and Khasis tribes. Indigenous inhabitants have been living in the Modhupur Forest for over a century. The Modhupur National Park Development Project is planned and partly financed by the Government of Bangladesh and reportedly supported by the Asian Development Bank. Although the Government has stated that it will not forcibly remove the indigenous people from the forest, local people fear eviction. In 2001, the Government started building a boundary wall around the area. Once the wall is finished, it will encircle some 5 000 indigenous people living in five villages; anybody living inside the Park would be treated as an illegal inhabitant and could be evicted. When the affected community peacefully protested against the Park project in January 2004, police intervened with excessive force against the demonstrators. One man was killed and several others, including women and children, were injured.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁶ 'Rehabilitación de ferrocarril Centro-Occidental requiere desalojo de 1.200 familias', *ABN* [online newspaper], (12 May 2005), http://www.abn.info.ve/go_news5.php?articulo=7997

⁴⁵⁷ Asian Centre for Human Rights, 'Destruction of a people: Jummas of the CHTs' [article on website], (25 May 2005), <http://www.achrweb.org/Review/2005/74-05.htm>

⁴⁵⁸ 'The human cost of coal', *Probe News Magazine* [online newspaper], (June 2006) <http://www.probenews.com/index.php?index=2&contentId=1289&PHPSESSID=a323a1b2142811e6f701cda91d60e8cd>

⁴⁵⁹ 'Bangladesh eco-protest', *The Observer* [online newspaper], (25 Apr. 2004), <http://travel.guardian.co.uk/countries/story/0,,1202442,00.html>

- Fifty families have been threatened with eviction from Government land on Boral River in Natore where they have been living for over a decade. Developers claim ownership of the land and have threatened to burn peoples' houses if they do not leave.⁴⁶⁰

Cambodia

- The Asian Human Rights Commission reported that the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces attempted to forcibly evict 40 families in June 2006 from their lands in Tuk Chenh village in the Phnom Sruoch province, claiming that the villagers had stolen the land. The villagers, however, argued that the land had been theirs since 1995 when it had been distributed to them. During the attempted eviction, armed soldiers threatened villagers and set fire to houses. The villagers, however, succeeded in defending their houses. People are concerned that the soldiers will return, leading to violence between soldiers and villagers.⁴⁶¹

- In a similar case, 3 170 families, settled in Boeng Pram village in Battambang Province in 2005. Reportedly, the 10 000 hectares of land were allocated to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, but senior provincial officers sold it to private developers. The villagers fear eviction through either the Armed Forces or the private developers. In July 2006, 20 armed soldiers came to the village and pressed the villagers to sign away their land; 10 villagers were arrested.⁴⁶²

- In July 2006, the Phnom Penh Municipality also issued eviction notices to 150 families of a settlement known as Group 78. The Municipality of Phnom Penh claims that the community has illegally occupied Group 78 land, and claims that the land is Government property. However, the Government has not provided any documentation to support their claim. The Sour Srun Company also claims that it owns a portion of the Group 78 land. However, it has likewise failed to provide any documentation to support this claim.

The community living on Group 78 land has produced documentation supporting their possession of the land and occupation since the early 1980s. For over 20 years, the community has farmed the land, built structures on the land, and used the land as collateral for loans. Some families retain receipts, which were issued by the commune and local authorities in the early 1990s, recognising their occupation of the plots on the site. Furthermore, the community has satisfied the requirements of Article 38 of the 2001 Land Law, which grants ownership to someone who has possessed property in a non-violent, continuous, open, obvious, and good-faith manner for five years.

The Municipality of Phnom Penh has attempted to negotiate with affected residents by offering the equivalent of US\$600 and a five by twelve metre plot of land to each family that agrees to move. However, with the exception of several families, the majority of residents continue to firmly refuse the offered settlement, stating that it is inadequate, it is not fair market value compensation, and they do not wish to leave their land.

⁴⁶⁰ 'They will torch our houses to grab khas land', *The Daily Star* [online newspaper], (24 Feb 2004), <http://www.thedailystar.net/2004/02/24/d40224070674.htm>

⁴⁶¹ Asian Centre for Human Rights, 'Cambodia: Army unlawfully evicts villagers' [article on website], (21 June 2006), <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2006/1793/>

⁴⁶² 'Rights Group to ask RCAF chief to discipline soldiers', *The Cambodian Daily* [online newspaper], (10 July 2006), http://www.cambodiapolitics.org/news_06/the_cambodia_daily_06/cd_06_07/10_cd4.pdf

By mid-August 2006, the Government was expected to evict another 1 400 families living nearby in Village 15. There has been no consultation with the concerned communities.⁴⁶³

China

- In April 2005, the director of the 'South-Nord Water Diversion Project' announced that up to 400 000 people are facing relocation for the project, which is intended to divert water from the Yangtze River to China's north. This 60 billion dollar project will cause the displacement of residents of 80 000 people a year from the Hubei and Henan provinces in Central China. The long term project is scheduled to be completed in 2050. The China Daily reported that levels of compensation for the displaced have been set at a higher rate than for previous relocations.⁴⁶⁴
- The construction of the Xiluodu Hydropower Station project on the Jinsha River started again in December 2005, after construction had previously been halted. Once finished, the Xiluodu Hydropower Station will be the second largest hydropower station in China. The Xiluodu Dam in Yunnan Province is the first of four huge hydropower projects on the Jinsha River. The project has resulted in a large number of protests. Affected people are to be relocated and compensated. Once the hydropower station is finished, an estimated number of 60 000 people would lose their land in the submerged area.⁴⁶⁵

Georgia

- Municipal officials in Tbilisi have served eviction notices to approximately 120 refugee families from Abkhazia, who live on the right bank of the Mtkvari River in the capital Tbilisi. Tbilisi Mayor Zurab Tchiaberashvili proposed to build high standard buildings in the area. The refugees have lived in the area since 1993.⁴⁶⁶

India

- To implement 'Vision Mumbai', the plan of the Maharashtra State Government to make a world class city out of Mumbai, hundreds and thousands of slum dwellers in India's booming city still face eviction in addition to the over 300 000 who have already been evicted.
- Approximately 2 000 families living in the slums of Indira Nagar and Sanjay Nagar in the Bhatti Mines area, New Delhi, face relocation after the Supreme Court refused their demand to delay the eviction. According to the Court's order, the slum dwellers will be shifted to other areas of New Delhi, but authorities are required to ensure that the evicted families are provided with all basic services at the relocation sites.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶³ Human Rights Watch, 'Cambodia: Phnom Penh's poor face forced evictions' [article on website], (2 Aug. 2006), <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/08/02/cambod13889.htm>

⁴⁶⁴ '400 000 to relocate for water project', *China Daily* [online newspaper], (6 Apr. 2005), http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-04/05/content_431415.htm

⁴⁶⁵ 'Hydropower station construction recommences, sending mixed political messages', *Central News Agency* [online news service], (5 Jan. 2006), <http://www.probeinternational.org/tp/print.cfm?ContentID=14495>

⁴⁶⁶ Human Rights in Georgia, 'Meria Smashes Refugees Hopes with Bulldozers' [article on website], (Dec. 2004), <http://www.humanrights.ge/eng/stat86.shtml>

⁴⁶⁷ 'SC refuses to stay eviction of slum dwellers', *Tribune News Service* [online news service], (28 June 2006), <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2006/20060629/delhi.htm#1>

- Some 600 farmers living in the Saragodu Reserve in Chikmagalur district were served with eviction notices in June 2005. The Forest Department applied for an eviction order, stating that the land belongs to the Government, and the Supreme Court thus ordered the eviction of any illegal settlers. However, residents maintain that the land had been granted to them by the Government in the 1960s.⁴⁶⁸

- BBC reported that a few thousand non-Nicobarese Indians residing on the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago face forced eviction if they do not voluntarily move back to the mainland. After the Tsunami disaster in December 2004, residents from India's mainland started outnumbering the indigenous population of Nicobar. Additionally, resources such as water and land are scarce on the islands, and the Nicobarese tribes have asked all non-ethnic Nicobarese to leave the islands. Indian law forbids anybody other than ethnic Nicobarese tribes from living on the Island, although people from mainland India have lived on the Nicobar Islands for several decades.⁴⁶⁹

Sardar Sarovar Dam

- In March 2006, the Narmada River Valley Authority decided to raise the dam height of the Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada River. This raise will bring 220 villages in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat under submergence, and will affect more than 35 000 families. The Supreme Court ordered in April 2006 that all relocated persons have to be rehabilitated and, if compensation and resettlement was not carried out fast enough, the Court would order a complete halt to the works. The construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam and the submergence of land has led to the displacement of thousands of families in the last 20 years, and only 10 per cent of the total number of affected families have been resettled.⁴⁷⁰

In addition, an 'eco tourism project', that includes water theme parks, golf courses, hotels, restaurants, and camping facilities, located near the Sardar Sarovar site in Gujarat, threatens six villages with eviction. The residents of these villages lost the rights to their lands because it was acquired in 1961 for the dam project. However, at that time, residents were not recognised as eligible for resettlement. They have thus remained on their land during the ongoing fight with authorities. Now a tourism project threatens to destroy their homes.⁴⁷¹

Indonesia

- The Asian Human Rights Commission reported that the land belonging to the village of Tanah Awu in Central Lombok has been under constant dispute, as the West Nusa Tenggara provincial authorities want to build an international airport on the land. To this end, the local Government is planning to remove the villagers from the fertile agricultural land. The land dispute has led to oppression of the peasants by the local Government for the past ten years, but there have been no efforts of consultation with the local population. In June 2006, Government

⁴⁶⁸ 'Govt urged not to evict growers', *The Hindu* [online newspaper], (11 June 2005),

<http://www.hindu.com/2005/06/11/stories/2005061102680500.htm>

'Protest against eviction of tribal people from forests', *The Hindu* [online newspaper], (31 July 2005),

<http://www.hindu.com/2005/07/31/stories/2005073101380200.htm>

⁴⁶⁹ 'Migrants face eviction after tsunami', *BBC News* [online news service], (28 Feb. 2005),

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4304143.stm

⁴⁷⁰ Friends of River Narmada [website], <http://www.narmada.org/sardarsarovar.html>

⁴⁷¹ Friends of River Narmada, *Press release: No displacement in the name of tourism* [article on website],

<http://www.narmada.org/nba-press-releases/september-2005/Sep26.html>

officials, accompanied by armed police and paramilitary officers, arrived at the village. After peasants had thrown rocks at the police, police opened fire and several people were injured.⁴⁷²

Japan

- A village inhabited by some 200 elderly Koreans, the Utoro district near Kyoto, is threatened with eviction. In 1941, when Korea was under Japan's rule, Koreans were brought to Kyoto to build a military airbase. At the end of the War, some Koreans decided to stay in the area and they founded the village of Utoro. After the War, the land passed to Nissan Shatai, a Nissan Motor subsidiary that sold it in the 1980s to a real estate company. The real estate company has since tried to evict the elderly residents. After 10 years of legal battles, the Supreme Court decided in July 2000 that the residents have to leave Utoro. The owner of the land can legally request the forced eviction of the residents at any time.⁴⁷³

- The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) reported in January 2006 that some 30 homeless people face eviction from Utsubo Park and Osaka Castle Park in Osaka. There has been no consultation with the affected people. Although the Osaka city authorities have offered shelter for the evictees, they have failed to find a fundamental solution to address the issue of homelessness. In Osaka, there are more than 10 000 homeless people living in the streets and parks.⁴⁷⁴

Laos

- In March 2005, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank approved millions of dollars in loans and guarantees for the construction of a hydroelectric dam at the Nam Theun River, in southern Laos. Construction of the Nam Theun 2 project began in early 2005 and is scheduled to be completed in 2009. Some 6 200 people are threatened with eviction to make way for the Nam Theun 2 dam and its reservoir. Additionally, the dam will have an impact on the livelihoods of thousands of people living downstream from the land; many fear the destruction of fisheries and the flooding of riverside gardens. The Thai-French dam developers and the Government of Laos are planning to resettle the affected people to new 'model villages', where 400 people have already moved to in the framework of a pilot resettlement scheme. However, those being resettled argue that the land is less fertile.⁴⁷⁵

Malaysia

- The Daily Express reported in March 2006 that several thousand people from 15 villages in Government reserves in the Nabawan region are threatened with eviction. Since the Government of Malaysia gazetted the Forest Management Unit (FMU) about 10 years ago, people in the

⁴⁷² Asian Human Rights Commission, 'Indonesia: Excessive forced used by police in central Lombok' [article on website], <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2006/1812>

⁴⁷³ 'Groups unite to save last Korean village of forced laborers in Japan', *The Korea Times* [online newspaper], (29 Apr. 2005), <http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/nation/200504/kt2005042817433611990.htm>

⁴⁷⁴ Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), 'Japan: Eviction threat at Utsubo Park and Osaka Castle Park in Osaka' [article on website], (24 Jan. 2006), <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2006/1475>

⁴⁷⁵ 'Southern Laos braces for change', *BBC News* [online news service], (16 June 2004), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3808499.stm>, see also International Rivers Network, www.irn.org

concerned areas are no longer allowed to carry out agricultural activities. Consultation with the affected people is under way, and there are plans to transfer them to the Batu Punggol area.⁴⁷⁶

- The residents of Kampung Panji have been served with several eviction orders by the Sabah Urban Development Corporation in May 2006. The residents, however, refuse to comply with the order, until compensation and alternative accommodation have been discussed. The company wants to clear the area for a new development project.⁴⁷⁷

- A total of 78 landowners will be resettled by the Lands and Surveys Department (JTU) to make room for the construction of a water treatment plant in Kg Tambalugu. The property had previously been acquired by the Government. Compensation and relocation are under discussion, and reportedly a site at Ulu Bakut has been identified as a relocation site for the affected people. Reportedly, 15 families were not provided with alternative accommodation.⁴⁷⁸

Myanmar

- The construction of the Thamanthi Hydroelectric Power Project on the Chindwin River would lead to the relocation of some 35 villages — mainly inhabited by the ethnic minority of the Kuki in the area of the Western Sagaing Division. The project will be implemented by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation of India. So far, neither the company nor the Government of Myanmar has held any consultation with the affected people. Neither the company nor the Government has undertaken a study on the social and environmental impact of the project.⁴⁷⁹

Pakistan

- To make way for the further construction on the Lyari Expressway, the City District Government of Karachi and other government agencies plan to demolish a further 66 000 houses.⁴⁸⁰

- According to reports of the Urban Resource Centre of Pakistan, the Karachi City Government is planning to demolish another 6 000 housing units in 20 separate informal settlements. According to the City authorities, all settlements that were created after 1985 are considered to be an illegal encroachment; and can therefore be removed at any time.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁶ 'Thousands in FMU areas face eviction, *Daily Express News* [online newspaper], (5 Mar. 2006) <http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?NewsID=40548>

⁴⁷⁷ 'Panji folks ignoring eviction order', *Daily Express News* [online newspaper], (5 June 2006), <http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?NewsID=42408>

⁴⁷⁸ 'Eviction order hasty, says MP', *Daily Express News* [online newspaper], (7 Aug 2006), <http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?NewsID=43629>

⁴⁷⁹ 'Thamanthi dam and Kuki people's fate', *Burma Digest* [online newspaper], (31 July 2006) <http://burmadigest.wordpress.com/2006/07/31/thamanthi-dam-kuki-peoples-fate>

⁴⁸⁰ UN-HABITAT, *Forced Evictions – Towards Solutions?* [article on website], (2005), <http://www.unhcr.org/pms/getPage.asp?page=bookView&book=1806>

⁴⁸¹ Urban Resource Centre, 'Eviction Watch Report Karachi, January – June 2005' [article on website], <http://www.urckarachi.org/evic.htm>

The Philippines

- For the construction of the South Rail Project another 50 000 people will be evicted. People will be relocated to areas approximately 30 kilometres from their present home.⁴⁸²
- The Zamboanga Municipality is planning to close the Zambagora market and evict hundreds of vendors in order to construct a multi-story parking terminal. After a long legal battle, the Supreme Court decided in favour of the City and ordered the eviction.⁴⁸³
- Approximately 70 families, all members of a tribal community, are facing eviction by the Department of Agrarian Reform of the Philippines. The families had settled on the land some 20 years ago. A previous eviction had been suspended after police and army had met with strong resistance by the residents. The residents would like to buy the land, but the landowner says that it is not for sale.⁴⁸⁴

South Korea

- Amnesty International reported that riot police attempted to evict over 1 000 elderly residents – most of them in their 60s and 70s – from their village in Pyongtaek, in the north west of South Korea in March 2006. The Ministry of National Defence had requested the eviction in order to make room for the expansion of a neighbouring US army base, Camp Humphreys. The villagers, however, resisted the eviction. During the protests, police used force and several villagers suffered minor injuries. Police arrested several hundred human rights activists taking part in the protests. Villagers argue that the compensation offered is not enough to buy equivalent land elsewhere, and they demand consultations with the Government, arguing that the consultation conducted in February, before the eviction attempt, were inadequate and the farmers' concerns had not been taken into account. Despite the protests, Korean and American authorities have not pulled back their plans to demolish the village.⁴⁸⁵

Sri Lanka

- The administrators of Serandip farm estate in Badulla are planning to build a large water tank to hold agricultural water for rural farmers. If the project is carried out, approximately 12 families of farm workers living on the land will be evicted and rendered homeless.⁴⁸⁶

Turkey

- The construction of the controversial Ilisu Dam Project on the River Tigris in south-east Anatolia in the Kurdish area of Turkey began in early August 2006. The Ilisu Dam is part of

⁴⁸² LOCOA, 'Philippine gov't commits massive HR violations in railroad projects' [article on website], (6 May 2006), http://www.locoa.net/home/?doc=bbs/gnuboard.php&bo_table=p_co_training&wr_id=11

⁴⁸³ 'Zambagora Occupants Stand to Defy Eviction', *Sun Star, Zamboanga*, (5 Jan. 2005), <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/static/zam/2005/01/05/news/zambagora.occupants.stand.to.defy.eviction.html>

⁴⁸⁴ 'Tribal folk vow to protect burial sites vs demolition', *Philippine Daily Inquirer* [online newspaper], (5 Oct. 2004), http://news.inq7.net/regions/index.php?index=1&story_id=13892

⁴⁸⁵ Amnesty International, *South Korea: Elderly farmers forcibly evicted for US army base*, [press release on website], (17 Mar. 2006), <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA250012006?open&of=ENG-KOR>

⁴⁸⁶ 'Tank expansion threatens estate homes', *Tamil Net* [online news service], (29 Nov. 2004), <http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?catid=13&artid=13506>

Turkey's South-eastern Anatolian Project (GAP), which has spread a network of dams and power plants across the Kurdish regions of south east Turkey. The reservoir of the Ilisu Dam will flood 65 villages and towns. Furthermore, the historical site of Hasankeyf, and hundreds of other ancient sites and Kurdish heritage will be submerged under water. A minimum of 15 000 people – mainly Kurds – will have to be resettled and another 32 000 will be affected by the loss of their land. The Government of Turkey commissioned a resettlement plan to be drawn up in 2005. According to the plan, people will have to choose between resettlement and financial compensation. However, compensation for people previously relocated by the South-eastern Anatolian Project has been tied to the property of land or houses. Since most land in south-east Anatolia is concentrated in the hands of large landowners, many landless families were not compensated. This time the Turkish Government promised to compensate the landless people, as well. The Turkish Government's decision to build a hydroelectric power plant in the Kurdish region risks an escalation of the conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdish guerrilla and population. Given the delicate situation in the region, affected people are unlikely to voice protest against the project, lest they be prosecuted as sympathisers of the guerrillas. The forthcoming evictions should thus be seen as part of a wider pattern of human rights abuse in south-eastern Turkey. Over the past decade thousands of villagers in the region have been evicted at gunpoint by the Turkish security forces.⁴⁸⁷

- The Municipality of Ankara plans the demolition of some 400 houses in the Gültepe (Çinçin) district in Ankara to make room for the construction of a housing project in the area.⁴⁸⁸

Europe

Bulgaria

- On 16 May 2006, the vice-mayor of the Sofia City Council, Tsvetan Tsvetanov, announced that all 'illegal' Roma settlements would be 'liquidated' and he gave the mayors of Sofia municipalities 20 days to draw up a list of such settlements. The announcement indicated that mayors would investigate ways to limit the 'setting up and enlargement of the Roma ghettos' within Sofia and that a Consultative Council, which had not yet been formed, would prepare a strategy for the development of the Roma community. However, no details were provided as to the content of the strategy and the announcement contained no guarantee that the human rights of Roma to protection from forced eviction would be upheld. After the announcement, several communities received eviction notices.

Up to 1 600 Roma persons, living in the Serdika neighbourhood were threatened with imminent forced eviction, to take place on 30 June 2006. Some of this community, known as Batalova vodenitza or NPZ Sredetz, were threatened with eviction in 2005, and took legal action to stop the eviction. However, on 21 June 2006, the Mayor of the Sub-Municipality of Varazhdane and a Deputy Mayor of Sofia city declared that the eviction and demolition would now proceed due to the ruling of the Supreme Administrative Court, which confirmed that the Mayor could proceed with the eviction. Notices were issued on 23 June 2006, giving the residents only seven days to leave. This is despite the fact that the community has lived on this land for almost a century. Although the Bulgarian media reported that some socially vulnerable families are entitled to one-time support in the amount of BGN 275 (approximately Euro 130), this compensation is

⁴⁸⁷ www.ilisu.org.uk, www.ilisu-wasserkraftwerk.com

⁴⁸⁸ *ibid.*

extremely inadequate to cover even the most urgent needs of the families who will be rendered homeless after the evictions, and might not even be provided to all of the affected families.

On 26 June 2006, the Municipality issued eviction notices to the 16 families of another community also called Batelova vodenitza, which is also in the district of Vazrazhdane. Despite the community residing on this land since 1926, the families were informed that Administrative Acts have been issued against them and they now have 14 days to object. The Acts and the objections will be sent to the Regional Directorate on Control of Illegal Constructions who will have the power to forbid the use of the buildings and cut off electricity and water supplies.

However, the threatened evictions provoked strong responses both locally and internationally, including a letter from four Members of the European Parliament, saying:

We strongly urge you to postpone the eviction and demolition of the houses, in order to find a lasting solution for the problem agreed upon by all parties concerned. I am convinced that further anti-Romani behaviour from the side of the mayor of Sofia will not contribute towards a better image of Bulgaria. Especially at a time of close European scrutiny of your country.⁴⁸⁹

On 29 July, the Government of Bulgaria suspended the demolition of the homes of the Roma families from Batalova vodenitza. However, other Roma communities still live under threat of forced eviction. The Sofia Municipality also issued eviction notices in June 2006 to 16 families living on Dobri Jelyazkov Street. They are members of a community who has lived on this land since 1926. In the absence of reasonable justification, adequate notice, consultation with the affected families, compensation and any provisions for alternative housing and social support for the families, such evictions constitute a gross violation of Bulgaria's obligations under international human rights law.⁴⁹⁰

Greece

- In April 2005, the Municipality of Athens announced the imminent eviction of over 200 Roma households in the Votanikos district of Athens. The Roma homes are situated on land that has been designated for the construction of a football stadium. However, the Municipality of Athens has not discussed relocation with the residents and has not presented a court order.⁴⁹¹

France

- In the aftermath of three fires in Paris that destroyed buildings inhabited by African immigrants and killed over 40 people, Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy ordered the evictions of all squatters from unsafe buildings. This order concerned tens of thousands of immigrants in Paris, many of whom have entered the country illegally and thus are ineligible for public housing. Paris' Municipal officers, however, expressed reservations over Sarkozy's order to have all squats emptied, and in October 2005, the Mayor of Paris called on police to halt their policy on forcibly evicting squatters until alternative lodgings could be found. Paris City Council said the priority should be urgent investment in renovating sub-standard buildings.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁹ Members of European Parliament Hiltrud Breyer, Daniel Marc Cohn-Bendit, Els de Groen, Bart Staes to Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev of Bulgaria [Letter], 28 June 2006.

⁴⁹⁰ European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), 'Eviction threats of Roma in Bulgaria continues unabated' [article on website], (19 July 2006), <http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2611>

⁴⁹¹ Greek Helsinki Monitor, [Correspondence]

⁴⁹² 'Paris mayor calls for a halt to squatter evictions', *Expatica* [online newspaper], (12 Oct. 2005), http://www.expatica.com/source/site_article.asp?channel_id=1&story_id=24438

United Kingdom

- Some 1 000 travellers residing on Dale Farm near Basildon, Essex, which constitutes Britain's largest traveller community, are under threat of eviction after a decision of Basildon Council to clear the site. Dale Farm has been a refuge in the last few years for travellers evicted from other sites. The travellers own the site, but do not have proper planning permissions for putting up structures, fences and roads.⁴⁹³
- Several other traveller communities are threatened with forced evictions all over the United Kingdom. Reports indicate that the UK needs up to 2 000 more caravan stands and a further network of 2 000 stopping sites to facilitate nomadic movement.

⁴⁹³ Traveller Support, <http://www.travellersupport.org.uk>