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**Victims hopeful that Lundin Petroleum will pay its dues**

*“Impunity and disregard for victims has been among the root causes of perpetuating violence in South Sudan. (…) I hope that Sweden’s righteous intention to take Lundin executives to court will also produce satisfaction for the many people who have paid such a high price for Lundin’s benefits.” Rev. James Kuong Ninrew, Juba.*

There is good news about South Sudan coming from Sweden. Lundin Petroleum’s Ian Lundin and Alex Schneiter are being questioned by the Swedish police for possible complicity in war crimes. For the first time in history, a competent court may soon be looking into war crimes that were committed in Sudan and South Sudan. Sweden is thereby showing true leadership. The investigation is an exemplary effort to seek accountability for corporate complicity in human rights abuses.

A court case however has limitations. Sweden cannot hold Sudanese or South Sudanese suspects to account, and it cannot easily deliver remedy to the victims. The indicted individuals represent only a segment of those who have benefitted from Sudan’s oil war, that earned Lundin Petroleum a fortune, while options for victims to obtain compensation through legal means are onerous and uncertain at best. Nonetheless, **the victims of the oil war are starting to claim their right to effective remedy**. Now is the time for the Swedish Government and Lundin Petroleum’s shareholders to take responsibility and realize this right. The Sudanese war profits made Lundin enabled Petroleum’s money-spinning investments in Norway; Lundin Petroleum’s investors therefore stand accused of glossing over human rights abuses and indirectly benefitting from war and war crimes. Confronted with the overwhelming evidence of callous behaviour by the company, its investors must finally start addressing the rights of the victims.

A particularly heavy responsibility lies with the Lundin family, who own 30% of the company, and with the Swedish state, Lundin Petroleum’s host and, through its pension funds, another major shareholder. Among those who have an old debt to pay are Swedbank Robur, with 5.8% the second largest shareholder at the moment, Skagen, Nordea, Handelsbanken, and the Norwegian Government through Norges Bank. Astonishingly, Statoil SA this year bought 20% of the shares of Lundin Petroleum, despite being fully informed about the company’s past. In spite of their professed support for the UN Guiding Principles, none of these shareholders have ever used their leverage to undo the company’s dismal legacy.

For further information, please contact

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Background:

In 2010, the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan (ECOS) published the report Unpaid Debt (<http://www.ecosonline.org/reports/2010/UNPAID_DEBT_fullreportweb.pdf>) that called for the Governments of Sweden, Austria, and Malaysia to investigate the role of Lundin Petroleum, OMV and Petronas in war crimes in Sudan, and to ensure the right to effective remedy for the victims. After 2011, ECOS gradually ceased to function and PAX, the Dutch peace and human rights movement, carry on its commitment to the victims of Sudan’s oil war.

The report motivated the Swedish public prosecutor for international crimes to open a criminal investigation. It estimated the Lundin Consortium’s fair share in future compensation of victims quite conservatively at $300 million. Key documents about the case can be found at <https://www.paxforpeace.nl/stay-informed/in-depth/unpaid-debt>. A comprehensive website covering the court case will be launched by December 2016, [www.unpaiddebt.org](http://www.unpaiddebt.org). Also, [www.ecosonline.org](http://www.ecosonline.org) offers a rich searchable database about the history of oil exploitation in Sudan and South Sudan.

Early in 2016, a group of victims of the oil war met in Juba and nominated Rev. James Ninrew as their Chairman. This Victims’ Working Group has encountered massive support among victims for a Remedy Claim that reads:

*We claim our right to effective remedies and reparation for the crimes that have been committed against us. We lived through the unspeakable horrors of Sudan’s oil war. Our villages have been burned down, our daughters raped, children abducted, parents beaten to death, cattle stolen, communities scattered. The human rights abuses of the oil war have devastated our lives. As victims of human rights abuses, we have the right to remedy. This right has been denied to us and we claim it now.*

*Crimes have been committed by a variety of armed forces after the Government of Sudan decided to let international companies exploit oil on our land. Once the leading company in our area, Lundin Petroleum found oil, it sold it for a fortune, and left. Its managers are expected to stand trial in Sweden shortly for complicity in crimes committed against us. The company and its shareholders are indebted to us and it is time to pay.*

*South Sudan is in turmoil and its authorities are unable to govern the country effectively and equitably. Consequently, a remedy and reparation process will have to be independently managed, without any political interference. Because we suffered together, we want collective reparation. Because we need a transparent and accountable process, we solicit impartial international parties to initiate and oversee a remedy process. We would appreciate if Sweden, Lundin Petroleum’s home country, could take the lead to realize this.*

*A Victims Working Group was established in Juba, headed by Rev. James Ninrew and Rev. Matthew Deng. We trust them to defend our interests and speak on our behalf.*

