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FIAN criticizes premature closure of case against Neumann Kaffee Gruppe

Heidelberg, 21.04.2011. The closure of the case against Neumann Kaffee Gruppe by the German National Contact Point (NCP) of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies is unjustified and unreasonable, according to the FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN).

FIAN claims that the NCP, residing in the Department of Trade and Industry of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, offers a biased concluding statement that is not helpful for a satisfactory resolution of the case.

The case concerns the forced eviction in 2001 of more than 2,000 Ugandans in the Mubende district by the Ugandan army, following the government's lease of their land to Kaweri Coffee Plantation, a subsidiary of the Hamburg based Neumann Kaffee Gruppe.

In July 2009 the evictees' group "Wake Up and Fight for Your Rights" filed a complaint with the NCP, with the support of FIAN, demanding compensation and direct dialogue with the Neumann Kaffee Gruppe following years in pursuit of a transparent judicial process.

"The Neumann Kaffee Gruppe has been particularly hesitant to meet with representatives of the evictees", said Martin Wolpold-Bosien of FIAN International.

"It took one and a half years after the complaint had been lodged before the first and last joint meeting took place between the NCP, Neumann Kaffee Gruppe representatives and the evictees. Furthermore, the company did not take part in talks initiated in 2010 to negotiate an extrajudicial agreement, nor did company representatives attend the last two court dates."

FIAN claims that the NCP's closure of the complaint process is particularly inappropriate at a time when it is necessary to maintain international attention on the case and encourage mediation between the parties that will lead to a fair and sustainable solution.

FIAN demands that the German Federal Government and parliament investigate the circumstances leading to the closure of the case and assess the extent to which the NCP is subject to a conflict of interest, in view of its location within the Department of Trade and Industry. FIAN also rejects the NCP's attempts to stifle public criticism of the eviction and its consequences.

"It is certainly unacceptable that the NCP demands that a human rights organization should refrain from public criticism of actors who are involved in or benefit from documented human rights violations", Wolpold-Bosien said.

Read the Official FIAN Statement regarding the closure of the Mubende-Neumann case by the National Contact Point (NCP) for OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises [here](#).

