Chad

Open letter to Mr. James D. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank

- [english] - Region - Africa - Chad -

Date de mise en ligne : Thursday 21 September 2000

Description :

On June 6, the World Bank's Board of Directors agreed to support the Chad Petroleum Development Project.
Your organization committed itself to ensuring that all future profits in that project will be, as a priority, devoted to the fight against poverty in one of the world’s poorest countries.

The fight against poverty - which is your main mandate - should not be dissociated with the establishment of democracy. As you are aware, the Chadian people not only suffer from misery but are also the direct victims of Mr Déby’s government repression. In an area where oil will soon flow, blood continues to be shed. The chadian National Army (TNA), which was involved in the fight against the rebellion of Moïse Ketté, has continued to commit grave human rights violations against the population.

On Thursday August 10, 2000, as priest Nestor Service was coming back from an evangelization mission, he was killed near the town of Pao by members of the regular army. On the same day, Nadji Robtol, the village chief of Bendho and Raphael Mbeurdé, father of eleven children, were murdered by soldiers of the TNA. On September 6, Moïse Nodji Ketté himself was killed in unclear circumstances. Priest Nestor Service, from the protestant church of Ngaramgole, in southern of Chad, tortured and killed by the forces of the regular army.

In addition to these extra judicial executions, Human Rights Organizations’ investigation reports describe cases of arbitrary arrests, torture, pillages and burned down properties.

We urge you, Mr President, to interrupt the payment of the Petroleum Development Project as long as the policy of repression against civil population has not come to an end and those responsible for the crimes committed in this region have not been prosecuted and punished.

We cannot accept that the funds of the World Bank be blindly given to a State which degree of corruption and violence prevents every effort of social and economic development.

The credibility of the World Bank is at stake. The future of its activities now depends on the willingness of the World Bank to send a clear and strong signal to the Chadian authorities.