

Land Grabbing in Mubende-Neumann (article)

Professor Zamora Cabot continues his line of research on the subject of multinational enterprises liability with this article ([click here to download](#)), where he raids into a field of the out-most concern, such as that of land grabbing, over the very significant case *Mubende-Neumann*.

After an introduction, Section I highlights some of the most relevant aspects of the subject matter; at the same time it indicates the working plan. Then, in Section II, the author implements a definition of the land grabbing phenomenon, together with the trends over which an exponential growth has been based. Also, some basic questions such as those of property titles on lands and their surrounding problems, together with the influence of the right to food and the right to land, are developed. This Section concludes by referring to regulatory approaches based on non-committal attitudes when it comes to facing land grabbing, and the special scrutiny it should undergo in connection with countries either submerged or suffering from conflict situations, i.e., weak environments where land grabbing problems may develop into human rights questions.

Section III states the facts and legal consequences of the case *Mubende-Neumann*, a procedure of massive eviction that took place in Uganda in 2001, where the Government, after signing an agreement with a firm of German origin, expelled in a particularly brutal and violent way more than two thousand people from the lands they occupied, and delivered them to a branch of the above-cited corporation. These facts prompted a legal proceeding in Uganda, on the one hand, and another one based on the OECD Guidelines for multinational companies, on the other; both are exposed in the article in a synthetic way. The author ends this Section by setting off the report drawn up by GI-ESCR on this case before the United Nations Human Rights Committee, and the notes addressed by the Committee to Germany (October 2012) in its Concluding Observation nº 16.

Section IV deals with the subject of the so-called “extraterritorial obligations” of the States, explaining their precedents, the main actors implied in their development, their legal framework (the Covenant of Civil and Political Rights

and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as the most outstanding among them). It also addresses the issue of how to conciliate these obligations with extraterritorial laws.

The study ends up in Section V with some concluding reflections, critical remarks addressed to the German authorities performance in the case under consideration and, more generally, in all cases arising out of human rights violations on the part of the German multinational corporations. Still, as a note of hope, the author underlines the increasing number of occasions in which the countries hosting companies and investments are reacting in favour of the affected communities through their institutional framework. As example, the Instance decision issued by a judge of Kampala in the case *Mubende-Neumann* or, just as well very recently, that of the Supreme Court in India, *Comunidad Dongria Kondh, of Orissa*, in face of the mining colossus Vedanta. Two cases in which the fight both affected communities undertook in defence of their rights turned to be decisive, thus constituting a most important pattern and a valuable element for reflection towards the future.