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Sweden's Chance to Take a Stand on Corporate Complicity in International Crimes Supreme Court Should Block Energy Company Executives' Attempt to Evade Justice

Sweden's courts should stop the attempts of energy executives to escape justice for crimes against humanity, The Docket, part of the Clooney Foundation for Justice, said today. Former Chairman and CEO of Swedish energy group Lundin Energy, Ian Lundin and Alex Schneider, face charges of complicity in international crimes committed in Sudan during the country's Civil War.

An opinion filed by Ambassador Stephen Rapp, who previously served as the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Chief of Prosecutions at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, on behalf of The Docket, dismisses the executives' claims that the prosecution should not proceed because their right to fair trial within a 'reasonable time' under the European Convention of Human Rights has been violated.

"This attempt to avoid prosecution should not be tolerated by the courts. Sweden has a responsibility to investigate and prosecute international crimes, bring the perpetrators to justice, and provide remedies for the victims," said Anya Neistat, Legal Director at the Docket. "Sweden has an opportunity to do what many others have failed to achieve so far: bringing to justice business executives complicit in atrocities and giving Sudanese survivors a chance to obtain justice."

Between 1997 and 2003, Sudanese government forces and their allied militias burned villages and destroyed crops to depopulate the areas where companies, including Lundin Energy, then called Lundin Oil, carried out oil exploration projects. Thousands of people were killed, raped, tortured, abducted, and forcibly displaced from their homes. After non-governmental organizations [exposed the crimes](#) - and Lundin Energy's alleged complicity in them - Swedish prosecutors launched an extensive investigation, naming the executives as suspects in November 2016. The prosecutors were getting ready to proceed with the trial this year before the defendants filed their latest claim.

The Clooney Foundation for Justice's expert said in his opinion submitted to the Supreme Court of Sweden that the claim, which has already been dismissed by both district and appeal courts in Sweden, has no legal basis. Previous rulings from the international criminal

tribunals and from the European Court of Human Rights on similar cases show that the seriousness of the allegations and the complexity of the investigation mean the length of the prosecution's investigation has not been unreasonable, the opinion reported. The Supreme Court must also consider Sweden's international legal obligations to investigate, prosecute, punish, and provide effective remedies for victims of gross human rights violations and international crimes such as those alleged in this case.

"Bringing corporate actors to justice for their involvement in human rights violations is difficult and time-consuming, but essential if the victims of these violations are to achieve justice," said Ambassador Stephen Rapp. "Corporations have virtually endless resources to hinder and delay the prosecution and to try to render the survivors powerless. It is critical for the state authorities to stand with the survivors and resist efforts to close this process before its just conclusion. To do anything else would be a betrayal to the people of South Sudan, who have already suffered so much."

The Docket a Clooney Foundation for Justice initiative gathers evidence to trigger prosecutions and civil actions against those involved in international crimes and represents victims in their pursuit of justice.

For more information, please contact the media team at media@cfj.org

For more information on the case: <https://unpaiddebt.org/>

For more information on The Docket: <https://cfj.org/project/the-docket/>

For more information on The Clooney Foundation for Justice: <https://cfj.org/>

**For more information on Ambassador Stephen Rapp:
<https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/people/stephen-rapp>**