

Tribunal to Shame US for Crimes Against Katrina and Rita Survivors

By Talise D. Moorer
Amsterdam News Staff



On the brink of year two since hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck the Gulf Coast region of the United States, more than 300,000 residents, mostly poor and Black, still have been unable to return home, due in large part to the discriminatory rebuilding and public assistance efforts to help them recoup from devastating losses.

For the survivors, August 29, 2007 is a day of reckoning: an unprecedented international tribunal will convene in New Orleans at the Pan American Conference Center to bring charges of racial discrimination and the denial to the right to return, as well as demand that the U.S. government be held accountable for the crimes it perpetrated against the marginalized and oppressed people of the Gulf Coast—people of African descent, indigenous peoples, migrants, and the poor—during and after Hurricane Katrina.

Many Katrina and Rita survivors, along with former Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, New York City Councilmember Charles Barron, the People's Hurricane Relief Fund (PHRF), the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College and the U.S. Human Rights Network, are conjoined in this massive demonstration.

"The international tribunal is necessary to further expose to the world the U.S. crimes and violations of the survivors of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and to obtain justice for the survivors," said Joan P. Gibbs, general counsel for the Center for Law and Social Justice and the co-coordinator of the prosecution team.

Dr. Kwame Kalimara is also co-coordinator of the prosecution team.

Beyond what unfolded before our eyes in mass media during and after the storm, Gibbs told the AmNews that "it is critically important that we not let the world forget that over 200,000 people were dis-

bursed from the Gulf Coast for reasons that have gone unaddressed."

Gibbs said the tribunal will result in one comprehensive review of charges concerning crimes before the storm—repair of the levees and the evacuation plan, for example—and post-storm crimes. A panel of international judges from throughout the African Diaspora will participate. Findings will be filed with the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights; the Inter-American Court and other international bodies.

As indicated on the web, the PHRF and other supporters formally demand that the U.S. government declare the victims of hurricanes Katrina and Rita internally displaced persons (IDPs) and that they be provided with the basic rights and securities that come with this designation, that the U.S. government provide immediate restitution to all Gulf Coast IDPs, regardless of race, income or property-holding status; and that government officers, institutions and agencies responsible for the death of over 2,000 individuals and the numerous human rights violations and crimes committed during and after Hurricanes Katrina be held legally accountable for their actions.

Gibbs, along with eight other attorneys and an international delegation of government officials, scholars and advocates, will bring together hurricane survivors, expert witnesses; human and civil rights prosecutors, and both U.S. and international judges to call into question government practices before, during, and after the storms that led to the disproportionate impact of hurricanes Katrina and Rita on poor African American communities.



For further details on how to support or participate in the international tribunal, call (504) 301-0215.

Yo!, No Low Riders Allowed!

FACTS:
Young men were molested by older and stronger inmates.

They became suicidal because of what happened to them.

Prison officials took away their belts to prevent them from hanging.

That ended up being a symbol that the young man was actually someone's **GIRLFRIEND!!**

This style began in PRISON!

SAGGERS



This is not cool! It's a disgrace!
Sagging is "Not Cool!"
It is **unacceptable** to girls, women and ladies!