

Press release

No state immunity for Nazi war crimes!

Under this motto the AK-Distomo (Hamburg) and the AK Angreifbare Traditionspflege call for activities in The Hague / Netherlands.

From September 12-16, 2011 a public hearing take place at the International Court of Justice in The Hague on a lawsuit filed by Germany against Italy. The Federal Republic of Germany sues Italy to prevent trials from Greek and Italian Nazi victims who want to implement compensation claims against Germany.

The survivors of the massacre of German SS troops in the Greek Distomo, where on June 10 1944 218 people were killed, have already achieved a final ruling of the Areopag (Highest Court of Greece) against the Federal Republic of Germany that they must pay approximately € 28 million plus interest to the plaintiffs. The German Government prevented the enforcement of the sentence in Greece, until in June 2008, the Italian Supreme Court, Court of Cassation in Rome, allowed the enforcement of claims into German state property in Italy. Germany, however, claimed "sovereign immunity". This argument, both the Areopag and the Italian Court of Cassation rejected. The privilege of sovereign immunity does not apply in cases of serious war crimes or human rights violations.

Then the German government in December 2008 raised an action against Italy before the International Court of Justice in The Hague, as a last resort to stop the enforcement of compensation claims. The German government wants to enshrine the principle that the Italian courts did not have jurisdiction for such legal cases. Ultimately, it is also about the more fundamental question of whether states can be held accountable for war crimes or not. Those who are affected by this case are not involved in this process that is conducted only between states. They therefore need the support of an international public.

The Organisers request to dismiss the lawsuit of Germany before the ICJ and demand the immediate compensation of the victims. They invite to come to events of information and protest in the Hague:

Sunday September 11, 2011:

8.00 pm: Information and discussion event at the Autonomous Centre, Wilhelm van Outhoornstraat 17

Monday September 12, 2011:

9.00 am: Manifestation in front of the International Court of Justice, Carnegieplein 2

10.00 am: Start of the hearing before the ICJ

6.30 pm: Presentation of an international report for Amnesty International on the question of Compensation for serious human rights abuses vs. State immunity

The Hague University of Applied Sciences, Johanna Westerdijkplein 75

More information and current dates below: <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/ak-distomo/>

Survivors and representatives of the victims from Greece and Italy will from Sunday, 09/11/11, will be on site and available for interviews.

Contact: e-mail: ak-distomo@nadir.org

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Hamburg, 9/8/11

AK Distomo AK / Angreifbare Traditionspflege

