



BERTHA JUSTICE INITIATIVE



EUROPEAN CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS



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EELC
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CALS
Centre for Applied
Legal Studies

HRLN
Human Rights Law Network

Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights
1300 19th Street, NW
Washington DC 20036
USA

March 26, 2018

Dear Judges of the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award:

We write to wholeheartedly endorse the nomination of Jacqueline Moudeïna, Chadian lawyer and human rights activist, for the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award 2018.

Like Jacqueline, we are members of the Bertha Justice Network, a global network of social justice and movement lawyering organizations supported by Bertha Foundation. We believe that it is Jacqueline's tireless work and exceptional courage and determination to achieve justice for the victims of the Hissène Habré dictatorship in Chad, and to strengthen observance of human rights in Africa, that makes her so deserving of this award.

As the lead lawyer for the survivors of the brutal 1982-90 Habré regime, Jacqueline has dedicated the last twenty years of her life to ensure that those who committed crimes do not go unpunished. As a result of her tenacious efforts, alongside victims' relentless campaigning, a special court in Senegal convicted Hissène Habré of crimes against humanity, war crimes and torture, including rape and sexual slavery, in May 2016. An appeals court confirmed the verdict in April 2017 and ordered Habré to pay \$153 million in victim compensation through a Trust Fund. Also a result of Jacqueline's work, twenty Habré-era security agents were convicted of murder and torture and ordered to pay reparations in a Chadian court in 2015.

The Hissène Habré trial was a landmark case, as it was the first time that a head of state was prosecuted for human rights crimes in the courts of another country. Jacqueline played an invaluable role in creating the political conditions to bring the former dictator to justice in Africa, with the support of the African Union, which has consequences for the observance of human rights in Africa.



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Jacqueline was also instrumental in enabling the survivors of sexual violence, who were hesitant to share their experiences due to cultural norms in Chad, to not only come forward with their stories, but to testify in court. By giving the survivors the courage and confidence to break their silence, Jacqueline enabled sexual crimes to be part of the conviction, though this charge was not included in the indictment.

Jacqueline's stance against the former dictatorship has come at grave personal risk to herself. She has received countless death threats and has survived multiple assassination attempts, including a 2001 grenade attack by a former Habré aide that left shrapnel in her leg and continues to affect her health today.

To us, no candidate is more deserving of the Robert F. Kennedy Award. Not only would Jacqueline's selection recognize her remarkable achievements as a human rights defender, but it would also help bring global attention to her ongoing, painstaking work to verify the thousands of victims of the regime and seek reparations through the Trust Fund, which would complete this long struggle for justice.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bertha Justice Initiative, Bertha Foundation
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