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# Hughes Hubbard & Reed

## HHR Secures Grant of Asylum in Difficult Pro Bono Case

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Hughes Hubbard recently secured a grant of asylum for pro bono client Prosper Walter Noupayo, a Cameroon refugee who had come to the United States to escape persecution for his political beliefs.

In Cameroon, Mr. Noupayo had been subjected to repeated and brutal detentions, beatings and torture by government security forces for his participation in a political party opposed to the dictatorial regime of Cameroon's president, Paul Biya. The torture resulted in permanent scarring, severe physical injuries, and psychological trauma which ultimately led to a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder.

To save his life, Mr. Noupayo was forced to flee Cameroon, leaving behind a wife and two children. Using a falsified passport, Mr. Noupayo escaped to the United States, where he claimed asylum on the basis of his political persecution.

Hughes Hubbard began representing Mr. Noupayo in January 2011, after Mr. Noupayo had already filed a deficient asylum application. In addition to the deficiency of Mr. Noupayo's application, the team faced several difficulties in making Mr. Noupayo's case. Chief among these was proving Mr. Noupayo's identity in the face of a presumption that his true identity was as listed in the false passport he had used to enter the United States.

The Hughes Hubbard team compiled and submitted numerous documents in support of Mr. Noupayo's case, including a memorandum of law and an affidavit from an expert in Cameroonian human rights issues. The HHR lawyers also represented Mr. Noupayo at a grueling three-hour interview with an asylum officer.

On July 20, 2011, Mr. Noupayo received notice that he had been granted asylum. Hughes Hubbard is now assisting him in gaining derivative asylum status for his wife and two children. Fara Tabatabai, Jonathan Misk and Regina Kaley represent Mr. Noupayo, with supervision from Sarah Cave.

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**Fara Tabatabai**