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**CHAD BECOMES THE 104 STATE PARTY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT:
THE ICC NOW HAS TERRITORIAL AND PERSONAL JURISDICTION OVER CRIMES COMMITTED IN WESTERN DARFUR**

New York, November 7, 2006 – The Republic of Chad ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on November 1, 2006 according to information published by the United Nations Treaty Office website. Therefore, 104 States, including the newly independent State of Montenegro (which succeeded in the treaty obligations of Serbia Montenegro) have joined the new system of international criminal justice provided for in the Rome Statute of the ICC that entered into force on 1 July 2002.

Chad is the 19th member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the 29th African nation to join the ICC. This means not only that Africa is the best represented region within the ICC system, but also that a large number of countries from the Muslim world endorse the universal vocation of the ICC as the only permanent international mechanism to provide redress to victims of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The President of Parliamentarians for Global Action, **Sen. Alain Destexhe** (Belgium), underscored the impact of the ratification of Chad on the Darfur situation: “Now the Court can exercise fully its jurisdiction in Darfur, whether in eastern Darfur under UN Security Council resolution 1593 (2005) or western Darfur through the territorial and personal jurisdiction extended to the Court by Chad via this ratification. It is now time for the international community to fully support the effort of ending conflict and impunity in Darfur as we shall not sit powerlessly in the face of crimes against humanity and genocide”, Sen. Destexhe, also a former Executive Director of Médecines sans Frontières, stated today.

The stalemate of the UN Security Council in finding support to implement its resolution 1706 (2006) of 31 August 2006 is worrisome: while the Darfur conflict is on-going, civilians are repeatedly victimized and the Sudanese Government has managed to halt the efforts of the Security Council in sending a robust peace-keeping operation to protect defenseless civilians. This ratification by Chad nevertheless demonstrates that there still exist many avenues to strengthen the Court and consolidate the cooperation needed not only to punish crimes committed in Darfur, but also to prevent more atrocities.

Former PGA Member and former Chair of the Health Committee of the Chadian Parliament, **Ms. Marie Nanalbaye Koumandial**, denounced the continued atrocities against women committed on both sides of the Sudan-Chad border over the past year: “It is time to stop rape and other massive crimes against women, and bring to justice the perpetrators”. Madame Koumandial expressed her appreciation for the parliamentarians of Chad who voted almost unanimously the ratification of the ICC Statute in July 2006 and added: “To make ourselves useful to the international community and the victims of terrible crimes, it is now time for the Chadian legislature to approve laws to fully cooperate with the ICC and to make the crimes of the Rome Statute part of the national legislation of Chad”.

Sen. Raynell Andreychuk (Canada), Convenor of the PGA International Law and Human Rights Programme, emphasized the mandate of the ICC in addressing gender-justice: “the women of Darfur are entitled to protection, access to justice and reparations. The fact that Chad joins the Court is a re-affirmation of the universal human rights of women, which are the most vulnerable and neglected victims in this on-going conflict” Sen. Andreychuk said.

Parliamentarians for Global Action will hold its “*IV Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians for the ICC and the Rule of Law*” in Tokyo, Japan from 4-5 December 2006. Gender justice and the fight against violence and impunity in Darfur will be a central component in these deliberations in which will participate more than 150 parliamentarians from all regions of the world.

About PGA

Parliamentarians for Global Action is a network of more than 1300 parliamentarians from 113 countries worldwide that in the past ten years has worked in favor of the establishment of a permanent international criminal court. PGA members have lead, promoted and authored ratification and implementation initiatives of the Rome Statute in 59 out of the 104 State Parties of the ICC, including some of the latest States that joined the ICC - Kenya, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico in 2005, and The Comoros in 2006. PGA is a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for the ICC. PGA receives the support of the European Commission, European Union, and from the Governments of Belgium, The Netherlands, and Switzerland, as well as core support from Denmark and Sweden.

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