



Parliamentarians for Global Action
Acción Mundial de Parlamentarios
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires

PGA's Statement - For Immediate Release

International Law and Human Rights Programme

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IRAQ: PGA CALLS ON IRAQ TO RATIFY THE ROME STATUTE OF THE ICC

New York/The Hague, 20 August 2014: PGA Members from 139 countries worldwide, under the leadership of PGA President Ross Robertson (Assistant Speaker of the Parliament of New Zealand), urge the international community to increase its humanitarian assistance in Iraq and call for the cessation of inhumane acts against the civilian population and, in particular, religious and ethnic minority groups in the state of Iraq, parts of which are now under the control of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Over the past two months, ISIS has carried out deadly attacks in Iraq and it continues to do so. These atrocities cannot go unpunished and Iraq should ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and, at the same time, accept its ad hoc jurisdiction under art. 12.3 of the Rome Statute for the situation of ISIS and the ongoing crisis that has cost the lives of an approximate number of 2000 people since June 2014, enslaved about 300 of Yazidi women and internally displaced thousands of ethnic-minority Yazidis who have been fleeing to Iraq's Kurdish region.

On August 15th, after the Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki had stepped down from his position in the face of enhancing pressure from his country's Shiite leadership and the ongoing, devastating military campaign, the United Nations Security Council, issued Resolution 2170, which condemns the "indiscriminate killing and deliberate targeting of civilians, numerous atrocities, mass executions and extrajudicial killings, including of soldiers, persecution of individuals and entire communities on the basis of their religion or belief, kidnapping of civilians, forced displacement of members of minority groups, killing and maiming of children, recruitment and use of children, rape and other forms of sexual violence, arbitrary detention, attacks on schools and hospitals, destruction of cultural and religious sites and obstructing the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to education, (...) especially in Tamim, Salaheddine and Niniveh Provinces."

Pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy, the widespread or systematic attacks directed against any civilian populations because of their ethnic or political background, religion or belief may constitute a crime against humanity and certain acts if committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such, may constitute genocide. The perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to justice.

PGA, a parliamentary network with over 1100 Members, encourages the current deputy speaker of the Iraqi parliament, Haider al-Abadi, who is in charge of forming a new government within the next month, to call on the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Ms. Fatou Bensouda for immediate help to stop the sectarian violence and ethnic cleansing in Iraq that has been going on since June.

PGA also encourages the European Union and other key players in the international community to promote these steps by Iraq, including transmission of a ratification bill of the Rome Statute to parliament for consideration and adoption of ratification. The ICC ratification by Iraq might have a deterrent effect on certain groups that have supported ISIS and help to curb the widespread and systematic attacks against civilians and the genocide based on religious belief and ethnicity.

The time to act is now.

About PGA

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is the largest transnational network of Members of Parliaments from all regions of the world who, in their individual capacity, support the effective operation of the ICC and domestic jurisdictions to end impunity. The PGA network is assisted by a small secretariat that facilitates the cooperation and exchange by member MPs to achieve these goals and provides technical cooperation on legal advice and advocacy.

Members of PGA have contributed to 76 of the 122 ratifications of, or accession to the Rome Statute to date. PGA is a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for the ICC. The PGA Campaign for the Universality and Effectiveness of the Rome Statute system receives support from:

***THE EUROPEAN UNION** (EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS)*



*THE GOVERNMENTS OF **THE NETHERLANDS, SWITZERLAND, ESTONIA, LIECHTENSTEIN** AND*



*PGA RECEIVES CORE SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENTS OF **SWEDEN** AND **DENMARK**.
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AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE HAGUE.*

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