



Parliamentarians for Global Action  
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Action Mondiale des Parlementaires  
برلمانيون من أجل التحرك العالمي

**PGA Press Release – For Immediate Release**

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**PGA congratulates the unanimous vote for the implementing legislation of the  
Rome Statute of the ICC in DRC**

*The Hague/New York/Kinshasa, 4 June 2015:* On 2 June the Chamber of Deputies of the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (DRC) voted unanimously for the adoption of the Law to Implement the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the domestic legal order. Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) applauds and expresses its support for this development as the full implementation of the Rome Statute into the national legal system is needed to promote the fight against impunity and access to justice for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

This result has been achieved thanks to the leadership and consistent contribution of PGA Members from all major political parties in the Democratic Republic of Congo, who are now mobilized to ensure the swift adoption of this Bill in the Senate, which should be expected to take a decision in a rapid manner after the larger (and more recently-elected) membership of the Chamber expressed such a clear and unequivocal view through a unanimous vote.

This unanimous vote is clear evidence of the principled commitment of Congolese Legislators to put an end to impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the International Community as a whole, listed in Article 5 of the Rome Statute.

Former PGA Members and MPs Prof. Nyabirungu and Adv. Mutumbe had tabled this draft legislation in 2008 in the first democratically-elected Parliament of the DRC, and another PGA Member, Prof. Balamage MP, re-tabled it in the second Parliament (the current one) in September 2012.

The PGA DRC National Group organized and hosted many activities such as a [Great Lakes Regional Parliamentary Conference](#), seminars, meetings, and training sessions for the Plenary and the relevant Committees of Parliament in [2009](#) (March 27-28), [2010](#) (October 10-13), [2011](#) (May 31), [2012](#) (November 1), [2013](#) (June 12-13) and [2014](#) (17 July), including technical assistance to the relevant Parliamentary Committee sessions that decided to transform the Bill into four legislative initiatives aimed at amending the Criminal Code and 3 Organic Laws on procedural matters and jurisdiction. Notwithstanding lack of progress and obstacles, the PGA DRC National Group remained committed in its endeavor to generate political will in support of the fight against impunity and the empowerment of civilian jurisdictions, calling their national authorities and fellow parliamentarians to take the relevant measures to close the impunity gap, and finally bring about this significant result.

Having ratified the Rome Statute in 2002, DRC has a long history of support to the Rome Statute system, since it was one of the first 60 States Parties that contributed to the entry into force of the Rome Statute on 1 July 2002. PGA has been fully supportive of these fundamental initiatives undertaken by the DRC for the fight against impunity through technical assistance and cooperation since 2007.

The importance of this development lies in the fact that it is aimed at giving full effect to the principle of complementarity. National civilian jurisdictions shall be able to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate on the most serious crimes of international concern in DRC. This legislation will empower civilian courts to address such crimes, which had until now only been addressed by military courts that applied the Rome Statute as a “self-executing” treaty on the basis of a domestic constitutional norm permitting it. Moreover, the cooperation provisions of the legislation will allow to reinforce the cooperation between the ICC and the DRC and consolidate the ad hoc arrangement that currently exists in the relationship between the ICC and the Congolese State. Last, but not least, through this process the entire judicial system of the DRC is strengthened as certain general principle of international criminal law, including the principle of individual criminal responsibility and its corollaries, are incorporated in Article 1 and other provisions of the DRC Penal Code.

PGA, on behalf of its more than 1100 members from all regions of the world, will continue to promote these processes and deliberations, which represent progress towards the creation of a “rules based international legal order and for a more equitable, safe and democratic world”.

**Statement by Hon. Dieudonné Upira Sunguma, Chair of PGA National Group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):** *“As a Member of Parliament, it is a great honor to celebrate the unanimous vote by the Chamber of Deputies of the DRC for the adoption of the Law to Implement the Rome Statute of the ICC in the domestic legal order by the National Assembly of DRC. This step marks an important achievement in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern in DRC. We are now strategizing to ensure a quick adoption by the Senate where our PGA Members have repeatedly pledged to support this bill in order to fulfill our obligations as a State Party to the Rome Statute and as a way to prevent reoccurrence of violence in DRC’s territory.”*

**Statement by Sen. Alain Destexhe PGA Member (Belgium), Co-Convenor of the International law and Human Rights Programme:** *“After having followed this process for many years, I sincerely congratulate the PGA National Group in the DRC for its relentless efforts and mobilisation towards the adoption of a comprehensive legislation implementing the Rome Statute. Adopting such legislation will enable to create the necessary conditions for effective national investigations and prosecutions of serious international crimes committed in the DRC to share the burden with the ICC in closing the impunity gap, giving thus full effect to the principle of complementarity contained in the Rome Statute.”*

## About PGA

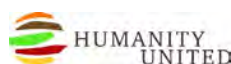
Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is the largest transnational network of Members of Parliaments from all regions of the world who, in their individual capacity, support the effective operation of the ICC and domestic jurisdictions to end impunity. The PGA network is assisted by a small secretariat 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 123 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)*



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



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