

Minister, Members of Parliament, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the President of Parliamentarians for Global Action, Hon. Margareta Cederfelt, it is a **great** honour for me to be here with you today, representing the Secretariat of our organization.

At the outset, **please** allow me just a few moments to sincerely thank our hosts for this Workshop, **the PGA National Group from the Parliament of Tanzania** and in particular **Hon. Jasson Rweikiza, MP – the Chair of the Group.**

It takes **many** people to organize an event of this kind and your help has been – as always – **essential.**

I'd like also to take this opportunity **to thank all of you** who have taken the time to come to Dar-es-Salaam **from more than 20 different countries** and share with your colleagues and

counterparts **your own thoughts and perspectives** on the theme of this Workshop.

It is my **sincere** hope that you will come away from your time here motivated to take action to make the world **a much safer** place.

I would like also to extend our thanks **and deep appreciation** to the **Government of Canada** for supporting our Campaign Promoting Universality and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

Without it, our Members would **never** have been able to achieve the important results that they have to date.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is wonderful to see so many **familiar faces** here today, Members of PGA with whom we in the PGA Secretariat have had the privilege of developing **close professional working relationships** down through the years.

Seeing a number of **past** PGA Members with us, **from Tanzania and beyond**, is **also** a great tribute to our work.

We are very grateful for **your continued commitment to PGA.**

**Most of all, however, I am glad to see so many that are new to PGA.**

I hope that this will be **just the first of many positive experiences that you have with our organization.**

PGA was founded 40 years ago by a number of Members of Parliament from different countries, **convinced of the need for meaningful global parliamentary advocacy and action**, leading to **clear and well defined** results.

It was at **the height** of the Cold War, and an early area of work of the organization was advocating for a ban on nuclear weapon testing.

**Subsequently** PGA developed a Project which contributed to the adoption and entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

With the **fading** of the Cold War in the 1990s and onwards, the Members of PGA recognized they could achieve a great deal **in many other areas of international concern**.

**Today**, PGA is made up **over 1,300 Members of Parliament in just over 140 countries worldwide**, advocating for upholding of basic human rights, the rule of law, justice and accountability, gender equality and non-discrimination as well as the abolition of the death penalty

We have **3** Programmes and **8** Campaigns.

**One** of our Campaigns is Promoting the Universality and Implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention as well as UN Security Council Resolution 1540 of 2004.

**The other** is our parallel Campaign Addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In recent years, as many of us know, **alarming evidence** has emerged that terrorists are seeking to get their hands on and use **not only conventional arms** – small arms and light weapons – **but also Weapons of Mass Destruction**, including Biological Weapons. **In fact, it has already happened** – we have seen thwarted Biological weapon attacks already this year in Germany and France and discoveries of plots have also emerged here in Africa that Boko Haram, ISIS and Al Shabab are now **actively looking** into how they can use these terrible weapons.

So what can **you** as Legislators, prominent Government officials and Ambassadors do to seek to address this threat?

In the last 3 years, PGA Members in **a number** of countries, including Liberia, Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, as well as in Nepal and Samoa, **have all taken important steps which have led to the ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention.**

Although the treaty is 46 years old, **there are still 17 countries** worldwide that are not yet States Parties.

The BWC is **no different** to other international conventions.

In order for it to be fully effective, it is important for **all** countries to ratify it.

It is **especially encouraging** to hear, therefore, that the Government of Tanzania **and** the Government of Central African Republic, as a result, **in part**, of the advocacy efforts of PGA Members, are now close to completing their respective ratification processes of the BWC.

We hope, therefore, that South Sudan, Chad, Somalia, Comoros, Djibouti, and Namibia **may soon also follow down this path** and that our discussions here in the next two days can help **in some small way** in this process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very encouraged to see **so many Women Members of Parliament participating in our Workshop here today.**

It is an unfortunate reality – **and for too long** – that women legislators have **not** been allowed to make the sort of decisive contributions that they **can – and must** – make in the sphere of national, regional and international security.

But this is slowly changing.

**Persuasive** research and studies have revealed, **time and time again**, that women are **disproportionately** impacted by the horrors of conflict and insecurity

This is **also** reflected in the 2018 Report of the UN Secretary General on Gender Disarmament and Arms Control.



UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security **also** comes to mind.

In PGA, we are **very proud** of our Member **Hon. Beatrice Epaye, Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the National Assembly of Central African Republic** who is with us here **today**.

In spite of many other, **almost overwhelming challenges** facing her country and government at the present time – **and just** in the past 10 months, Hon. Beatrice Epaye has persuaded the Foreign Minister of the Central African Republic to transmit the BWC to the National Assembly, and then subsequently ensured that it received **prompt** parliamentary approval.

The Government of the Central African Republic **has now signed** its Instrument of Ratification of the BWC a few months ago and we understand that it will **very soon** be deposited with one of the BWC Depository States.

This is a remarkable achievement.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe we **all** understand that ratification of a treaty, of any treaty, while a vital step – is **not** the end of the story.

It must also be **implemented and enforced**.

**Significant resources and technical assistance** from the United Nations, regional organizations, national governments and organizations such as PGA are available for this purpose.

And in ratifying and implementing the BWC, there can also be very positive, indirect **side effects – and benefits - as well**.

Technical advise, expertise and equipment that may have been provided to quickly identify deadly viruses **deliberately** released can also be used in the context of a **natural** outbreak of diseases – and for the **same** reason – to rapidly identify which

virus or bacteria is 'on the loose' so that much quicker remedial action can be taken than would otherwise have been possible.

This is **not** merely a theoretical observation.

As we speak, the shadow of Ebola has **returned** to Central and Eastern Africa again.

I have also read press reports of the **extensive** steps being taken by the Government of Tanzania to keep this devastating threat from permeating national borders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, let me touch briefly on the **second** theme of our Workshop.

UN Security Council Resolution 1540 was adopted in 2004. This is a UN Security Council Resolution, **not** a treaty, but because it was adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it is **legally binding** on all UN Member States.

This Resolution imposes obligations on **all** UN Member States to take steps to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

**Many** of your countries have already taken important steps and reported them to the UN Security Council 1540 Committee.

**Some** of your countries have yet to take this step.

In the folders we have prepared for you, you will find **different** documents which we hope you will find helpful.

One is a **chart** which highlights the steps each of your countries has taken, **or is yet to take**, relating to both the BWC and UNSCR 1540.

We hope this chart may help to **guide your efforts** when you return home.

I would **also** like to draw your attention **in particular** to the fact that the **central** role of Legislators in implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 was **expressly recognized** in UN Security Council Resolution 2325 **that was adopted less than 2 years ago in December 2016.**

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that this presentation today has given you a better sense of **the object, purpose and goals** of our Workshop – and how you can all make **decisive** contributions **to achieve these goals**.

We in PGA look forward to remaining in contact with you in this vital task and assisting – **in any way that we can**.

Thank you.