

Workshop on the Fight Against Impunity for Mass Atrocities under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and Promotion of the Rule of Law

9 April 2021

14:00 – 15:45 (Abuja time) / 15:00 – 16:45 (The Hague time)

Concept Note

As stated by the former ICC President, Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, during the 55th Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 2019: “West Africa has long been a strong bastion of support for the ICC and international justice”. Judge Eboe-Osuji then underscored the fact that the ICC relied on the cooperation of States and that, above all, accountability and justice had to be sought at the national level. Through their legislative, representative, and oversight prerogatives, Parliamentarians can play an essential role in the fight against impunity for mass atrocities, namely genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression, the prevention such crimes, the development of effective accountability mechanisms at the national level, and the promotion of international cooperation.

As a part of its International Law and Human Rights Programme, PGA organises regional parliamentary workshops, briefings, and consultations on the Rome Statute of the ICC. In July 2019, PGA organised a 2-day *Working Group in the Fight Against Impunity in Africa*, where more than 40 participants representing 15 different African States had the opportunity to explore and exchange on accountability mechanisms. This year, PGA and its National Group in Nigeria chaired by Hon. Abdulrazak Namdas, has decided to focus on the West African region and organise, under the auspices of the National Assembly of Nigeria, a *Workshop on the Fight Against Impunity for Mass Atrocities under the Rome Statute of the ICC and promotion of the Rule of Law*. This meeting aims at fostering a fruitful peer-to-peer exchange between legislators on accountability for international crimes. Exceptionally, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the workshop will be a hybrid event, where participants will have the opportunity to attend in person at the National Assembly Complex in Abuja (Nigeria) and online via the Zoom platform.

During the event, legislators will discuss challenges, successes, and the work that has been undertaken in their countries to ensure the investigation and prosecution of international crimes. It will also be the occasion for ECOWAS Parliament Members to reflect on international justice issues in the region prior to their First Ordinary Meeting usually scheduled in May. Finally, relevant cases before the ICC, including the closing of preliminary examination into Nigeria and decision of the Office of the Prosecutor to open an investigation will be addressed, shedding light on the importance of cooperating with the Court.

Agenda

- 14:00 – 14:10** Welcoming Remarks by **Hon. Abdulrazak Namdas**, Chair, PGA Nigeria National Group
Opening Remarks by **Hon. Olufemi Hakeem Gbajabiamila**, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nigeria
- 14:10 – 14:20** Presentation of the context: impunity for serious violation of human rights and international crimes in West Africa
Ms. Horejah Bala-Gaye, Trial Lawyer, Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC
- 14:20 – 14:35** Accountability for international crimes: why is it important?
Dr. Dino Kritsiotis, Professor of Public International Law, Head of the Int. Humanitarian Law Unit, Nottingham Int. Law & Security Centre, University of Nottingham
- 14:35 – 14:50** The ICC and Africa: Recent Developments
Mr. Amady Ba, *Hors hiérarchie* Senegalese judge on secondment as Head of the International Cooperation Unit, Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC; Former Judge at the Court of Cassation of Senegal, Former Director of the regional judicial training centre
- Brief updates on the cases of Gbagbo and Blé Goudé (Côte d’Ivoire) and Al-Hassan (Mali) / Brief update on the completion of the Preliminary Examination of the Office of the Prosecutor of the situation in Nigeria
 - The importance of State cooperation for the investigation and prosecution of international crimes
- 14:50 – 15:00** Accountability for mass atrocities through the implementation of the Rome Statute in national legislation: the example of the Gambia
Hon. Fatoumatta Njai, Member of the National Assembly of the Gambia, Member of the Standing Committee on Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs; Member of the ECOWAS Parliament; *PGA member*.
- Presentation and updates on the International Crimes Bill and the Prevention and Prohibition of Torture Bill.
- 15:00 – 15:10** Commentary on the importance of the gender perspective in the Rome Statute and the ICC jurisprudence
Ms. Priyadarshini Narayanan, Appeals Counsel, Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court
- 15:10- 15:20** Universality of the Rome Statute and all its Amendments: Launch the ratification process in Guinea Bissau
Dep. Joao Bernardo Vieira, MP (Guinea Bissau), Foreign Affairs Committee; *PGA Member*
- 15:20 – 15:30** The Role of Parliamentarians in strengthening the Rule of Law
Ms. Frederika Schweighoferova, Senior Legal Officer, PGA ILHR
- 15:30 – 15:40** *Exchanges between the participants on obstacles and progress (15 minutes)*
Brief commentary on the exchanges of views and relevant questions by Dr. David Donat-Cattin, Secretary-General, PGA

15:40 – 15:45 Closing remarks by Hon. Benjamin Mzondu, Member of the House of Representatives of Nigeria; *PGA Member*

Moderator of the event: Hon. Abdulrazak Namdas, Member of the House of Representatives of Nigeria; Chair, PGA Nigeria National Group

End of the workshop

List of Invited Participants

Parliamentarians (*countries by alphabetical order*)

Benin [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Issa Salifou, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Burkina Faso [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Nabie Nimayé, PGA Member and ECOWAS Parliament Member

Cabo Verde [*one or more of the following MPs, depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Orlando Pereira Dias, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Dep. Carlos Alberto Delgado, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Dep. Filomena Mendes Goncalves, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Côte d'Ivoire [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Yah Touré, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Dep. Mamadou Sako, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Ghana

Hon. Sylvester Matthew Tetteh, PGA Member

Guinea [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Alpha Souleymane Bah, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Guinea-Bissau [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Joao Bernardo Vieira, PGA Member

Dep. Gabriela Alfredo Fernandes, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Liberia

Sen. Stephen J. H. Zargo, PGA Member and ECOWAS Parliament Member

Niger [*depending on proficiency in English*]

Dep. Nassirou Halidou, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Nigeria

Hon. Abdulrazak Sa'ad Namdas, Chair of the PGA National Group

Hon. Zainab Gimba, Vice Chair of the PGA National Group

Hon. Olufemi Hakeem Gbajabiamila, Speaker of the House of Representatives

Sen. Francis Alimikhena, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Sen. Abdullahi Sankara Danladi, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Sen. Mohammed Ali Ndume, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Sen. Emmanuel Orke-Jev, ECOWAS Parliament Member
Sen. Ike Ekweremadu, PGA Member
Hon. Michael Umeoji, ECOWAS Parliament Member
Hon. Adebayo Balogun, ECOWAS Parliament Member
Hon. Nasiru Gabasawa, ECOWAS Parliament Member
Hon. Nasiru Sani, PGA member
Rt. Hon. Isyaku Ali Danja, PGA member
Hon. Salisu Ibrahim Mohammed, PGA member
Hon. Sunusi Usman Bataiya, PGA member
Hon. Nuhu Abdullahi Achika, former PGA member
Hon. Kabiru Alhassan Rurum, PGA member
Hon. Babangida Alasan Abdallah, PGA member
Hon. Bamidele David Oleyelogun, PGA member
Hon. Ifeanyi Ibezi, former PGA member
Dr. Ossai Nicholas Ossai, PGA member
Hon. Babatunde Olatunji, former PGA Member
Hon. Lynda Ikpeazu, MP, PGA Member
Hon. Oluga Taiwo, MP, PGA Member
Hon. Sada Soli, MP, PGA Member
Hon. Zakariya'u Muhammed, PGA Member
Hon Benjamin Mzonde, PGA Member
Hon. Abubakar Ahmad, MP, PGA Member
Hon. Abdulsalam Gambo, MP, PGA Member
Hon. Shehu Balarabe, PGA Member
Hon. Abass Adigun, PGA Member
Hon. Gaza Gbefwi, PGA Member

Senegal *[depending on proficiency in English]*

Dep. Abdoulaye Vilane, ECOWAS Parliament Member

Sierra Leone

Hon. Sidie Mohamed Tunis, Speaker of the ECOWAS Parliament
Hon. Chernor Maju Bah, PGA Member and ECOWAS Parliament Member
Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay, PGA Member and ECOWAS Parliament Member

The Gambia

Dep. Fatoumatta Njai, PGA Member and ECOWAS Parliament Member

Togo *[depending on proficiency in English]*

Hon. Raymonde Lawson, PGA member
Hon. Senanu Alipui, PGA Member

International Criminal Court Representatives, Diplomatic Representatives and Academia

Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, ICC (former ICC President)

Dr. Susi Barboza, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guinea Bissau; Former PGA Board Member

Mr. Amady Ba, Hors hiérarchie Senegalese judge on secondment as Head of the International Cooperation Unit, Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC; Former Judge at the Court of Cassation of Senegal, Former Director of the regional judicial training centre, CFJ

Ms. Antônia Pereira de Sousa, ICC Focal Point for Gender Equality, External Relations and Cooperation Officer, Registry - International Criminal Court

Ms. Horejah Bala-Gaye, Trial Lawyer, Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court

Mr. Ketil Karlsen, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to Nigeria and ECOWAS

Mr. Dino Kritsiotis, Visiting Professor, Oxford University; Professor of Public International Law, University of Nottingham, Head of the International Humanitarian Law Unit, Nottingham International Law and Security Centre, University of Nottingham

Ms. Priyadarshini Narayanan, Appeals Counsel, Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court

PGA staff

Dr. David Donat-Cattin, Secretary-General, PGA; Adjunct Professor (International Law), Center for Global Affairs, New York University (NYU)

Ms. Frederika Schweighoferova, Senior Legal Officer, Int. Law and Human Rights Programme, PGA

Ms. Melissa Verpile, Senior Legal Officer, International Law and Human Rights Programme, PGA

About Parliamentarians for Global Actions

Vision

Contribute to the creation of a rules-based international order for a more equitable, safe and democratic world.

Mission

Inform and mobilize parliamentarians in all regions of the world to advocate for human rights and the Rule of Law, democracy, human security, inclusion, and gender equality.

Strategy

Through a peer-to-peer methodology, country-by-country strategy, and the convening of national and regional parliamentary workshops, PGA seeks to educate, sensitize, build technical and legal capacity, and strengthen the political will of parliamentarians to take concrete initiatives and legislative actions to achieve results on PGA's campaign objectives.

For more information on the Programme please contact Melissa Verpile – melissa.verpile@pgaction.org and/or Frederika Schweighoferova – schweighoferova@pgaction.org

PGA'S CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC) SYSTEM RECEIVES THE SUPPORT OF THE



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And the governments of The Netherlands, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein