



Parliamentarians for Global Action
Parlamentarios para la Acción Global
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires
برلمانيون من أجل التحرك العالمي

Contact:

Kinshasa
Mr. Eloi Urwodhi Uciba
Consultant
Eloi.urwodhi@pgaction.org
Tel. +

The Hague
Ms. Marion Chahuneau
Legal Officer
marion.chahuneau@pgaction.org
Tel. +31.70.360.4433

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PGA Members Call on the International Criminal Court to Bring the Ntaganda Case to Ituri

Members of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) call on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to allow the closing statements in the Ntaganda trial to be held in Bunia, in the Ituri province.

“As a representative of the people of Ituri, I cannot underline strongly enough how important it would be for all of those who were and continue to be affected by the ‘Second Congolese War’ to see for themselves justice being done. Some of them have been able to follow the developments of the various cases from afar but for a lot of my constituents, the idea of accountability for the crimes they have suffered remains a blurry concept. Witnessing it happen would make this tangible and I believe holds a great potential for healing and prevention” declared Hon. Dieudonné Upira Sungumi, Member of the National Assembly of DRC and Member of PGA’s Executive Committee.

Members of PGA’s National Group in the DRC concur that such a step would be very important and symbolic not only for a region that has seen many crimes and humanitarian crisis, but the whole country. They underline that in the current context of instability and gross breaches to the legal and institutional framework, the physical presence of the ICC in DRC would be a much needed reminder that impunity can no longer be, and thus have a deterrent effect against renewed waves of violence that are primarily victimizing civilian populations.

Mr. Bosco Ntaganda stands accused of 13 counts of war crimes and 5 counts of crimes against humanity, alleged to have been committed in Ituri in 2002 and 2003, at the end of the Second Congo War. He surrendered himself voluntarily to the Court in 2013, 6 years after an arrest warrant was issued against him, at a time in which the networks of protection that allowed to remain a fugitive-at-large ceased to operate in his benefit. Trial Chamber VI began hearing arguments in 2015, and is now set to hold the closing statements before issuing its verdict. Judges are also considering whether the Chamber should sit *in situ*, in Bunia, DRC, for those hearings. More than 2,000 victims have so far been granted the right to participate in the proceedings: they are mostly located in the Eastern Province of the DRC.

In situ proceedings have been considered by the ICC in other cases, but Judges have so far always decided against it, essentially for security reasons backed by budgetary restraints. Holding the closing statements of the Ntaganda trial in Bunia would thus be an important “first” for the Court, all the more symbolic that the situation in DRC was the first to be opened.

About PGA

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is the largest transnational network of members of parliament from all regions of the world that, in their personal capacity, support the effective functioning of the ICC and national courts to end impunity for crimes of international law and to promote human rights and the Rule of Law. The PGA network is assisted by a Secretariat to facilitate cooperation between member-parliamentarians with the view of realizing the vision of the Organization, namely “*to contribute to the creation of a Rules-Based International Order for a more equitable, safe, and democratic world*”. The Secretariat also provides technical assistance, and policy and legal advice to Members.

As of today, PGA has contributed to 77 out of the 123 ratifications or accessions to the Rome Statute and more to 36 implementing legislation processes.

The PGA ICC Campaign receives the support of:

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