



Parliamentarians for Global Action

PRESS RELEASE

Parliamentarians from across Asia and the World meet in The Philippines to consider regulation of Small Arms and Light Weapons and a Proposed Arms Trade Treaty

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Peter Barcroft
Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)
Tel: 1 212-687-7755, ext. 103
Fax: 1 212-687-8409
Email: peter.barcroft@pgaction.org
Website: www.pgaction.org

New York & Manila, February 6, 2007—Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), a dynamic network of progressive global legislators, will host an Asian Parliamentary Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SA/LW) and the Proposed Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in Manila, the Philippines, from February 6-7, 2007. The Workshop is being organized in collaboration with the House of Representatives of the Congress of The Philippines and in active cooperation with the Philippine Action Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PhilANSA).

The main objective of this Parliamentary Workshop, the third in a series of Workshops organized by PGA on this issue, will be to sensitize Parliamentarians from the Asian region and certain other countries to the need for improvement on controls on Small Arms and Light Weapons transfers and to better regulate trade and export in such arms generally, given that unchecked or inadequately regulated trade in illicit small arms and light weapons can cause and prolong conflict in different regions of the world, facilitate terrorism by allowing terrorists easier access to arms and can also hinder and/or delay sustainable development. In addition, and for the same reasons, this Workshop will seek to build greater awareness among Parliamentarians in the region surrounding the proposed Arms Trade Treaty currently under consideration at the United Nations and identify concrete steps that MPs can take in support of this important initiative.

Participants attending this PGA Asian Parliamentary Workshop include legislators from Japan, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Cambodia, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Belgium and Sierra Leone with the Opening Remarks to be delivered by Mr. Jose de Venecia, Jr., Speaker of House of Representatives (Philippines). In addition to the presence of a Senior Official from the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations in New York, a number of Specialized Agencies of the United Nations will also participate, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The Philippines Action Network for Small Arms (PhilANSA), which has provided invaluable assistance in the organization of this event, will also participate fully during the formal proceedings of the Workshop itself.

Recognition of the important role that Parliamentarians can play in this area was very apparent at the PGA Regional Seminar on this same topic held in Dakar, Senegal at the end of February 2006 at which PGA was the principal organizer together with several other parliamentary organizations, the UK Government, UNDP, UNOWA and the World Bank. PGA also organized another successful Parliamentary Workshop on SA/LW in Tbilisi, Georgia in June 2006 for MPs in the CIS region, in collaboration with the OSCE and US Embassy in Tbilisi.

The Workshop will conclude with the participating parliamentarians adopting a Plan of Action, reaffirming their commitment to the need for improved controls on Small Arms and Light Weapons exports, sales and transfers across and from the region and an endorsement of the ATT.

This Workshop is kindly supported by the Governments of Canada, Denmark and Sweden

NOTE TO EDITORS

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is a membership organization comprised of over 1,300 MPs from 114 parliaments worldwide, engaged in a range of action-oriented global initiatives that promote democracy, justice and development (www.pgaction.org).

#