



Matias Hitimana, a Burundian militant, buttressed by his gunmen outside the room, continued to stand after his rant on how the international community should leave them alone to sort out Burundi's unique problems. Moses Katjuongua, the grand old man of Africa and President of PGA thundered to him "Young man, sit down. I am from Namibia a stable and prosperous democracy but when the world thinks of investing in my country they think Africa and when they think Africa they see you killing each other here and they don't come; so we will not leave you alone, we will keep coming back till you have learnt to behave; now sit down!" Hitimana crumpled into his chair and the six hour negotiating session to choose a new Speaker for the Burundian National Assembly started.

Today 17 years later, we commemorate the memory of our colleague Moses who spent his life in the struggle for democracy and peace, first in his country and across his continent and then globally through PGA. Of his extraordinary journey, Mr. Karl-Goran Biersmark, former MP from Sweden, recalled it started with an exile on foot, "walking all the way from then South-West Africa under the inhuman apartheid system, to Tanzania for education, eventually on to China, East Germany studying in the communist system and then ending up in the University of Gothenburg, Sweden" He took what he learnt back to his now independent homeland of Namibia and was elected to parliament. "Moses was a true democrat and we worked very closely together as President and Treasurer of PGA."

Moses' unique skills in peace-building came to the fore when he took over as Chair, Task Force on Africa and later President of PGA. He helped define and bring to success what PGA dubbed as Track 1 ½ Diplomacy – experienced politicians helping their younger, often more angry colleagues learn to compromise and make deals to prevent, mitigate and resolve power-sharing conflicts in transitional parliaments. Gilbert Martin who accompanied him on six missions to Burundi reminisced about "his approach: a one-person subtle mixture of the 'good-cop-bad-cop' technique applied with the half smile of an elder who had lived through many of the arduous changes he was advocating and consequently knew what he was asking of his interlocutors. " He is remembered very fondly by all staff who worked with him. Ayaka Suzuki now a senior UN staffer, recalled "in addition to his considerable oratory skills, his political deftness and especially his humanness". Michael Agbeko said with emotion, "we were brothers" Fatime Dam, now with the UN in Africa, remembered "son affection, le vaillant Combattant, un père, un frère, un ami.. [qui] reconnaissait l'importance du rôle de la femme."

From across the globe his New Zealand colleague, Ross Robertson wrote, "we were good friends, and I will never forget our times in PGA together." Fluent in English, Afrikaans, Dutch, Swedish, Swahili, Moses built the PGA network of peace-builders. Allan Rogers, former MP from the UK who succeeded him, lauded his "exceptional mind and personality.. You meet few people in life whom you remember always with fondness; he was one such man."