



PRESS RELEASE

***Parliamentarians for Global Action welcomes the voluntary surrender of Congolese warlord Bosco Ntaganda
Urges Prompt, Appropriate Action by US Authorities and the ICC***

The Hague/New York/Kinshasa, 19 March 2013: Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) welcomes the decision of Mr. Bosco Ntaganda, currently leader of a faction of the M23 militia, to end his fugitive-status and commence the process of justice through requesting his transfer to the ICC in the Hague, via the Embassy of the United States of America in Kigali, Rwanda.

Mr. Bosco Ntaganda is accused of having perpetrated some of the most serious crimes known to humankind: the crimes against humanity of murder, rape, sexual slavery and persecution, and the war crimes of enlistment of children under the age of 15, conscription of children, using children in hostilities, murder, attacks against the civilian population, rape, sexual slavery and pillaging.

PGA Members from DRC, particularly those whose constituencies are located in the Ituri and Kivu regions, are pleased to see that patience and perseverance in supporting justice is finally prevailing against those who have argued that amnesties and impunity could represent legitimate bargaining chips to be pursued in negotiations with the M23 rebel-militia group and other alleged authors of atrocities in Eastern DRC.

“There is no alternative to putting an end to impunity if we want a durable peace supported by the civilian populations which have been affected by the conflict and widespread atrocities”, stated the Chair of the PGA DRC National Group, Hon. **Dieudonné Upira Sunguma, MP**, speaking from his constituency in Ituri, *“this surrender demonstrates that international crimes are no longer tolerated and that no amnesty can be granted for the alleged perpetrators of those crimes”*.

PGA Members applaud the prompt undertaking given by the US Administration, represented by its Ambassador-At-Large for Global Criminal Justice Mr. Stephen Rapp, to facilitate the process of acceding to Mr. Ntaganda’s request to transfer him to the ICC. PGA also notes with particular satisfaction the support expressed yesterday by US Department of State Spokesperson Victoria Nuland *“for the ICC investigations on the atrocities committed in the DRC”*.

PGA now calls on the ICC Office of the Prosecutor, led by Ms. Fatou Bensouda assisted by Deputy-Prosecutor James Stewart, to ensure that the charges against Mr. Ntaganda will reflect all of the major instances of victimization that he allegedly inflicted on innocent victims, including women being raped and children being enslaved, at different stages of the recurring armed conflicts that have so tragically devastated Ituri and the Kivus. In particular, no major atrocity that can be attributed to his individual criminal responsibility should be selectively omitted by the ICC.

Statements of PGA Members from the Democratic Republic of Congo:

- *“There is no alternative to putting an end to impunity if we want a durable peace supported by the civilian populations which have been affected by the conflict and widespread atrocities. This surrender demonstrates that international crimes are no longer tolerated and that no amnesty can be granted for the alleged perpetrators of those crimes”.* **Hon. Dieudonné Upira Sunguma, MP**, Chair of the PGA DRC National Group (speaking from his constituency in Ituri)
- *“This is a historic moment for the victims in the DRC who deserve accountability and redress for the crimes and harm that they have suffered. Victims must thus be afforded the right to participate in proceedings and apply for reparations”.* **Sen. Sébastien Adambu Lonalisa**, PGA Member from the Equateur Province who supported strongly the ICC intervention to bring justice to victims.

- “Bosco Ntaganda’s surrender shows that the ICC is the best possible option to ensure that fair and impartial proceedings take place against those who have committed international crimes in the DRC. We hope that all fugitives around the world indicted by the ICC will follow the example of Ntaganda and deliver themselves to justice”. **Hon. Lucie Kipele, MP**, PGA Member, speaking from her constituency in Dungu (Orientale Province), which has been devastated by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA): Her statement echoed the content of yesterday’s call by Prosecutor Bensouda on the fugitive leaders of the LRA to voluntarily surrender to the ICC and the recent Statement of the PGA Uganda National Group urging Ugandan and Overseas Special Forces engaged in the pursuit of the LRA leaders indicted by the ICC to make every effort to arrest, not eliminate them.
- *We hope that the trial in The Hague will open the door for national proceedings against other criminals who have committed crimes of concern to the International Community as a whole, and we are thus engaged with PGA to promptly adopt the legislation implementing the Rome Statute, which will allow such proceedings in the DRC. This will send a strong signal to deter others from committing the most serious crimes known to humankind throughout the DRC and will constantly remind the DRC of its obligations as a State party to the Rome Statute.*” **Hon. Serge Mayamba, MP**, from Kinshasa and strong supporter of the adoption of a legislation incorporating the Rome Statute into national law.

About PGA

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is the largest transnational network of Members of Parliaments from all regions of the world who, in their individual capacity, support the effective operation of the ICC and domestic jurisdictions to end impunity.

Members of PGA have contributed to 76 of the 122 ratifications of, or accession to the Rome Statute to date. PGA is a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for the ICC. The PGA Campaign for the Universality and Effectiveness of the Rome Statute system receives support from the European Commission, European Union and the Governments of The Netherlands and Switzerland, as well as from Humanity United.

The PGA Complementarity Project in DRC, Uganda and Kenya is supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

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On-line access to PGA ICC Campaign:

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