



PRESS RELEASE

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) condemns *Coup D'état* in the Central African Republic

Calls for Upholding of Libreville Agreement of 11 January 2013

The Hague/New York/Bangui, 28 March 2013: Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is deeply concerned at the latest turn of events in the Central African Republic, which has led to the rebel occupation of Bangui and the flight of the incumbent President of the Republic. PGA concurs with recent Statements by the UN Security Council, the Council on Peace and Security of the African Union, the UN Secretary General, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the European Union, the International Organisation of La Francophonie and others institutions that have similarly condemned the Coup D'état by the Seleka rebellion.

PGA stands in solidarity with the PGA National Group in the National Assembly of The Central African Republic - comprised of 54 members from a multi-party group - and expresses its strong support for the people and the representatives of the democratic institutions of the Central African Republic.

PGA calls upon all parties to respect international law, to exercise restraint and to cease and abstain from any further acts of violence of any kind. The ICC has jurisdiction over serious crimes of international concern that have been or may be committed in the territory of the Central African Republic, in accordance with the Rome Statute of the ICC. In this respect, the Prosecutor of the ICC, Ms. Fatou Bensouda, has already warned that her Office "*will not hesitate to investigate and prosecute all those alleged to be committing these crimes*".¹

PGA further urges that the Libreville Agreement of 11 January 2013 be fully honoured by all concerned parties and that an inclusive dialogue be quickly initiated to find a peaceful outcome from the present impasse. In particular, and in light of his long standing commitment to human rights and the fight against impunity – as well as his past membership in PGA when a Member of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, we call upon Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, appointed during the Libreville process and approved by the rebellion, to do all he can to ensure a swift resumption of civilian rule and constitutional order.

Statements by PGA Members:

Mr. Martin Wiguele (Central African Republic), Rapporteur of PGA CAR National Group

I am deeply concerned by the situation in my country and I thus call for the restoration of public safety and constitutional order as well as the holding of fair, pluralist and transparent elections as soon as possible. I also call upon the international community to support the actions that will be taken by the Prime Minister to re-establish peace, security and the social and economic well-being in the country.

Ms. Irene Addo, MP (Ghana), Deputy Convenor International Law and Human Rights Programme

I call upon the rebels and all parties involved in the conflict within the Central African Republic to respect and ensure respect of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, and to immediately cease any act of violence and pillaging, which is a war crime under international law.

The only way in which power can be legitimately acquired and exercised is in compliance with the Constitution and with International Law: I therefore firmly condemn the suspension of the Constitution declared by the de facto rulers of the Central African Republic. Members of Parliamentarians for Global Action from all regions of the world believe that the Rule of Law shall prevail over the rule of force, and that no impunity shall be tolerated for gross violations of human rights: Hence, my appeal is directed to all relevant actors in Central African Republic and the international community who shall undertake any necessary measure to restore the principle of legality and to implement the Libreville Peace Agreements of January 2013 for the exclusive benefit and protection of the people of Central African Republic.

¹ http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/press%20and%20media/press%20releases/Pages/otp-statement-CAR-22-03-2013.aspx

Dep. Lamine Thiam (Senegal), Convenor, Peace and Democracy Programme

History has taught us that the path to democracy and the Rule of Law is the best guarantee for peace and stability in all continents and countries, including Africa. Hence, on behalf of Parliamentarians for Global Action, I have no hesitation in condemning the Coup d'Etat in Central African Republic in the most resolute manner. Since the conference organised by PGA in the National Assembly in Bangui in October 2011, 54 Members of Parliament from the Central African Republic from majority and opposition became members of PGA and united their forces for the creation of a rules-based international order. All these Parliamentarians are now affected by a climate of insecurity and violence against the civilian population that shall cease immediately. I urge all national and international actors that are playing a role in the Central African Republic crisis to ensure that the constitutional rights of democratically elected Parliamentarians be fully restored and respected.

Mr. Harry van Bommel, MP (The Netherlands), Member of PGA (Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, SP)

The civilian population of the Central African Republic people is once again the victim of the fight for power and of abuse of power: During the last 4 months, the Government has collapsed in the face of a violent armed rebellion and has failed to protect fundamental human rights. When I attended the PGA Conference on Justice and the Rule of Law held in Parliament in Bangui in October 2011, I noted the extraordinary quest for accountability, transparency and social justice stemming from the democratically elected Legislators of all parties and constituencies. While that legitimate demand might have not been adequately met by the Executive, there is no justification for the recourse to violence and criminal retaliation chosen by the rebellion. I therefore unite my voice to the ones of my African colleagues to call upon the Seleka coalition and all other concerned Parties to respect basic human rights standards and to immediately restore the constitutional order, starting with the democratically elected Parliament.

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.

Contacts of the International Law and Human Rights Programme & Peace and Democracy Programme, PGA:

In The Hague

Dr. David Donat Cattin

Ms. Maia Trujillo

+31.70.360.4433

donat@pgaction.org

maia.trujillo@pgaction.org

In New York

Mr. Peter Barcroft

Ms. Leyla Nikjou

+1.212.687.7755

peter.barcroft@pgaction.org;

leyla.nikjou@pgaction.org

On-line access to PGA ICC Campaign:

<http://www.pgaction.org/countries/africa/car.html>

<http://www.pgaction.org/programmes/ilhr/overview.html>

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