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GERMANY AND BOTSWANA RATIFY KAMPALA AMENDMENTS TO ROME STATUTE OF ICC
Parliamentarians celebrate this important step forward in the prevention of the crime of aggression

New York/The Hague/ Amman/ Brussels/ Buenos Aires/ Kinshasa/ Montevideo/ Wellington, 5 June 2013:

The Government of Germany deposited on 3 June 2012 at the United Nations in New York its Instrument of Ratification of the Amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted in Kampala in 2010, thereby accepting to bind its nationals and territory to the prohibition of the use of certain weapons in armed conflicts not of an international character, as well as to the criminalization of acts of aggression arising from the illegal use of force in international relations. On 4 June 2013, Botswana followed suit and also deposited at the United Nations its instrument of ratification, which had been signed by President Ian Khama on 15 April 2013, in Gaborone.

In Germany, this Deposit follows upon an inclusive national debate and a unanimous approval of the Amendments by both Chambers of the German Parliament. This ratification of the Kampala Amendments is of particular symbolic and historic importance, in light of Germany's own 20th century history and represents a vindication of past hard lessons learnt with respect to the norms that must govern international relations in order to ensure enduring peace. The Kampala Amendments reflect and seek to uphold the norms and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

These Deposits are of further significance as it also serves to consolidate ongoing global efforts to achieve universal ratification of the Kampala Amendments related to the Crime of Aggression. Five other nations from all regions of the world have ratified both Amendments to date - Liechtenstein, Samoa, Luxembourg, Estonia and Trinidad and Tobago. In taking the step that it has taken today, Germany has made an important contribution towards the goal of achieving 30 ratifications before 2017. Botswana is the first African nation to ratify the Kampala Amendments.

Members of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) continue to spearhead global support for the criminalisation of Aggression. In 2012, PGA called for the nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize of the Kampala Review Conference. At the European Parliament, PGA Members have consistently called for support for the Amendments. Today, on this historic and joyous occasion, PGA Member parliamentarians around the world renew their calls to their respective governments - as well as to other parliamentarians, supporters of peace movements, the scientific community and the public at large to continue steadfast in their work in strengthening the legal regime of the Rome Statute that criminalises the most serious crimes under international law.

PGA members have made the following remarks:

Dip. Felipe Michelini (Uruguay), Convenor of PGA Int'l Law and Human Rights Programme:

From Montevideo, I celebrate the ratifications this week of the Kampala Amendments. As in Germany, the Chamber of Deputies of my country has recently unanimously approved the amendments. This is in line with our commitment on the prohibition of the use of force since

we ratified the Statute of the Nuremberg Tribunal. While the Senate is currently seized with this matter, I pledge Uruguay to be the first nation of South America to ratify the Kampala Amendments.

Dip. Margarita Stolbizer (Argentina)

War is the source of evil and suffering in the world, violence against women, children and men as well as environmental deterioration. Vestiges of past wars remain in our societies and our consciousness. And only when all nations will genuinely renounce to the illegal use of force, we will be able to rebuild within our societies the fabric of our violent past. I welcome the ratification of Germany and of Botswana and I look forward the Argentinean government's decision to send the amendments to be ratified by Congress.

Dip. Gabriel Ascencio (Chile), Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee

The Kampala Amendments, currently under consideration by the Chamber of Deputies in Chile, must be adopted as soon as possible. Chile's foreign policy, which seeks to develop new political and economic partnerships, must be underpinned by principles that protect and promote international law, especially the central tenant of the prohibition of the illegal use of force.

Hon. Dieudonné Upira, MP (Democratic Republic of Congo)

In ratifying the amendment of Kampala on the crime of aggression, Germany and Botswana offer the world and the Democratic Republic of the Congo an example of strong commitment to the rule of law, peace and justice. This act not only allows us to learn from atrocities committed in the past which have have gone unpunished but it also helps us to ensure a safer and more peaceful world to present and future generations. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the National Assembly has taken the first steps to incorporate the definition of the crime of aggression into Congolese law. The Government shall forward as soon as possible to the Parliament the Draft Law on the ratification of the Kampala Amendments. We are ready to accept these amendments as they are essential to prevent the repetition of the atrocities that are committed in our country and are jeopardizing the future of all our people.

Helmut Scholz, MEP (Germany), Chair of PGA Group in the European Parliament

The deposit by Germany and by Botswana of the Kampala Amendments arrive at the right moment when peace is still under heavy pressure and wars and military conflicts continue to threaten the development in many regions of the globe. It can give an example to continue all efforts for taking out the celebration of the Nobel Peace Prize granted to the European Union as obligation to be fulfilled by all European Union Member States. Indeed, European peace has been achieved through the reaffirmation of central tenants, including those contained in the UN Charter. With 3 ratifications by European Union members, we re-affirm our call to all other EU Member States to ratify this important international commitment and to promote with that a common EU position to achieve global support to the Kampala Amendment.

Jamil Nimri, MP (Jordan)

In Rome in 1998, Arab nations were at the forefront of the negotiations to ensure that the crime of aggression would be included in the Rome Statute. Many Arab nations have remained outside the Rome Statute as they waited to see the definition being adopted. There are no more excuses now. The challenges our region is facing require resolute decisions to renounce to violence and repression and opt for dialogue and democracy. Jordan, which has enormously contributed in the negotiations to reach a successful definition of the Amendments, must ratify the Kampala Amendments soon.

Kennedy Graham, MP (New Zealand)

The adoption of the Kampala Amendments in June 2010 is along with the adoption of Kyoto Protocol and the Arms Trade Treaty, the most significant legal accomplishment since 1998. I have personally nominated the Review Conference to the Nobel Peace Prize, and have promoted a domestic bill to ensure our Foreign Policy to abide respect to the UN Charter. I await my government's decision to seize Parliament with the discussion on the ratification of the Amendments. New Zealand must be one of the first 30 nations to ratify the Amendments.