



Kinshasa, June 13, 2013

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**NGO in general consultative status
with the Economic and Social Council**

Letter to G8 Foreign Ministers

Your Excellencies,

We, Members of Parliament from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Members of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), a network of over 1,000 Members of Parliament from over 130 countries worldwide, view with strong approval the G8 decision to adopt the *Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict* in London on 11 April, 2013.

As you are aware, Eastern Congo has been called the "rape capital of the world" by U.N. Special Representative Margot Wallstrom. Indeed, reports record the horrific fact that 48 women are raped every hour in the DRC. Rape is used as a weapon of war and the DRC is, sadly and tragically, known as the country with the most widespread impunity for such crimes.

PGA also very much appreciates the recognition by the G8 of efforts undertaken by NGOs, such as PGA, to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict, the importance of the International Criminal Court (ICC) as an instrument in the fight against impunity for sexual violence in conflict, and the acknowledgment that more must be done to address these ongoing crimes.

PGA is also pleased that the G8 Ministers explicitly recognized in their *Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict* that the "effective investigation and documentation of sexual violence in armed conflict is instrumental for bringing perpetrators to justice and for ensuring access to justice for victims whilst protecting their safety, dignity and human rights."

We, Parliamentarians from the DRC and members of PGA, hereby kindly request you to ensure the prompt and effective implementation of this seminal G8 Declaration, so that the victims of sexual and gender-based violence are not forgotten and to put an end impunity for the perpetrators of these widespread atrocities, as well as reinforce mechanisms of accountability, prevention, redress and reparation.

To this end, we urge you to assist and support:

1. The creation of a program to provide reparations and psycho-social support for victims of atrocities, including victims of sexual and other forms of gender based violence (SGBV)

2. The setting up and/or consolidation of investigative, prosecutorial, adjudicative, penitentiary, law enforcement and reconciliation mechanisms to end impunity in DRC.

We, Parliamentarians affirm our utmost commitment to the full implementation of this G8 Declaration, through different legislative and policy making initiatives.

Yours sincerely,

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