



Parliamentarians for Global Action
Acción Mundial de Parlamentarios
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires

ALLOCUTION OF THE HONOURABLE JULIETTE MBAMBU MUGHOLE

Assembly of States parties to the International Criminal Court

21 November 2013 – The Hague

**Madam President,
Excellencies,**

It is an honour for Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), that I represent today, and which is a network of over 1,300 parliamentarians from more than 130 countries around the world, to address this 12th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ultimate goal of PGA is to put an end to impunity in the world and across Africa: we need **MORE** justice; there can be no exceptions for the Heads of State! This is my belief as a parliamentarian from North Kivu, a region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which has been ravaged for decades by a war that was largely fed by neighbouring countries that are not parties to the Rome Statute. We are in this regard very grateful for the efforts made by the international community in order to comprehend the real reasons of the war in eastern Congo today, and for opening their eyes in order to stop the atrocities committed in that region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is why the National Group of PGA in DRC, spares no efforts to end the existence of safe havens for perpetrators of grave violations of human rights and humanitarian law through concrete and concerted actions for an international justice that is complementary to national jurisdictions. Indeed, the cooperation between those two jurisdictions brings efficiency to the principle of justice for all, and especially for the weak, the oppressed and the voiceless. To achieve this, all States must ratify the Rome Statute or strengthen their national courts in order to adapt them to the provisions of the Rome Statute. It is in this context that PGA has launched a relentless campaign in DR Congo to support the Parliament and civil society in taking appropriate measures to implement the principle of complementarity between national and jurisdictions and the ICC, starting with the adoption of the law implementing the Rome Statute which is in the current agenda of the Parliament. This reinforces the Rule of Law and the reform of the Congolese judicial system, which is already in its last phase in the parliament and with the Congolese Government.

Distinguished guests;

We will not bend in front of the threats of some States regarding their possible withdrawal from the Rome Statute. Moreover, PGA members in Kenya have not joined the majority of their Parliament to vote in favour of a motion calling on the government to denounce the

Rome Statute. Also, in the DRC, we have made our duty to protect the integrity of the Rome Statute. As a result, in his speech of October 23, 2013 in front of the Members of the Parliament, the President of the DRC emphasized that reconciliation without justice is bound to fail. At the same time, he praised the active cooperation of the DRC with the ICC and has expressed the desire to see this cooperation strengthened in order for the Congolese victims of international crimes to benefit from all their rights and to be rehabilitated in their condition, status, dignity and to benefit from a fair social reintegration.

From what as just been said, we must remember that the consecration of impunity begins with the sacralisation of privileges and immunities from jurisdiction, which totally disregards the innocents who fall under destructive weapons as well as raped women, some of whom are children and elderly. In the case of the DRC only, the Ministry of Gender, Family and Children noted that in 7 Congolese provinces, 10,685 cases of sexual violence were reported in 2011 and 15,654 cases in 2012, which indicates an increase of 52%, which must be added to the thousands of children born from those rape. We should expect an increasing statistical curve for 2013, because of the extreme cruelty of violence perpetrated by the M23 and other armed groups swarming in the region. The ICC must therefore remain vigilant, because despite the arrest of some criminals, their successors continue to commit the same crimes for which those criminals were arrested. Indeed, we discovered just a few days ago, several mass graves in the territory of Rutchuru, and every day, the Foundation which has my name, records an average of 3 women raped daily in Lubero, Beni and Butembo in North Kivu. Their stories cannot hold your tears back.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me ask you a fundamental question: why are so many resources, Summits and efforts put in place to protect persons accused of international crimes, when they already benefit from the presumption of innocence? We believe that international justice should be firm with the leaders who kill and rape their own populations or facilitate such crimes in other countries.

We therefore take this opportunity to launch a strong appeal to African leaders to respect the rights of their citizens. Those who claim a right to end the life of a person or deprive him or her from its dignity as a human being must not remain unpunished.

Thank you for your attention

Hon. Juliette Mbambu Mughole
Member of the National Assembly
Democratic Republic of the Congo

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.

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On-line access to PGA ICC Campaign:

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

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