



## Parliamentarians for Global Action

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### **THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES JOINS THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT AS ITS 112<sup>TH</sup> STATE PARTY**

*New York/The Hague, August 10, 2010* – PGA congratulates The Republic of Seychelles who today has deposited her Instrument of Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) with the United Nations in New York. This brings to 112 the number of States that have joined the ICC system and to 31 the number of African nations that are party to the ICC. Seychelles is the first African State that has ratified the Rome Statute subsequent to the making public of the case of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes against the President of Sudan by the International Criminal Court in July 2008.

Since 2002, Parliamentarians for Global Action, a network of over 1,300 Legislators from over 120 countries world-wide, has been pleased to work with MPs and government officials on progressing the process of ratification in the Seychelles. In 2002 PGA co-organized with the International Organization of the Francophonie a Conference on ICC Ratification and Implementation in the sub-region hosted by the Parliament of Mauritius, which contributed to the ratifications of Mauritius and Djibouti in 2002, Comoros in 2006 and Madagascar in 2008. With the Seychelles' ratification, the entire African Indian Ocean sub-region has now become a "no-impunity zone".

PGA Member, **Mr. Bernard Georges, MP**, (Seychelles), who addressed the Mauritius Conference in 2002 and the 6<sup>th</sup> Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians for the ICC and the Rule of Law in Kampala, Uganda in May 2010, stressed the bipartisan nature of the vote of the Seychelles National Assembly: "*On 13 July 2010, the entire Parliament voted unanimously this fundamental treaty that protects the life, well-being and human dignity of victims of the most serious crimes of international concern*", said Mr. Georges, who represents Seychelles' main opposition party.

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney General/Minister of Justice and PGA member, **Mr. Madan Dullo**, saluted the decision of the Seychelles Government and Parliament, whereby the last of the African Indian Ocean Islands has now become a State Party to the Court. "*It is important to have one more African country in the new system of international criminal justice, which is compatible with all legal traditions as well as the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU)*" Mr. Dullo stressed. In response to a recent recommendation formulated by the AU in respect of the Arrest Warrant pending against the President of Sudan, Mr. Dullo added that "*the founding treaty of the AU, at its article 4, provides our organization with a firm condemnation and rejection of impunity: Therefore, Arrest Warrants shall be promptly executed, not postponed! We should therefore resolve to propagate the awareness of the importance to protect the integrity and purpose of the Rome Statute across Africa and other continents with the aim to make it truly universal and effective*", he concluded.

The Convenor of PGA's International Law and Human Rights Programme, Mrs. Ruth Tuma, MP (Uganda), noted that "*By ratifying the Rome Statute, the Seychelles has confirmed their will to join the other members of the ICC in a new system of global justice where all people shall benefit from the principle of equality before the law.*" Mrs. Tuma underlined the nexus between the PGA recent activities in Eastern Africa and the Indian Ocean sub-

regions, such as the conference on implementing legislation held in Comoros in February 2010, and the de-blockage of the ICC process by the competent authorities in The Seychelles, led by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, former MP Ambassador Barry Fauré.

The Seychelles signed the Rome Statute on 28 December 2000, but had not ratified the treaty before its entry into force at the end of 2002.

**About PGA:**

Parliamentarians for Global Action is a network of more than 1300 members of parliament from all regions of the world who, in their individual capacity, have pledge to mobilize political will in favour of the establishment, effective and complementary operation of an independent ICC. Members of PGA have contributed to 67 of the 112 ratifications or accession to the Rome Statute to date. PGA is a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for the ICC. PGA receives the support of the European Commission (EU) and of the Governments of Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, and Switzerland, as well as core support from Denmark, Sweden, Nigeria and The Hague Municipality.