



LIPADHO a.s.b.l.
Ligue pour la Paix et les Droits de l'Homme
Coordination Nationale

(Original : FRENCH)

**LIPADHO's INTERVENTION AT THE 6TH SESSION OF
THE ICC ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES
28 November – 14 December 2007**

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ligue for Peace and Human Rights (LIPADHO) is a national NGO established on 22 February 2001 in Bunia, Ituri, Democratic Republic of Congo. It emerged from the good will and dedication of peace-loving people in a region where human life was animalized and belittled.

Inspired by the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, LIPADHO put its energy to raising awareness about the Rome Statute and informing communities in Eastern Congo about the Court's mandate. The Association has braved all forms of threats, operating within militarized zones in which militias continue to commit killings and massacres, and continue to rape and burn villages with impunity.

This context justified the contribution of LIPADHO in assisting victims of international crimes. 900 victims have been assisted and among these, some 200 have applied to participate in proceedings before the ICC. However, until now, none of them has been granted the status of victim by the Court, some having applied in mid 2006.

The present session of the ASP opens when the DRC has two pending cases before the Court. This justifies why a particular attention should be drawn to the situation of the DRC and the affected populations there.

At this stage, the Court does not provide any form of support to victims or intermediaries in their work which is nevertheless vital to the mandate of the Court. It is imperative that the Court reinforce its outreach and provide support to intermediaries. States Parties should also ensure that MONUC is mandated to provide security to field workers. Indeed, until today, the Court's field staff have never reached the affected rural areas beyond the town of Bunia.

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With regard to discussions on the Crime of Aggression, LIPADHO considers that foreign States' also bear responsibility for crimes committed in the DRC. LIPADHO is satisfied that the case of Germain Katanga has been brought before the Court, and that this case has been framed to acknowledge the allegations that the Ugandan Armed Forces were implicated in the armed conflict in Ituri. LIPADHO was also satisfied that in confirming charges against Thomas Lubanga, the Pre-Trial Chamber recognized that the conflict had an international character.

From that perspective, LIPADHO hopes that the definition of Crime of Aggression, as provided for in article 5(2) of the Rome Statute, will be agreed and adopted without delay. LIPADHO hopes that its adoption will enable the link between human rights violations, high ranked officials and the commission of state sponsored crimes to be pursued in the future.

LIPADHO hereby launches a vibrant appeal to all the States Parties to adopt policies of good governance in the fight against all forms of impunity. This fight also requires the implementation of the Rome Statute into domestic law.

On behalf of the LIPADHO and its delegation, I thank you.

Eloi URWODHI UCIBA
National Coordonator
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