



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

Press Release
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TRANSFER OF Germain KATANGA TO THE ICC

The League for Peace and Human Rights (LIPADHO), on 17 October 2007, learnt with satisfaction of the transfer to the International Criminal Court (ICC) of Germain KATANGA. Among the main presumed perpetrators of international crimes in Ituri, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mr. Germain KATANGA is involved in several massacres involving systematic rape, inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment. He is presented as one of the most powerful member of the militias which perpetrated human rights violations and abuses.

LIPADHO welcomes, moreover, the cooperation in the transfer between the Congolese government and the ICC. LIPADHO waits for this cooperation to extend to the implementation of the Rome Statute in order to make Congolese civil justice too, more proficient in judging international crimes. This would bring swiftness in arrests of a high number of criminals who haven't been targeted yet and whose presence still worries and discourages the population.

LIPADHO rejoices with the fact that the Court selected charges against the accused that include blood crimes. Those bear, in victims' eyes, an element of cruelty, they go beyond imagination and profoundly hurt human conscience. The case of sexual violence in all its forms is too a capital crime. Nevertheless, it needs to be stated that compared to the charges retained against Thomas LUBANGA, those against Germain KATANGA give victims of the community previously antagonist to his own, more chances of entering the case.

LIPADHO believes it important that the Court accelerates without rushing with other arrests which must take into account accomplices and silent partners.

Some of the latter are still in power, in particular in the Armed Forces of The Democratic Republic of Congo and others inside governments and armies from Rwanda and Uganda, countries which had to aggress and fuel ethnic conflicts in the East of the DRC.

From the above, LIPADHO recommends:

1. The Court to :

- Act with promptness in the procedure to confirm the charges;
- Proceed with the arrests of other suspects, the persons most responsible for the crimes committed in the DRC without distinction based on the rank, the ethnic origin or the nationality;
- Ensure that the charges represent the whole of the criminality, especially sexual crimes, such as rape, which still occurs with impunity;
- Take into account victims' request for participation on charges not retained against Thomas Lubanga;

2. The Congolese authorities to :

- Make it a priority in the Congolese Parliament agenda to vote the Bill implementing the Rome Statute, adopted since September 2005 by the Government Council;
- Prosecute other suspects who collaborated with the main perpetrators and persons from the armed conflicts most responsible for the commission of international crimes; indeed it is an established fact that the ICC won't prosecute all criminals;
- Set up in collaboration with the Court, mechanisms of holistic protection of victims who ask to participate in the proceedings before the Court in order to ensure their security.

Done in Kinshasa, on 18 October 2007

For the National Coordination of the LIPADHO

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