

Annex A2

**Statement of victims and leaders of Bahema Sud concerning
the reduction of Germain Katanga's sentence**

Public Redacted Version

COMMUNITY OF BOGORO

BABIASE GROUPEMENT

DISTRICT OF ITURI

STATEMENT OF VICTIMS AND LEADERS OF BAHEMA SUD CONCERNING
THE REDUCTION OF GERMAIN KATANGA'S SENTENCE AND HIS RETURN
TO ITURI

We, the undersigned, victims in the case of *The Prosecutor v. Germain Katanga* and/or leaders of Bahema Sud, have recently been apprised of the statements made by certain prominent figures from the district of Ituri concerning the reduction in the sentences imposed on Thomas Lubanga and Germain Katanga and their return to Ituri (ICC-01/04-01/06-3151-Anx4, Anx5 and Anx6).

We are very surprised at the content of the above-mentioned statements which do not reflect the social and political context. Furthermore, we deplore the fact that some ethnic groups, including those of Bahema Sud, have not been included in these consultations.

The prominent figures of Bunia did not suffer the harm experienced by the victims in the *Katanga* case and are wholly unaware of the continuing problems faced by victims since the attack. Moreover, it must be noted that the prominent figures of Bunia who signed those statements do not represent the community of Bahema Sud or that of Bogoro.

On that basis, we challenge those statements and we hereby express our opinion as follows.

We are opposed to the reduction in Germain Katanga's sentence and his return, for the time being, to Ituri for various reasons, in particular:

His return is likely to revive tension and intensify the conflict.

It is in fact entirely incorrect to claim that the communities of the territories of Ituri have overcome the conflicts between them and live in perfect harmony. The presence of operational militias and the recurrent attacks on civilian populations speak volumes about the continuing tension in Ituri which divides the Hema and Ngiti communities.

At the moment, the Ngiti live and go about their business peacefully in the Babiase *groupement* and are accepted by the Hema of this area whereas the Hema are not welcomed by the Ngiti. The latter have recently invaded some of the Hema compounds they claim should automatically revert to them.

Furthermore, having regard to the gravity of the crimes of which he was found guilty and the extent of the harm suffered by the victims, we deplore the 12-year sentence imposed on Germain Katanga by the International Criminal Court. That sentence caused tears to be shed by a good number of victims. **The victims of the February 2003 attack on Bogoro consider that this sentence is not proportionate to the crimes committed and that any reduction would merely exacerbate the feeling of injustice shared by all the victims.**

Furthermore, reducing the sentence and ordering Mr Katanga's release before the allocation of reparations would merely reinforce the victims' trauma and their sense of impunity.

Lastly, we denounce the dishonesty of the signatories of the above-mentioned statements intended to mislead the communities by juxtaposing the application for the reduction of Germain Katanga's sentence with that of Thomas Lubanga, whereas these are separate cases with different victims and losses.

For all these reasons, we confirm that we oppose any steps to reduce Germain Katanga's sentence and his return, for the time being, to the district of Ituri, and in particular, his settlement in Aru.

Done at Bogoro, 5 September 2015.































