

Confirmation of Charges Hearing in the Case of Laurent Gbagbo Before the ICC: A Key Step Towards Justice for Victims FIDH February 18 2013 Laurent Gbagbo will face, from Tuesday 19 February, the judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) who will decide whether or not to confirm the charges against him and send him to trial for crimes against humanity. The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its member organizations in Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorian League of Human Rights (LIDHO) and the Ivorian Movement for Human Rights (MIDH), recognize the importance of this step in the path towards justice in Côte d'Ivoire, and call once again for a balanced and impartial justice.(...)

Laurent Gbagbo will appear before the International Criminal Court for crimes allegedly committed in the context of the post-election violence of 2010-2011. According to the indictment against him, he is suspected of being responsible as indirect co-perpetrator for four counts of crimes against humanity: murder, rape and other sexual violence, persecution and other inhumane acts. Laurent Gbagbo was transferred to The Hague following an arrest warrant issued against him by the ICC and made public by the Pre-Trial Chamber III on 30 November 2011.

His wife, Simone Gbagbo, also faces charges at the ICC. Trial Chamber I unsealed an arrest warrant against her on 22 November 2012. She is accused of having committed, as indirect co-perpetrator, the crimes of murder, rape and sexual violence, persecution and other inhumane acts. Whilst the arrest warrant against Laurent Gbagbo was immediately executed, the FIDH and its member organizations note the lack of cooperation from Côte d'Ivoire regarding the arrest warrant of Simone Gbagbo.

To date, no arrest warrant against supporters of Alassane Ouattara has been made public, although some have allegedly committed international crimes during the conflict that opposed them to the supporters of Laurent Gbagbo. " More than two years after the beginning of the post-election crisis, national and international courts have a duty to ensure a balanced and impartial justice ," said Patrick Baudouin, Honorary President and Coordinator of the Litigation Action Group of FIDH. " This effort to ensure justice is all the more necessary in the context of the fight against impunity in Côte d'Ivoire ," he added (...)

The confirmation of charges hearing which will begin on 19 February 2013 will serve to determine if there are substantial grounds to believe that Laurent Gbagbo has committed the alleged crimes he has been charged for, and whether his case should be referred before a Trial Chamber. The Prosecutor will present his case and Laurent Gbagbo will have the opportunity to challenge it. 139 victims have been allowed to participate and be represented by a legal representative.

A key step in the proceedings, this hearing is also an important moment for the victims. "Laurent Gbagbo will be confronted by the Prosecutor with the evidence of his alleged responsibility for very serious crimes before impartial judges and will face victims representatives, who will have a voice in the courtroom. This is critical so that the victims can actually obtain justice ", said René Hokou Legré, President of LIDHO.

See the full article [here](#) .