

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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The Democratic Republic of Congo. Petition containing 102,105 signatures delivered by Amnesty International to the Minister of Justice and Human Rights

A petition containing 102,105 signatures asking the Congolese authorities to prioritise reform of the justice system and the fight against impunity was presented by an Amnesty International delegation to the new Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Mme Wivine Mumba Matipa, on 22 May 2012, in Kinshasa.

After meeting the Amnesty International delegation, the recently appointed Minister of Justice and Human Rights said she was ready to work together on all the issues raised and promised to continue efforts already underway, particularly in the fight against impunity.

The signatures were collected as part of an Amnesty International worldwide campaign that has taken place over the last few months following publication, in August 2011, of the Amnesty International report: *“Democratic Republic of Congo: the time for justice is now: New strategy needed in the Democratic Republic of Congo”*.

During its meeting with Mme Matipa, the delegation reminded her of the need to adopt a global strategy to reform the Congolese justice system in order to fight effectively against impunity for past and recent crimes against international law.

She underlined the importance of more effective coordination between the different actors and the need to review and adapt essential bills that had stalled, notably one on implementation of the Rome Statute and another on specialised courts.

A road map covering the Congolese government's priorities in the field of justice and human rights is due to be published soon, announced Mme Matipa.

In addition to the issues of reform of the justice system and the fight against impunity, the Amnesty International delegation raised the following issues: the death penalty, prison conditions, protection of human rights defenders and delays in proceedings against Bosco Ntaganda and several other outstanding prosecutions.