

Press Release

Kailash Satyarthi, Chairperson of Global March Against Child Labour bestowed with the world acclaimed “Defender of Democracy Award”

New Delhi, 21 May 2009, Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) will present the 2009 Defender of Democracy Awards to **Mr. Kailash Satyarthi** of India, Founder/Chair of the Global March Against Child Labor, and Ch. Aitzaz Ahsan of Pakistan, Barrister-at-Law, Senior Advocate Supreme Court.

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) which is a non-profit, non-partisan international network of over 1300 legislators in more than 100 elected parliaments around the globe, aims to promote peace, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, sustainable development and population issues by informing, convening, and mobilizing parliamentarians to realize these goals.

PGA is honoring Mr. Satyarthi for his distinguished life-long work and commitment to end child labour in India and around the world and his global campaign for education rights for children. For nearly three decades, Mr. Satyarthi has campaigned courageously to end child labour in his own country and around the world, rescuing more than 77,000 bonded labourers, including more than 40,000 children. He traveled with various core marchers for 80,000 kilometers. His global march culminated in Geneva where United Nations created an international law against child labour and the worst forms of child labour ILO Convention 182 . He is the founder/chair of the Global March Against Child Labour, and creator of the Rugmark label, the universally recognized symbol of rugs certified as having been made without the use of exploitative child labour. Since September 2008, Mr. Satyarthi president of Global Campaign for Education and has been leading an effort for Education for children by 2015. Mr. Satyarthi also launched the Global March’s “World Cup Campaign” convincing the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) to agree to the elimination of child labour in the manufacture of soccer balls.

Since 1996, PGA has held the Defender of Democracy Awards in conjunction with its Annual Parliamentary Forum. The Defender of Democracy Award is presented to individuals who, through their own commitment and active engagement, have made significant progress in strengthening democracy and democratic practices. Some past recipients include H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, Ms. Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Mr. LakhdarBrahimi, former Special Representative of the UN Secretary- General for Afghanistan. The awards ceremony will take place on the evening of **October 20th, 2009 at the United States Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.** in conjunction with PGA’s 31st Annual Parliamentary Forum which is being hosted at the US Congress by PGA’s International Councilor, Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and its congressional members, Rep. Jim McDermott (D-Washington), Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-New York) among others.