

# Baptist campaigns for Congo crimes justice

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LONDON (ABP) — A Congolese-British Baptist who escaped death by firing squad in her home country three years ago is once again confronting the authorities to speak out against horrific human-rights abuses.

Marie-Therese Nlandu, an attorney who specializes in international human rights, has requested the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague look into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by President Joseph Kabila and other senior figures of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's government.



Nlandu, a member of All Nations Baptist Church in London, submitted the request following the assassination of fellow human-rights activist Floribert Chebeya in June.

She cites the widespread practice of rape and mutilation of young women in the Grand Kivu area of her country. Rape has frequently been employed as a weapon of war in Congo's recent conflicts over the country's mineral riches.

Attacks against Kabila political rival Jean-Pierre Bemba and the murder of thousands in the Kongo Central province are also mentioned in Nlandu's charges.

In 2006 and 2007 she spent 160 days on death row, charged with treason after defending people in various court cases.

After receiving treatment to recover from the injuries suffered as a result of the incarceration, Nlandu has traveled the world to speak to Congolese expatriate communities and raise awareness of the human-rights abuses.

Her husband, Noel Mbala, said his wife couldn't remain silent, despite the increased risk to her safety posed by her speaking out again.

"We can't just cross our arms — that's what makes evil prevail. What's happening is an internal torture for us as Christians," he said. "We need the international prosecutor to look into these crimes."

Supporters are asked to sign [a petition](#) to show support for the campaign.

-Paul Hobson is news editor of [The Baptist Times](#), the weekly newspaper of the Baptist Union of Great Britain.