



## Global March for Elephants and Rhinos, Inc.

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Legislative Council Bills Committee on Protection of  
Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Bill 2017

Dear Members of the Legislative Council:

I am Shubert Mwarabu, I am a son of Africa, and I plead with you to shut down the ivory trade in Hong Kong on behalf of the people of Tanzania, her last iconic giants, our elephants, and on behalf of the Aquameridian Conservation & Education (ACE) Foundation, Future for Elephants, the Global March for Elephants and Rhinos and OKOA Tembo wa Tanzania.

**In Tanzania, 60% of our elephants have been killed for ivory trinkets just over the last five years.** Together with Africa's wild creatures, her indigenous human communities are also victims. Human lives, rangers hired to protect our wildlife, are lost and political instability prevails; moving away from colonial forms of conservation entails that we consider the consequences of our actions and change on behalf of compassion and a more viable commons – we demand the ivory markets to close. Elephants are being massacred on an industrial scale, with sophisticated means such as automatic weapons, helicopter gunships, and night-vision equipment. The ivory trade is increasingly run by transnational criminal networks, while profits from the 'blood ivory' trade are used to help fund terrorist networks.

With so few numbers left, and such a slow rate of reproduction, elephants are rapidly heading for extinction, unless united and global action is taken to save them. Hong Kong can play a part by banning its domestic ivory trade and destroying its stockpile of ivory, and by sending an unequivocal message that these substances have zero commercial value.

The illegal wildlife trade is estimated at \$20 billion per year, and is funding organized crime, global terror networks and militias, and destabilizing and impoverishing local communities across Africa. Heavily armed poaching gangs oversee the bloody chain, from killing the animals to smuggling their body parts for export around the world.

As the numbers of elephants, and thousands of other species, are depleted every day, the savannahs and forests of Africa grow silent and barren, devoid of their once teeming wildlife. A future without these species, all of which play a vital role in maintaining balanced ecosystems – is very hard to imagine, but it's a future we are inexorably heading towards unless action is taken now to stop the wholesale killing.

Disrupting the paradigms of traditional conservation methods, engaging communities and shutting down the trade – globally is what is needed now. There's no reason why elephants should have to die because one wants to promise future exceptional ivory sales for trinkets. I hope you, on behalf of Hong Kong, will stand up and say no to ivory by shutting down the ivory trade.

On behalf of the Aquameridian Conservation & Education (ACE) Foundation, Future for Elephants, the Global March for Elephants and Rhinos and OKOA Tembo wa Tanzania, I thank you for the honor to present my testimony before you.

Regards,  
Shubert Mwarabu

