



# First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism

9 September 2021 - Vienna, Austria



## Press Release

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#### Parliamentarians at the forefront of terrorism prevention, peace-building and securing a better future for victims of terrorism

Vienna, Austria, 9 September 2021.

Legislators from around the world met in Vienna, Austria today for the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism.

Co-organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), this first summit was held within the scope of a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding signed between the three organizations in May 2019.

The Summit comes at a critical time, particularly as the international community and global and national economies seek to recover from the devastating pandemic, which continues to impact global counter-terrorism responses.

Opening the Summit, the **Speaker of the National Council of the Republic of Austria, Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka**, highlighted the crucial role parliamentarians play in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. He said: "Terrorism and violent extremism pose threats not only to the security of countries and the values of democratic societies, but also to the freedom of citizens. These multidimensional challenges can only be met with strong bilateral and international cooperation between states."

**IPU President, Mr. Duarte Pacheco**, underlined the importance of robust parliamentary action to identify lasting solutions to address the rising threat of terrorism and violent extremism. He said: "As parliamentarians, our roles as representatives of the people make us the principal stakeholders in efforts of countering terrorism. Governments, due to their executive authorities and mandate, often have the upper hand in countering terrorism, as they are responsible for State security. Nonetheless, parliaments have the upper hand in prevention, which is far more effective than countering terrorism."

**UNODC Executive Director, Ms. Ghada Waly**, emphasized the links between terrorism, organized crime and corruption, and the need for integrated responses. She said: "The legal frameworks that defend societies from terrorism must account for its perpetrators, collaborators and financiers, and support its victims. Through multilateral engagement, parliaments can develop such frameworks together. At UNODC, we are ready to work with you to establish a more ambitious, unified framework for legislative and technical assistance to parliaments on counter-terrorism."



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**UNOCT Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov**, [stressed](#) that parliamentarians play a crucial role in countering terrorism and violent extremism. UNOCT had therefore established a Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism in June 2021. He said: “We rely on parliamentarians to work hand-in-hand with governments to adopt strong, robust and transparent laws, budgets and policies to fund and implement the international legal framework against terrorism.”

**IPU Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong**, said “From our experiences at the IPU, we have clearly seen the interlinkages between underdevelopment and terrorism, between illiteracy and terrorism, and between climate change and terrorism. Besides security, the only comprehensive solutions in countering terrorism are ones that can encompass development, education, human rights and gender equality.”

The speakers of the opening session were joined by parliamentarians from around the world, experts, members of regional parliamentary assemblies, victims of terrorism, community leaders, and representatives of civil society, United Nations entities and other international and regional organizations.

The opening session was followed by three thematic sessions.

In the first session, *Parliamentary response to support the victims of terrorism*, the parliamentarians heard first-hand from victims of terrorism, Ms. Nadia Ghulam Dastgir from Afghanistan and Mr. Abdi Yusuf Hassan, a Member of Parliament from the National Assembly of Kenya.

Moderated by the **President of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Mr. Reinhold Lopatka**, the panel also included the **United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Acting Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Pramila Patten**.

The parliamentarians also discovered the *Model Legislative Provisions to Support and Protect the Rights and Needs of Victims of Terrorism*, which are currently being developed through the tripartite IPU-UNOCT-UNODC partnership.

The provisions aim to serve as a model for the review of existing laws and procedures related to victims of terrorism in a manner that will contribute to systematizing and promoting the exchange of good practices to protect, assist and support victims of terrorism.

The second session on the *Role of parliaments in preventing terrorist radicalization and addressing hate speech* discussed challenges, parliamentary perspectives, effective strategies and best practices.

Moderated by the **Honourable Ms. Jacqueline Adhiambo Oduol**, Member of the National Assembly of Kenya and Vice-Chair of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism of the IPU, it included contributions from several counter-terrorism experts and members of national parliaments.



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The last session, on the Sahel region, was moderated by **Mr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, Member of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates and Member of the IPU Executive Committee**. Panelists discussed the challenges faced by the Sahel region and examined how to find real solutions that can provide support to a population that has suffered dramatically, as well as to the victims of terrorism in this region.

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For more information:

- Mr. Thomas Fitzsimons ([press@ipu.org](mailto:press@ipu.org)), Director of Communications IPU
- Ms. Laurence Gerard ([gerardl@un.org](mailto:gerardl@un.org)), Public Information Officer, UNOCT
- Mr. Brian Hansford ([brian.hansford@un.org](mailto:brian.hansford@un.org)), Chief Advocacy Section, UNODC

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