



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE**  
برلمان البحر الأبيض المتوسط

**PAM President – Hon. Gennaro Migliore**

**Draft Speech**

**Address to opening of the UN Programme Office in Doha**

**16 June 2021**

***Check against delivery***

**Your Excellency Mr. Speaker,**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with great pleasure that I am here with you today, and I would like to sincerely thank our gracious hosts for the warm welcome to the wonderful city of Doha.

It is an honor to be here in presence for the opening of the new UNOCT Programme Office dedicated to parliamentary action.

Indeed, the establishment of this new Center represents a milestone achievement for the United Nations and for the global parliamentary community.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Parliamentarians play a key role in counterterrorism. We create legislative frameworks for ensuring the adoption of any successful strategy to address the challenges posed by terrorism.

In our role, as representatives of our citizens, we have the duty to address the root causes of terrorism and its manifestations, and to constructively engage in the difficult, sometimes controversial, debates in this regard.

Parliamentarians are also responsible to ensure that our laws strike the delicate balance between security guarantees and civic rights we enjoy as citizens.

Moreover, in our oversight capacity, MPs must ensure that all of our states' efforts in the fight against terrorism are in line with the rule of law and international human rights obligations.

MPs are also entrusted with ensuring that both law enforcement agencies and judges receive all the legal, material and financial support they need to prevent, counter and prosecute terrorists, both at the national and international level.

Last but not least, through Parliamentary diplomacy, at PAM we come together to share legislative experience in better implementing the UN Global Counter-terrorism Strategy.

Dear colleagues,

The countries of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean have been the most affected by terrorism. This is why PAM has always put counter terrorism at the core of its activities. PAM was the first organization, ever, to agree on a definition of terrorism.

Countering terrorism and violent extremism, and radicalization, became even more urgent with the rise of ISIL in 2014.

At the request of the Security Council, PAM teamed up with the United Nations to ensure that national legislations are in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and that legal terminology is harmonized across the region.

Through joint actions with CTED and UNODC, PAM helped to raise awareness about and address the phenomenon of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs).

Then, with the establishment of the UNOCT, PAM has also structured a close cooperation with the new UN Office. Years of successful collaboration led to the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations in February 2021.

I am confident that with the establishment of the Doha Office, we will be able to achieve even more in our joint efforts.

I want to express my gratitude to our colleagues in Qatar for their leadership on this critical matter.

**Dear colleagues,**

Before concluding, let me brief you about the last developments in the works of PAM on counterterrorism.

Our Assembly has recently held its 15<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session, during which I presented my report and policy recommendations to our member parliaments, in my capacity as the Chair of the PAM Counter-Terrorism Committee.

In my recommendations, I strongly encouraged PAM Parliaments to engage in constructive dialogue at a national level to explore viable options to address the status of their nationals held in detention camps in North East Syria and Iraq.

I also urged all PAM Member States to carefully examine the issue of terrorist recidivism in their national parliaments.

Last, but not least, I called for political action within our countries to reinforce support to our neighbors in the Sahel and throughout Africa, to strengthen counterterrorism efforts and mobilize both political and financial resources to address the root causes of the ongoing destabilization.

While our Assembly will continue to work on these pressing issues, we will also start tackling new challenges.

With this aim, PAM will work closely with UNOCT and other strategic partners to design an action plan for the next steps.

I am confident that the new Office in Doha will be key in facilitating this plan.

Thank you.