



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN  
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE  
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط



UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF COUNTER-TERRORISM

## PRESS RELEASE

**The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism hold a high-level virtual meeting on assessing the challenges of the post-territorial ISIL context, and sign a cooperation agreement to enhance future joint action**

**15 February 2021, New York/Naples** - The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) co-organized a virtual meeting on the “Challenges of the post-territorial ISIL context.” The meeting gathered over 100 participants, including PAM Parliamentarians, United Nations representatives, leading counter-terrorism experts and key partners, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) South Hub, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE PA), among others.

Following the welcoming remarks by Senator Alia Bouran, PAM President Emeritus and President of the First Standing Committee on Political and Security-related Cooperation, Honorable Gennaro Migliore, Chair of the PAM Special Parliamentary Committee on Counterterrorism, and Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of UNOCT, opened the joint parliamentary event. H.E. Mr. Ahmed Bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar and Ms. Michèle Coninx, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) also participated in the high-level opening.

Additionally, UNOCT and PAM signed a Memorandum of Understanding, to further consolidate their partnership. The agreement provides a framework for fostering the engagement of parliamentarians from the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf regions in the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

“UNOCT recognizes the critical role played by Members of Parliament in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism, working hand-in-hand with Governments,” Mr. Voronkov said. He added that with the generous support of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar, UNOCT is opening a Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism in Doha in the second half of 2021 to foster collaboration with parliamentarians. “Through its new parliamentary office in Doha, UNOCT is looking forward to working with PAM and the global parliamentary community to achieve a safer world—one without terrorism—for present and future generations,” he stressed.

“This meeting is an amazing opportunity to speak about the challenges of repatriation, prosecution, deradicalization, evaluating the threat of recidivism, and strengthening international counterterrorism cooperation” said Sen. Alia Bouran in her welcoming remarks.

The virtual signing ceremony was followed by two thematic sessions. The first expert discussion focused on assessing the challenges of the post-territorial ISIL context. Emphasis was placed on the issues of prosecution, reintegration, and rehabilitation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and their

family members; the UN support to Member States in response to requests from national governments, which have repatriated, or are committed to repatriating to their nations from conflict zones; the threat of terrorist recidivism and the necessity to improve deradicalization programmes; as well as the resurgence of jihadist activity in the Sahel.

Speakers underlined that the status quo on ISIL survivors in Syria and Iraq represents both a humanitarian crisis and a risk to international security and called for a collective effort to address this issue.

Participants also highlighted that one of the key challenges is to estimate the actual danger posed by convicted terrorists after their release. In this regard, they stressed the need to adopt effective legislation to mitigate the risk of recidivism, while ensuring policies are in line with constitutional norms and human rights.

“Recent terrorist attacks, such as those in Vienna last year, have demonstrated that there is a significant danger posed by terrorist recidivism” highlighted Hon. Migliore, and noted that “PAM Parliaments need to address this issue from a policy and legislative levels”.

The second session comprised a high-level panel focusing on different regional perspectives and initiatives on counter-terrorism in the Euro-Mediterranean and Gulf regions. Representatives from Morocco, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the OSCE PA shared their good practices and lessons learned in fostering multilateral counter-terrorism cooperation.

The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting will provide a sound basis to identify priorities and shape an action-oriented PAM-UNOCT plan of action. The legislative recommendations will also feed into a report and a resolution that PAM will debate at its next Plenary Session to provide effective support to PAM Member Parliaments to address the challenges of the post-territorial ISIL context.

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*For more information*

- Ms. Laurence Gerard, UNOCT, [gerardl@un.org](mailto:gerardl@un.org) - [www.un.org/counterterrorism](http://www.un.org/counterterrorism) - @UN\_OCT
- PAM Media Section, [info@pam.int](mailto:info@pam.int) – [www.pam.int](http://www.pam.int) - @Pam\_Int