



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism

*Parliamentarians at the strategic forefront of prevention,
building pathways for peace and a better future
for the victims of terrorism*

9 September 2021, Vienna

Concept Note

1. Introduction

The Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism is part of the IPU Programmes and is the first such Summit to be held in partnership between the IPU and the United Nations. The Summit is an important component of the trilateral Memorandum of Understanding between the IPU, the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism signed in May 2019, and is being jointly organized by the IPU and the United Nations (UNODC and UNOCT). The Summit will be taking place at a critical time, as the international community and global and national economies seek to recover from a devastating pandemic. This Summit will allow parliamentarians to identify lasting solutions and make a parliamentary contribution to global efforts in counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism, with robust action and a real impact on communities, in particular the victims of terrorism. The ultimate goal of the Summit will be to advance peace and sustainable development in regions where terrorist groups have exploited the pandemic and remain a significant threat to international peace and security, as is the case in the Sahel countries.

2. Background

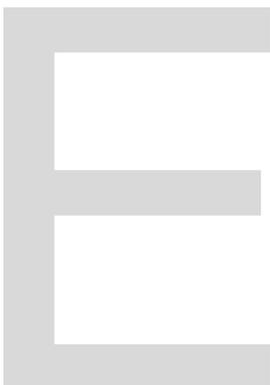
For the past 20 years, the global parliamentary community has paid special attention to terrorism. Since 1996, the IPU has adopted 12 resolutions¹ related to terrorism, which have all highlighted the need for cooperation with the relevant United Nations organizations² in order to support the implementation of UN strategies, including the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. IPU Member Parliaments unanimously adopted a resolution promoting this Strategy and committing to providing the legislative support required for the implementation of relevant UN resolutions.³

At the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg, Russia in October 2017, Member Parliaments endorsed the establishment of the parliamentary High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG), to serve as the global focal point for parliamentary activities related to counter-terrorism efforts. The establishment of the HLAG led to the creation within the IPU of a Programme on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism.

¹ IPU resolutions 1996/95; 2001/106; 2001/105; 2002/107; 2003/108; 2005/113; 2005/112; 2006/115; 2007/116; 2010/122; 2015/132; 2016/134.

² IPU resolutions 2001/05, para.4; 2002/107 paras 6 and 8; 2003/108, paras 24 and 34; 2005/112, para.13; 2006/115, para. 9; 2006/115, paras 10 and 12; 2006/132, paras 2, 5 and 11; 2016/134, para.26.

³ IPU resolution 2006/115.



The IPU Programme supports the work of parliamentarians at the national, regional and international levels by facilitating the transposition of international resolutions and strategies into domestic legislation. One of the key elements of the Programme is the provision of parliamentary capacity-building and access to the databases on counter-terrorism legislation, case law, bibliography, strategies and treaties available on SHERLOC at: <https://sherloc.unodc.org>.

Furthermore, the Programme promotes regional parliamentary cooperation, including avenues of cooperation with the United Nations, the establishment of a Global Parliamentary Network, the production of annual world parliamentary reports, the design of an Interactive Map, and the provision of a mobile application and toolkits for parliaments. One of the planned Programme activities is to hold one of the most important meetings on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism: the Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism, which is expected to be held every two years.

3. Objectives

This Global Parliamentary Summit will bring together various stakeholders, including parliamentarians from around the world, the United Nations, experts, members of regional Parliamentary Assemblies, victims of terrorism, representatives of civil society and community leaders, with the objective of identifying the best way for parliamentarians to address the different causes of terrorism and violent extremism, and to find appropriate measures that can be implemented to enact positive and real impact on the ground and within communities.

Date and venue

The Summit will take place on Thursday, 9 September in Vienna from 09:00 to 18:00. A meeting of the HLAG will precede the Summit.

Programme

The Summit will begin with a high-level segment with welcoming addresses by:

- the President of the Austrian National Council
- the IPU President

These will be followed by keynote addresses by:

- the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism,
- the IPU Secretary General

After the high-level segment, there will be three thematic sessions on various topics related to counter-terrorism and violent extremism.

Session 1: ***Parliamentary response to support the victims of terrorism***

Victims of terrorism will address the global parliamentary community and the United Nations so as to provide their perspectives, intended to guide participants in the search for real solutions. This session will focus on how the international community can work together in coordination with communities and civil society, so that the difficult situation of victims of terrorism ceases to be a forgotten issue. Since 2016, the IPU has increased efforts to raise global awareness about the victims of terrorism, and since 2017 it has organized sessions with victims of terrorism from the Sahel region and the Middle East to bring forward a strong counter-narrative to terrorism.

After this session, the IPU will launch a number of counter-terrorism tools

The IPU has designed tools in the context of efforts to establish an interactive parliamentary network that forges greater coordination among parliamentarians. These ICT tools are intended to support parliamentarians in their efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism. They provide up-to-date information about counter-terrorism around the globe, in order to raise awareness, increase connectivity and unify global efforts on counter-terrorism. These tools are also structured to facilitate legislative implementation of related UN resolutions and strategies.

Session 2: ***Role of parliaments in the prevention of terrorism, radicalization and hate speech***

Terrorism is a global challenge that the international community as a whole has to combat effectively. Terrorism and violent extremism remain an increasing threat, which cannot be addressed effectively by military operations and security measures alone.

Terrorist and extremist groups tend to use marginalized areas, taking advantage of local problems to recruit young citizens in vulnerable life situations. It is necessary to address the root causes and underlying conditions that may lead individuals to join these terrorist or extremist groups.

Parliamentarians must therefore step up their work with key actors in regions and communities. A particular focus should be placed on the role of women, youth, local stakeholders and civil society, including religious and community leaders, to work together in the prevention of violence, strengthening resilience against radicalization and hate speech, and enhancing governance by improving government institutions through more community engagement.

Session 3: ***The call for the Sahel***

The increasing violence and deteriorating security situation in the Sahel region have had a significant impact on communities, societies and economies. Indeed, the Sahel region has suffered a devastating surge in terrorist attacks against civilian and military targets. Terrorist groups are present across borders and repeatedly target communities and national institutions through coordinated attacks, taking advantage of porous borders.

The insecurity resulting from armed conflict, terrorism and transnational organized crime renders the countries of the Sahel region increasingly vulnerable, and therefore impairs opportunities for achieving development. Concerted efforts by the governments and parliaments of the countries of the Sahel region, combined with the support of the other regions, is desperately needed in order to tackle these challenges more effectively.

The G5 Sahel created the Joint Task Force in 2017 to strengthen the fight against threats to peace and security, and bolster development. Its main objectives are to collect, process and share relevant criminal information on a diverse range of actors in a highly complex environment. The numerous challenges that the Sahel faces today require effective counterterrorism measures within a multidimensional approach, in order to cover many different fields, with a greater focus on preventive approaches.

The Summit will be an opportunity for parliaments, civil society, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to join the call for saving the Sahel countries from the plague of terrorism. The Summit will discuss the problems and challenges that this region is facing and examine how we can find real solutions that provide support to a population that has suffered dramatically, as well as to the victims of terrorism in this region.

4. Outcomes of the Summit

- Raising awareness of the issues faced by the victims of terrorism at a global level.
- Institutionalizing the relationship between legislators and executives on the national and international level for the support of global efforts for countering terrorism and violent extremism.
- Increasing awareness of resources needed and funding gaps for Sahel countries for the implementation of specific projects and programmes that can support the CT and PVE efforts of these countries.

5. Contact details

Additional information and a full agenda are available at: <https://www.ipu.org/event/first-global-parliamentary-summit-counter-terrorism>

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