



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# 143rd IPU Assembly

Madrid, Spain  
26-30 November 2021



## Workshop on *Good parliamentary practices to promote interfaith dialogue*

Sunday, 28 November 2021, 16:00 – 18:00  
Hall Roma, 2nd floor, Palacio Municipal (IFEMA)

### Concept Note

With four out of five people worldwide professing a religious faith,<sup>1</sup> human mobility on the rise and religion-driven violent extremism a very real concern for many societies, the question of the role of parliaments and parliamentarians in promoting interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence is highly topical.

The key functions of parliaments – law-making, budgeting, representation and oversight – make them the guardians of the rule of law, citizenship, human rights and justice in our societies. The IPU Declaration on *Promoting cultural pluralism and peace through interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue*, adopted on the occasion of the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg in 2017, recalls the obligation of national authorities to build inclusive societies which promote sustainable and peaceful diversity in order to combat divisive narratives, intolerance and violence. It also encourages parliamentarians to engage with cultural stakeholders and religious leaders, guided by the principles of transparency, accountability and the rule of law.

The setting of the 143rd IPU Assembly in a region that was a global centre for interreligious coexistence in the Middle Ages, and which has been the setting for many historic interfaith and intercultural events in recent times, affords a unique opportunity to convene a workshop on ***Good parliamentary practices to promote interfaith dialogue***. The workshop will bring together parliamentarians, representatives of the United Nations and experts working in different religious, geographical and cultural contexts to share insights into the important role of parliaments in promoting the peaceful coexistence of people of different faiths and those of no faith, especially through the passing of legislation that guarantees freedom of religion or belief, the promotion of equal rights for all religious communities, as well as taking measures to prevent and counter hate speech and promote a culture of tolerance and understanding.

Participants are invited to share good practices being implemented by parliaments and parliamentarians at the national and regional level, as well as the different challenges they face. The deliberations of this workshop will also contribute to the design of the *World Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue: Working together for peace and humanity*, which is being organized by the IPU in cooperation with the United Nations and will be held in St Petersburg on 16-18 May 2022.

The workshop will explore the following questions:

- What are examples of model legislation and good practices at the national and regional level that promote interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence?

---

<sup>1</sup> See *The Global Religious Landscape*, Pew Research Center, 18 December 2012, <https://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>

- Does your parliament have a specialized committee or structure dealing with interfaith and intercultural dialogue and, if so, what are its core mandate and functions?
- What kinds of challenges are being faced in reconciling religious identity and citizenship, and how can these be addressed?
- What are some examples of how measures to promote citizenship have strengthened social cohesion or prevented radicalization?
- What measures are needed to strengthen citizenship, the rule of law and statehood to create strong and resilient multi-faith societies?
- What major issues can parliaments anticipate facing in the future?
- What contribution can the IPU make to promoting national or international parliamentary dialogue around and interest in interfaith issues?