



CONCEPT NOTE

THE GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON COUNTER-TERRORISM AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

7-8 October 2025

Istanbul, Türkiye

Venue: [Hilton Istanbul Bakirkoy](#)

In-person with limited virtual participation

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

In recent years, the global security environment has become increasingly volatile, with terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism continuing to evolve in both form and scope. Terrorist groups are exploiting regional vulnerabilities, conflict settings, and emerging technologies to advance their objectives, while national and international responses often struggle to keep pace. The growing nexus between terrorism and organized crime—manifested in illicit arms trafficking, financial crimes, smuggling, and the use of new technologies for terrorist purposes—has further complicated the threat landscape. These persistent and complex threats underscore the urgent need for coherent, rights-based, and collaborative counter-terrorism approaches.

However, several enduring challenges continue to undermine the effectiveness of such responses. The absence of a universally agreed definition of terrorism remains a fundamental legal and policy gap—limiting the consistency of legislative frameworks and impeding international cooperation. In parallel, the occurrence of terrorism in the context of armed conflict raises serious questions regarding the applicability and enforcement of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as well as the adequacy of domestic legal frameworks to ensure accountability and civilian protection.

Parliaments play an essential role in addressing these challenges. As institutions responsible for legislating, overseeing executive action, allocating public resources, and upholding human rights, national parliaments are uniquely positioned to develop and support comprehensive and legitimate counter-terrorism laws and policies in line with international human rights norms and standards. Nonetheless, many legislatures continue to face capacity constraints, policy fragmentation, and limited access to global expertise and good practices in the fields of counter-terrorism and the prevention and countering of violent extremism conducive to terrorism (CT/PCVE).



In response, the [United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism \(UNOCT\)](#), through its [Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism](#), has worked to strengthen the role of parliaments and foster inter-parliamentary cooperation. A cornerstone of this effort has been the establishment of the [Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism](#)—a unique and innovative platform that currently brings together 17 parliamentary assemblies from across the world. The Mechanism provides an inclusive space for national parliaments and international parliamentary assemblies to exchange experiences, identify shared priorities, and coordinate actions to advance more harmonized and effective legislative responses to terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism.

Since 2021, through the Coordination Mechanism—supported by the [Shura Council of the State of Qatar](#)—and in close collaboration with its participating assemblies, the UNOCT Programme Office has successfully convened seven meetings of the Coordination Mechanism, five parliamentary conferences, and four thematic Parliamentary Policy Dialogues. These engagements have examined regional and legislative responses to terrorism and violent extremism across various contexts and reaffirmed the critical role of parliaments in shaping inclusive, accountable, and human rights-compliant and gender-responsive counter-terrorism strategies.

This work also aligns with broader multilateral efforts to promote inclusive governance and strengthen global cooperation on peace and security, as reaffirmed in the [Pact for the Future](#), adopted at the 2024 Summit of the Future, affirms the need to revitalize multilateralism and ensure that global responses to critical threats—including terrorism—are firmly grounded in international law, human rights, and accountable institutions. The Pact also committed to implementing a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to prevent and counter terrorism and violent extremism, including by addressing the drivers of terrorism. In this context, the Conference seeks to contribute to efforts to realize that commitment by engaging parliamentary perspectives in counter-terrorism dialogue and strategy.

Looking ahead, the Ninth Review of the [United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy](#), scheduled for 2026, will coincide with the 20th anniversary of the Strategy's adoption. This milestone offers a critical opportunity not only to reflect on the progress and challenges of the past two decades, but also to strengthen the Strategy's relevance and effectiveness in the face of evolving threats. Against this backdrop, the perspectives and priorities of national parliaments and parliamentary assemblies can meaningfully inform the review process. Drawing on their legislative experience and institutional mandates, parliaments are well positioned to contribute to the development of counter-terrorism laws and policies that are evidence-based, accountable, and firmly grounded in the rule of law and human rights. In doing so, they play a critical role in ensuring participatory, informed, and inclusive law- and policy-making—one that fosters engagement with diverse civil society actors, including women, youth, and grass-roots organizations, and strengthens the transparency, accountability, and legitimacy of decision-making.



By convening legislators and representatives of parliamentary assemblies from across the globe, the Conference will support the development of actionable, parliament-driven recommendations to inform the Strategy's 2026 review. These recommendations will reflect the legislative experience, oversight responsibilities, and strategic priorities of parliaments and assemblies on the frontlines of counter-terrorism efforts. In doing so, the Conference will contribute to ensuring that the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy remains responsive, inclusive, and fit for purpose.

In addition, the year 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), which laid the foundation for the [Women, Peace and Security \(WPS\)](#) agenda. This milestone reaffirms the importance of women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in peace and security efforts, including in CT/PCVE. Resolution 2242 (2015) underscores the need to integrate gender perspectives and support women's leadership in these areas. As the Conference takes place in October—globally recognized as Women, Peace and Security Month—it provides a timely opportunity to advance gender-responsive, rights-based counter-terrorism approaches within the broader framework of the GCTS review and implementation.

II. OBJECTIVE

The Global Parliamentary Conference on Counter-Terrorism and the Prevention of Violent Extremism will aim to:

1. **Strengthen the role of parliaments** in developing comprehensive and coherent legislative responses to evolving terrorist threats, with a particular focus on the convergence between terrorism and organized crime, and the intersection of terrorism and armed conflict.
2. **Foster regional and international cooperation** by facilitating structured dialogue and knowledge exchange between national parliaments and regional parliamentary assemblies, with an emphasis on harmonizing approaches to legal frameworks and oversight mechanisms.
3. **Promote the adoption of human rights-compliant and gender-responsive counter-terrorism policies** by raising awareness of parliamentarians about the tools and strategies and standards to ensure that counter-terrorism laws and practices are aligned with international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and international refugee law.
4. **Support the development of concrete parliamentary recommendations** that can contribute substantively to the upcoming review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2026, ensuring the Strategy reflects the legislative and oversight needs of national parliaments.



III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Conference will seek to deliver the following key outcomes:

- An **Outcome Document**, containing concrete and actionable recommendations for strengthening national CT/PVE legislation and their compliance with international law, promoting participatory and accountable decision-making including through full, equal and meaningful participation of women, enhancing parliamentary oversight and advancing international and inter-parliamentary cooperation. These recommendations will serve as a key parliamentary contribution to global counter-terrorism policy discussions.
- Substantive **contributions to the ninth review** of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2026, compiled in an outcome document reflecting the legislative experience, oversight roles, and regional perspectives of national parliaments and parliamentary assemblies.
- The initiation and development of an outline for a **reference document** compiling good legislative and policy practices on parliamentary approaches to CT/PCVE. This outline will serve as the foundation for a future document that may include guiding principles, model legislative elements, and oversight frameworks—particularly in areas such as the definition of terrorism, the terrorism–organized crime nexus, responses to terrorism in the context of armed conflict, and the misuse of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, in compliance with international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law
- **Enhanced coordination and collaboration** among national parliaments, regional parliamentary assemblies, UN entities, international organizations, and research institutions, building on the foundation of the Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism. The Conference will support the strengthening of inter-parliamentary networks and alignment of legislative and oversight approaches in the field of CT/PVE.

IV. PARTICIPANTS

- Members of national parliaments of Member States, members of parliamentary committees on peace, security, terrorism and violent extremism-related issues.
- Representatives of parliamentary assemblies – participants of the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Mechanism of Parliamentary Assemblies;
- Relevant UN agencies, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, UN Development Programme (UNDP), Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), UN Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and others;



- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)—including human rights groups, women-led organizations, research institutes, academic bodies, and professional associations—working in the area of CT/PCVE.

V. FORMAT

The event will be held in a **hybrid format**, with in-person participation prioritized and limited virtual participation available for delegates unable to travel. This approach aims to maximize inclusivity while ensuring meaningful interaction and collaboration.

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French, Arabic, Russian, and Spanish to ensure broad accessibility and engagement.

VI. STRUCTURE

The Conference will be conducted over two days and structured to foster both strategic dialogue and actionable outcomes. It will feature a combination of plenary sessions, thematic expert panels and open discussions.

Day One – Legislative Gaps and Shared Challenges

Opening Session

High-level remarks from UNOCT leadership, Shura Council of the State of Qatar, the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and other representatives of the host government. The session will set the strategic tone of the conference and highlight the importance of parliamentary contributions to CT/PCVE efforts.

Session I – Toward a Common Understanding: Addressing the Absence of an Internationally Agreed Definition of Terrorism

This session will examine the legal, political, and operational implications of the lack of a universally agreed definition of terrorism. Participants will discuss the impact on national legislation, judicial cooperation, and accountability, human rights, civil society, including women-led organizations, and explore pathways for greater legislative coherence.

Session II – The Nexus Between Terrorism and Organized Crime

This discussion will explore the convergence of terrorist and criminal networks, including financing, arms trafficking, trafficking in person, smuggling, and cybercrime. It will consider the legislative and policy tools required to address this increasingly interlinked threat and ensure cross-sectoral collaboration in CT/PCVE frameworks.



Session III – Responding to Terrorism in Armed Conflict Settings

This session will address the complex legal and policy challenges that arise when terrorism occurs in the context of armed conflict. Participants will explore the interaction between international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and counter-terrorism legislation. Topics will include the treatment of foreign terrorist fighters, protection of civilians, sexual violence committed by terrorist groups, detention practices, the legal status of women and children associated with terrorist groups, the potential impact of counter-terrorism legislation on principled humanitarian activities, and the role of parliaments in overseeing CT measures in conflict and post-conflict environments. The session will also touch on transitional justice approaches and the integration of CT considerations into peacebuilding and recovery strategies.

Day Two – Innovation, Oversight, and Strategic Vision

Session IV – Addressing Emerging Threats: Legislative and Policy Responses to Technological Misuse in Terrorism

This session will focus on how national parliaments and regional parliamentary assemblies are responding to the misuse of emerging technologies—such as artificial intelligence, encrypted communications, and online platforms—by terrorist actors. It will highlight existing legislative and policy responses, national and regional strategies, and parliamentary oversight practices aimed at mitigating these risks while safeguarding fundamental rights. It will also explore possible risks, including on human rights, of leveraging emerging technologies for counter-terrorism purposes. The discussion will emphasize lessons learned and good practices that can inform future parliamentary action and contribute to broader international efforts to counter terrorism in the digital age.

Session V – Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight of Counter-Terrorism Efforts

This session will highlight the essential role of parliaments in ensuring that counter-terrorism measures are transparent, accountable, and grounded in human rights. As the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy approaches its 20th anniversary, the discussion will take stock of parliamentary contributions to the oversight and implementation of CT/PVE legislation, policies, and strategies. It will examine lessons learned, persistent challenges, and good practices in legislative scrutiny, budgetary control, and institutional accountability. The session will also explore how parliaments can strengthen collaboration with civil society and promote the full, equal, and meaningful participation of all, including women, in counter-terrorism efforts.

Session VI – Informing Future Guidance: Key Legislative and Oversight Themes for Parliamentary Action

This session will provide a space for parliamentarians and representatives of parliamentary assemblies to reflect on the key themes and priorities emerging from the conference discussions. It will focus on identifying areas where further guidance, model legislative elements, and good practices would support national efforts to address terrorism and violent extremism in line with



international law and democratic principles. The session will serve as a first step in outlining the structure and content of a future reference document on parliamentary approaches to CT/PVE.

Closing Session

The final session will present key takeaways from the conference and formally adopt a consolidated set of parliamentary recommendations. These outcomes will serve as the collective contribution of national parliaments and parliamentary assemblies to the 2026 review of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, reinforcing the need for parliamentary perspectives in shaping future international efforts.