



Parliamentarians from Asia and the Pacific are committed to fight terrorism

Kuala Lumpur, 3 October 2019 - The three-day Regional Conference on the role of parliaments in preventing and countering terrorism and addressing conditions conducive to terrorism in Asia and the Pacific, organized by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and hosted by the House of Representatives of Malaysia, concluded today in Kuala Lumpur. The Conference was the third in a series of regional awareness raising meetings under the United Nations-IPU Programme.

Parliamentary delegations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vanuatu gathered to discuss ways to strengthen parliamentary contribution to efforts against terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Representatives from Italy, Namibia and Niger also participated as members of the IPU High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

At the conclusion of the conference, parliamentary delegations approved by consensus an outcome document with 15 recommendations and priority areas for strengthening the role of Members of Parliament in combatting terrorism and violent extremism nationally and globally.

Topics such as addressing the root causes of terrorism, the protection of religious sites, counter-narratives to hate speech strengthening border security, the implementation of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Records (API/PNR) systems, were highlighted as high priorities in Asia and the Pacific.

Parliamentarians also expressed their solidarity with victims of terrorism and stressed the importance to protect their rights and needs and those of their families. Furthermore, they committed to promote comprehensive prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration strategies for individuals associated with terrorist groups and measures to cope with stigmatization and social exclusion of family members of terrorist offenders to prevent further radicalization.

Recognizing gender equality as a preventative measure against radicalization, Members of Parliaments in Asia and the Pacific also discussed ways to empower women and young girls, especially female-headed households.

Background

The United Nations and IPU are implementing the five-year Joint Programme on Parliaments Addressing Terrorism and Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism to help parliaments implement IPU resolutions, international conventions, protocols and UN Security Council resolutions related to terrorism. The Programme envisages the organization of two Global Parliamentary Summits in 2020 and 2022, the establishment of a Global Parliamentary Network, and the development of the Legal Databases, the production of annual world parliamentary reports, as well as the design of a web-based platform, mobile application and toolkits. One of the key elements of the Joint Programme is the delivery of parliamentary capacity building. The Databases with counter-terrorism legislation, case law, bibliography, strategies and treaties are available at: <https://sherloc.unodc.org>.

UNOCT was established in June 2017 to provide leadership on the implementation of General Assembly counter-terrorism mandates, to enhance coordination and coherence through the Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, and to strengthen the delivery of the United Nations counter-terrorism capacity building assistance to Member States, through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT).

UNODC as mandated by the General Assembly is one of the United Nations' key providers of counterterrorism technical assistance in the legal, criminal justice and related areas. UNODC works to promote the ratification, legislative incorporation and implementation of the international legal instruments against terrorism, that is the 19 international counter-terrorism conventions and protocols and relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions; as well as to facilitate regional and international judicial and law enforcement cooperation in terrorism-related matters.

The IPU is the global organization of parliaments. It was founded in 1889 as the first multilateral political organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations. Today, the IPU comprises 179 national member parliaments and 12 regional parliamentary bodies. It promotes democracy, helps parliaments become stronger, younger, gender-balanced, and more diverse. It also defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of MPs from around the world. Twice a year, the IPU convenes over 1,500 delegates and MPs in a world assembly, bringing a parliamentary dimension to the work of the United Nations and the implementation of the 2030 global goals.