



Press Release

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Speech by The Parliamentary Secretary for Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing during the UN Alliance of Civilizations Focal Points Meeting on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean

Excellency High Representative Mr. Al Nasser,
Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to address you on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), which is a proud member of the “Group of Friends” of the Alliance of Civilizations.

PAM’s main objective is to forge, through parliamentary diplomacy, political, economic and social integration among its member States, in order to find common solutions to the challenges facing the Mediterranean peoples.

While we need to find political solutions to conflicts, we must also address the issues of economic and sustainable development to tackle the root causes of extremism. Our Assembly has focused a consistent part of its work on this, particularly through activities of the PAM Panel on Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean.

To fight intolerance and violence, we must unify our efforts and engage all the society, from political and religious leaders to academic experts and civil society, and forge a multi-faceted response that respects international human rights and humanitarian law.

One key priority is the revitalization of the inter-religious dialogue and the spreading of the values carried by all faiths, based on renouncing violence, promoting peace and encouraging exchange.

Mr Chair,

Communities must not be left alone in fighting violent extremism; we must listen to their experiences and concerns, and work together to create behavioural shifts and changing mind-sets.

Youths are both the primary victims of radical ideologies and the main target for recruitment by violent extremist groups. We must show them a better way through endeavours to end poverty, inequality, exclusion and lack of opportunity, while assuring access to education.

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As parliamentarians, we are strongly committed to reach these goals which can be efficiently supported by a constructive use of media, particularly social media, to build trust to foster tolerance and civic values.

PAM, as part of its role as the leading international parliamentary organization in the Mediterranean region, promoting cooperation and dialogue among Member States, has also established an Academic Platform to consolidate synergies among the principle actors in the fields of higher education and research for the benefit of intercultural dialogue and exchange, objective oriented education and training, and employment opportunities.

Mr Chair,

Our role as parliaments is also to provide a platform for political and social dialogue. This was also recognized on the occasion of the Group of Friends Meeting at the Ministerial Level, held at the UN Headquarters in New York on 27 September 2013, where the Alliance adopted a Ministerial Declaration in which, at PAM's suggestion, it recognizes the role of national and regional parliaments and their active contribution at the international level through the process of soft diplomacy.

Following the model experience of the "Centre for Education of Imams" in Morocco, to counter the spread of extremism violence through the mosques, and recalling the presentation that the Government of Morocco gave of this best practise at the UN Security Council, in spring 2016 PAM will organize a Parliamentary.

On behalf of PAM I reiterate our continued commitment to prevent the spread of violent extremism in our region.

I thank you.