

# **High-Level Panel on The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combating Violent Extremism**

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# **High-Level Panel on The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combating Violent Extremism**

**UN Headquarters, New York, 21 July, 15.00 -18.00**

## **LIST OF SPEAKERS**

**Co-organisers** UNESCO, the Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN, Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics

With the Patronage of H.E. Prof. Frederico Mayor, President, Fundacion Cultura de Paz

## **Keynote Speakers:**

- Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO
- Mr Jehangir Khan, USG and Chairman of the Counter-terrorism Implementation Task Force
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- H.E. Ambassador Kiarat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the UN
- Video Address, H.E. Frederico Mayor

**Moderator:** Gianni Picco, former USG

## **Panelists:**

### **Panel 1 – The Call for National Legislation to Implement the Culture of Peace and Combat Violent Extremism**

- MEP. Lara Comi, EU Parliament Representative (Italy)
- M.P. Saman Jafri, Member of Parliament of Pakistan
- The Honorable Diane Watson, U.S. Congress(rt) and former Ambassador
- M.P. Oezcan Mutlu, Representative from Bundestag, German
- M.P. Jalila Morsli, Member of Parliament of Morocco
- Video Address – Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini, Chairman, Italian Senate Foreign Affairs Committee

### **Panel 2- The Multi Track Partnership of Religious Leaders, Educators and the Media in Putting the Legislation into Action**

- Dr. Lahoucide Khabid, President, Atlas Center for Diplomacy in Morocco
- Dr. Boris Pincus, President, Religions in Dialogue
- Imam Agha Jafri, Founder, American Muslim Congress
- Rabbi Yakov David Cohen, President UN NGO Institute of Noahide Code
- Dr. Wafik Moustafa, Chairman, Muslim Conservative Network UK
- Rev. Thomas Del Balle-Reyes, Catholic Holy Cross Church
- Shoshana Nicole Bekerman, Director, Inter-Parliamentary

## Coalition for Global Ethics

**Moderator:** Mayor Martin Oliner

**Affiliated Sponsors:**

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- The Institute for Noahide Code, UN NGO, Atlas Center for Diplomacy

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**Building peace starts on the parliamentarians' benches as much as on the benches of schools**



On 21 July, UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, addressed a High-Level Panel on “The Role of Parliaments for Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies and Combatting Violent Extremism”, organized by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, UNESCO, and the Interparliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics, at UN Headquarters in New York.

“Building peace and preventing violent extremism cannot be won with hard power only”, stated the Director-General. “We need soft power also, we need to win the battle of ideas, through education, through democratic debate, through a better understanding of each other’s cultures and religions” she

continued. "Parliaments play a critical role to address the challenges of our times, when not everything can be solved at the level of Governments or United Nations Agencies alone," said the Director-General in her opening speech highlighting that "parliamentarians have the unique power to bring solutions closer to the people, and make sure their needs and concerns are at the heart of our response."

The event brought together parliamentarians and representatives of the diplomatic community, the United Nations system and civil society in an effort to establish a closer collaboration on the development of a culture of peace and preventing the unprecedented rise of violent extremism. It aimed at the adoption of legislation for mandatory education on culture of peace and measures to prevent terrorism and violent extremism. It also aimed at strengthening the multi-track diplomacy partnership, to engage governments, the UN system, religious, academic, and media leaders to fulfil their respective roles to implement such aligned legislation. The Director-General gave an overview of UNESCO's action worldwide to prevent and counter violent extremism stating that "this starts on the benches of school, it must start with peace education, with textbooks and curricula that teach human rights, to prepare individuals to live as responsible citizens. Ms Emilia Gatto, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations, stressed that "there are no easy answers... we need to tackle the root causes of violent extremism, including marginalization, inequalities, discrimination, human rights violations, and hate speech, using the full toolbox offered by Agenda 2030". H.E. Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, urged that a long-term and comprehensive approach was needed to preventing and countering violent extremism, involving also regional and international cooperation, as a true requirement to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

In his intervention, Mr Jehangir Khan, Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, noted the key importance of dialogues with parliamentarians who represented the “citizens of the world”. He argued that violent extremism was one of the great challenges of the 21st century in particular in terms of preventing and saving the young generations from engaging in violent extremism. He also recalled the UN Secretary-General’s global plan of action, developed by the entire UN system.

Ms Hanifa Mezoui, Senior Advisor of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, commended UNESCO for having issued the Organization’s 2016 “Teacher’s Guide on the Prevention of Violent Extremism”. Ms Mezoui presented projects of the Alliance of Civilizations, aimed at strengthening religious cooperation and working through mediation as a form of preventive diplomacy.

The keynote session concluded with an address by Federico Mayor, President of the Foundation Culture de Paz, who recalled the important role of the UN High-Level Forum on a ‘culture of peace’, and urged parliamentarians to be at the forefront of the fight against extremist ideologies.

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***Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics***

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