



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE**  
الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

**Mid-Year report on the activities**  
**of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean**

9 July 2015

Distinguished delegates,

Dear colleagues,

On the eve of the summer recess 2015, I have the pleasure to share with all national delegations a brief overview of the activities of the Assembly in the first six months of the year. It is a very concise exercise to keep you abreast of the work accomplished by the Assembly, the Bureau, the Standing Committees and the Secretariat. The second half of 2015 will continue to see PAM active with the organization of selected events and the participation at international conferences, the details of which are available in the attached updated PAM Calendar of Events 2015 (attached for easy reference).

**Amb. Sergio Piazzì**  
**PAM Secretary General**

**1<sup>st</sup> Standing Committee on Political and Security-related Cooperation and Regional Stability**

On 17-19 February, the PAM Secretariat organized, in cooperation with the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), the UN and the EU, a conference dedicated to “Designing Effective Workshops to address the Foreign Terrorist Fighter Phenomenon within a Rule of Law Framework”. On the sidelines of the conference, held at the IIJ HQ in Malta, PAM invited MPs from Algeria and Morocco, as well as officials from International Organizations, to the PAM Secretariat headquarters for a briefing on PAM activities on counter-terrorism.

Following the request from the UN, in September 2014, for PAM’s assistance in the implementation of the legislative aspects of UN Security Council Resolution 2178, PAM organized, in collaboration with the UN Counter Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union (EU), a dedicated seminar for Parliamentarians of the Maghreb region on counter terrorism. The meeting, which was kindly

hosted by the Italian Senate, in Rome, on 26-27 February, focused on “The oversight of law enforcement and security services in the fight against terrorism”.

During this conference, the situation in Libya featured prominently, due to the growing presence of terrorist groups in the country, and their impact on stability in the region. PAM also used the sidelines of the meeting in Rome to take the opportunity to organize a series of bilateral meetings for the Libyan delegation with, inter alia, the President of the Italian Senate, the President of the Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Pier Ferdinando Casini, and members of the PAM Bureau and the Secretary General.

On 3-5 March, Sen. Halaqah (Jordan) represented PAM at the UN World Humanitarian Summit Consultations for the Middle East and North Africa region, which were held in Jordan. This event was part of a global consultations process, which will shape the agenda for the main summit to be held in Turkey, next year.

During the month of March, PAM Secretary General met with Dr. Fadeel Lameen, Chairman of the National Dialogue Preparatory Commission for Libya, at the Assembly’s Headquarters in Malta. The current developments in Libya were discussed, and PAM reaffirmed its commitment to dialogue, negotiations, and to reaching a political solution to the Libyan crisis.

On 23 March, PAM participated in the First Regional Conference: “Foreign Terrorist Fighters: Threat Assessment and Identification of Key Issues and Challenges in the National Legislative Frameworks”, which was held in Valletta, Malta. This meeting was held to launch the UN five-year initiative on Criminal Justice Responses to Foreign Terrorist Fighters, at which UNODC and PAM worked together in assuring the full Parliamentary engagement in fighting the FTF. PAM was represented at this meeting by Hon. Justyne Caruana (Malta).

On 24 March, PAM Secretary General met the new Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Malta, at the Headquarters in St. Julian’s. The Secretary General used the opportunity to discuss with the Ambassador priority issues for both sides, including the Libyan, Syrian and Ukrainian crisis, terrorism, the FTF phenomenon, and also the sanctions against Russia.

On 24-26 March, a PAM delegation participated at the 12th Dubai International Humanitarian Conference (DIHAD), in the United Arab Emirates. Sen. Lhou Lmarbouh (Morocco) addressed the conference on PAM’s activities on water and energy issues. PAM Secretary General also stressed PAM’s commitment to humanitarian assistance to civilians in conflict, as well as the need to effectively address the rise in human trafficking operations in the Mediterranean.

On the occasion of the 132<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on 28 March – 1 April, a very high level delegation of PAM travelled to Hanoi, Vietnam, headed by President Biadillah, and including PAM Vice President, Hon. Tayseer Quba’a (Palestine), and Honorary PAM President, Sen. Francesco Amoroso (Italy).

On 28-29 April, at the request of the UNSG and upon the invitation of the Syrian Parliament, PAM conducted a mission to Damascus and Beirut. The delegation was headed by PAM Secretary General, who was accompanied by Hon. Bilal Kasem (Palestine) and PAM Deputy Secretary General Mr. Mourad Youssry.

The PAM mission was intended to review the situation in the Palestinian Refugees Camp of Al Yarmouk, following the latest attacks on the Camp, located in the outskirts of Damascus, by Extremist Military groups, which deepened the humanitarian crisis in Syria and the region. Regarding the Yarmouk Camp, Hon. Bilal had the opportunity to discuss the situation with the Palestinian officials in Damascus responsible for the camp. The Syrian Government had facilitated the exit of 2350 families (almost 12 thousand civilians) after the attack on the Camp. Also, and in full cooperation with UNRWA, aid and medical supplies were sent to the camp, while the wounded people were evacuated.

In Damascus, the delegation met with the Speaker of the Parliament, members of the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs and those for the Committee on National Reconciliation, the Syrian Deputy Prime Minister, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Discussions focused on the political process for peace, the new round of Geneva negotiations, the challenges posed by terrorist activities in the country and humanitarian assistance. The delegation also met with members of the foreign diplomatic corps assigned to Damascus, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, and leaders of the Palestinian community in Syria.

In Beirut, PAM delegates met with the President of the Lebanese Parliament, senior officials of the United Nations humanitarian operations and UN ESCWA to discuss the regional dimension of the Middle East crisis, and the massive displacement of civilians.

PAM has participated at the 11<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), hosted by the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal in Lisbon, on 11-12 May 2015. Our Assembly was represented by Senator Francesco Amoroso (Italy), former PAM President, and PAM Secretary General, Amb. Sergio Piazzì.

In his address to the Plenary, dedicated to “Immigration, Asylum and Human Rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Region”, Sen. Amoroso reminded that security in Europe depends on the security in the Mediterranean. He reiterated the need to further strengthen collaboration among institutions like the UfM-PA and PAM, which in their complementary but unique roles, can tackle and propose concrete solutions to the diverse problems of the region. The Lisbon event also served as an occasion for a number of bilateral meetings, among which with the Vice President of the European Parliament, Hon. David Maria Sassoli, and other senior EU officials, on the reinforcement of cooperation between the two institutions.

On 16-17 May, PAM participated at the NATO Parliamentary Assembly’s spring session, in Budapest, Hungary. PAM was represented by Sen. Dr. Mohammed Halaiqah, who, after highlighting some of the activities on pressing security issues in the region, namely terrorism, proposed closer cooperation between PAM and NATO PA, so that MPs could benefit from the wealth of experience, knowledge and specialization of the two assemblies.

PAM also organized a Parliamentary Hearing on “Extremism, Terrorism, and tragedies of illegal immigration in the Mediterranean: which policies to face these renewed challenges?”, which was generously hosted by the Parliament of Morocco, in Rabat, on 26 May 2015. At this meeting, PAM MPs tackled for the first time, in a unified manner, key issues of competence of its three Standing Committees, so ensuring the coherence of the debate and the need for a systematic approach to the developments and prospects for the region. The meeting underscored the importance of sustainable development, targeted investments, and appropriate social policies,

which are considered as key for the stabilisation of the region in the framework of an integrated economic system in the Mediterranean, also keeping in mind the requirements resulting from Climate Change.

For the second semester of 2015, in the framework of the joint PAM/UN/EU program launched earlier this year, a Regional Seminar on Implementation of Resolution 2178 on Counter-Terrorism and Foreign Terrorist Fighters (specially dedicated to MPs from the MENA, the Balkans and Southern Europe regions) will take place in Bucharest, Romania, on 8-9 October 2015, kindly hosted by the Parliament of Romania and under the auspices of the President of the Republic. The event is the second joint PAM/UN/EU meeting dedicated to counter terrorism, and follows that hosted by the Italian Senate in Rome in February 2015, which was tailored for MPs from the Maghreb region. All PAM national parliaments will be invited to attend and contribute to the meeting in Bucharest, which is particularly relevant in view of the increased threat and escalation of terrorist activities in the region.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation, Development and Partnership;**

On Energy issues, PAM was particularly active through its Energy Group of the Panel on Trade and Investments in the Mediterranean, with the participation at a number of high level events. Sen. Lhou Lmarbough represented PAM at the MEDGRID Euromediterranean Meeting on Energy held in Brussels on 6 January, while MPs from the Parliament of Lebanon attended the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue at the end of March.

The PAM Secretary General participated at the 3rd MEDENER International Conference “Towards the Euro Mediterranean platform: financing energy efficiency and renewable energy sources”, which was held in Naples in April. The Conference was a concrete opportunity to analyze in depth the topics related, namely, to the functioning of the “Euro-Mediterranean Platform on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency” (PRESEE) and to discuss on what could be the contributions and the role of different stakeholders acting to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy in the region.

The PAM Panel Co-President, Eng. Alessandro Ortis attended the MEDREG Workshop on Interconnection Infrastructures in the Mediterranean in April, which was held in Egypt and where the draft of a Memorandum of Understanding has been finalized.

PAM, represented by Amb. Qazi Shaukat Fareed, Permanent Observer to the UN in New York, participated at the second Annual Sustainable Energy for All Forum (SE4ALL) convened on 18-21 May 2015. The event focused its discussions on the upcoming September UN Summit that will adopt the post 2015 development agenda, of which the issue of sustainable energy is a key element, and the COP21 Conference on Climate Change, in Paris, on 30 November - 11 December.

PAM was also invited to the General Assembly of MEDREG, which was held in Istanbul in May, and was represented by Hon. Fernando Serrasquero and Hon. Renato Sampaio, both Portuguese MPs.

At the end of June, Dr. Hafez El-Salmawy, President of MEDREG, and Amb. Sergio Piazzi, PAM Secretary General, signed a Cooperation Protocol to enhance the bilateral collaboration between the two organizations. The objective is to develop common activities and deepen institutional relations with the scope to facilitate the work of national Parliaments in designing energy laws, most notably regarding the competences of Energy Regulators and the liberalization of energy markets.

With regards to Food Security, PAM strengthened relations with the University of Siena on the occasion of the 2nd SDSN Mediterranean Conference: “Solutions for Agri-food Sustainability in the Mediterranean”. Many members of the PAM Platform attended the Siena event in March, where several bilateral meetings were held on its margins, including with additional academic and research institutions interested in joining the PAM Academic Platform

PAM also participated at the Private Sector Forum on Food Security in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Region, organized in Barcelona, on 5-6 May 2015, by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The PAM delegation was lead by the Secretary General, Ambassador Sergio Piazzi, who was accompanied by two leading academics from the University of Siena, Dr. Giacomo Fabietti and Dr. Antonella Autino.

Another important event attended by PAM MPs, Hon. Dif Allah Alsaideen (Jordan) and Hon. Fernando Serrasquero (Portugal), was the Global Parliamentary Conference 2015 held in Washington in April.

Climate Change is another priority area for PAM. To this effect PAM participated at the MEDCOP 21 Mediterranean Climate Summit, held in Marseille, on 4-5 June 2015. The Summit was organized by the Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur Region, presided by H.E. Michel Vauzelle, who is also PAM Vice-President. The two-day Conference was held under the high patronage of the President of the Republic of France, H.E. Mr. Francois Hollande. The objective of the event in Marseille was to highlight the common commitment in the fight against climate change and demonstrated the contribution of local authorities, associations, businesses, and networks working as catalysts for sustainable development. The Summit was held in the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which France will be hosting from November 30 to December 11, 2015.

Another two important events in the framework of the PAM 2<sup>nd</sup> Standing Committee attended by PAM parliamentarians were the Social and Environmental Progress: Europe in a Long-Run Perspective, organized by WWWforEurope in February in Brussels, and the Conference on Digital Integration and Efficiency in Textile and Clothing Value Chains across the Euro-Mediterranean Area organised in co-operation with DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs and Małopolska Kraków Region in April.

With regards to transport issues, in April PAM actively participated at the 1<sup>st</sup> Mare Forum in Malta, exploring the future of the shipping, marine and maritime industries in the Mediterranean, African and European region, represented by Hon. Justyne Caruana, Head of Delegation of the Maltese Parliament.

The last PAM activity for the first semester of 2015 was held in Pavia, Italy. The event was dedicated to ‘Waste Management and Food Security’ and was presided over by Sen. Emma Fattorini (Italy), PAM Vice President and President of the 2nd PAM Standing Committee. A visit to EXPO 2015 was also organized.

In the meantime, discussions are also underway for PAM to exchange Observer Status with the World Trade Organization (WTO), with whom a fruitful collaboration has been initiated.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Standing Committee on Dialogue among Civilizations and Human Rights**

Soon after PAM Plenary Session in Monaco, and on 11-12 February, PAM Secretary General addressed the EMUNI Annual Conference, which was held in Potoroz, Slovenia. On that occasion, the Secretary General underlined the importance of the cooperation process between EMUNI and PAM, following the participation of EMUNI at the launch of PAM’s Academic Platform in Catania in December 2014. This allowed for PAM to resume an important partnership.

In the framework of the PAM Academic Platform activities, our Assembly was invited on 17 – 19 March, to ‘Parmenides Forum VII: Common heritage and technologies: enhancement of heritage, a key to development’, which was organized by the Inter-Academic Group for Development (GID), in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Hon. Luka Denona, Head of the Croatian Delegation to PAM, represented the Assembly at this event. The GID is a PAM partner organization, with which a fruitful cooperation has been long established in the framework of the PAM Economic Panel and the Academic Platform. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between our Assembly and the GID, in Milan, on 12 June 2015.

On 30-31 March, PAM was represented by Hon. Maria Conceição Pereira, Head of Delegation of the Portuguese Parliament, at the Council of Europe and Parliament of Portugal’s Conference on ‘North-South Migration Dialogue’, which was held in Lagos (Algarve).

On 21-22 April, Hon. Maria Conceição Pereira, Hon. Pedro Roque from the Portuguese Parliament, represented PAM and addressed the UN General Assembly High-Level debate on ‘Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation: Fostering Peaceful, Inclusive Societies and Countering Violent Extremism’. The meeting was organized by the UN Secretary General, the President of the UN General Assembly and the High Representative of the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

On 14-15 May, a PAM meeting was held in Rabat at the generous invitation of the Moroccan Parliament, and under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI. The meeting addressed the topic of ‘Protection of Cultural Heritage threatened with Destruction’. This meeting was a milestone and was of great importance as it brought together MPs, members of UNESCO Executive Committee, regional organizations and parliaments, legal experts and also experts from Academic world.

The Secretary General, Amb. Sergio Piazzi, in collaboration with Mr. Frej Fenniche, Chief - Middle East and North Africa Section at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, organized the First Human Rights Induction Seminar for Parliamentarians of the Mediterranean Region, which was held on 18 – 19 June 2015, at the OHCHR HQ in Geneva, Switzerland. It is also the first time that the UN holds a Human Rights training programme for teams of parliamentarians ready to deploy on the field for emergency missions. The aim of the seminar was to familiarize PAM parliamentarians with human rights issues and related mechanisms; increasing their knowledge on the notion of protection of civilians, as well as providing tools to collect information, interview victims, report their findings and address human rights issues in the field. The event was organized following the adoption of a Report at the 9th Plenary Session in Monaco, where PAM member parliaments decided to set up a “Rapid Deployment Capacity” with a team of parliamentarians who would be deployed to conflict areas.

In light of the migration phenomenon and its humanitarian consequences in the Mediterranean Sea, PAM and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are working to strengthen their cooperation and will sign in the coming months an agreement to exchange observer status to the respective organizations.