

# Parliamentary action to promote and protect Human Rights

*Hernan Vales*

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# The main functions

- Legislate
- Oversee government activity
- Allocate financial resources
- Advocacy



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# Parliamentary Oversight



- Receiving regular reports from the Executive on its activities;
- Putting questions and interpellations to members of the Executive
- Setting up special commissions
- **Organising field visits to carry out enquiries** and propose remedial action, etc.

# Parliamentary action to promote and protect human rights

- Ratification of human rights treaties
  - Involvement in the drafting
  - Analysis of reservations
- Ensuring national implementation
  - Adopting the budget
  - Overseeing the executive branch
  - Follow up on recommendations or decisions
  - Establishing parliamentary human rights bodies
  - Adopting enabling legislation
- Creating and supporting an institutional infrastructure
- Mobilizing public opinion
- Participating in international efforts



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# International action

- Establish contacts with parliamentarians of other countries in order to:
  - share experiences on successful and less successful measures to address human rights issues (trafficking, migration, etc)
  - discuss possibilities of bilateral and multilateral cooperation
- Consider whether the assistance that a country is receiving is adequately geared
- Make public statements in parliament and in the country to stress the need for international cooperation
- Dispatch/ participate in electoral observer and human rights missions



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# International action – Possible contributions

- Serve as partners, for example by advising parliaments, especially if interim or newly elected
- Serve as watchdogs, monitoring human rights situations and criticizing uncooperative parties
- Serve as mediators and advisors in negotiations



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# Principles for Parliamentary international action

- Approach the situation in each country on its own merits, without pre-determined responses
- Increase local empowerment and participation
- Promote compliance with international obligations



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## Other examples - precedents

- IPU: Committee on Human rights of Parliamentarians, Committee on UN Affairs, visit to the Balkans in the 1990's
- OSCE Assembly
- EU Electoral observer missions
- Parliamentarians for Global Action
- World Bank Parliamentarians in the field program



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# Q&As

Questions?



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