



**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN  
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE**

الجمعية البرلمانية للبحر الأبيض  
المتوسط

**Written submission by Amb. Sergio Piazzì, Secretary General of the  
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)**

*on the occasion of the*

**14<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

*The Hague, 18-26 November 2015*

I would like to thank the International Criminal Court for the invitation addressed to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean to contribute to the 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of States Parties. This is the first time our Assembly is invited as an observer by the International Criminal Court, and I would like to extend my warmest thanks to all of you, for what we consider as an important recognition for our engagement on the issues to be discussed today.

I would like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Assembly, our deepest condolences and solidarity to the French people, particularly the Parisians, and the French Government, who once again were the target of a vile act of terrorism. PAM has already unreservedly condemned, with an official statement, the heinous attacks that shook Paris and the civil world less than a week ago, and PAM will continue its work, together with its institutional partners, in the fight against terrorism.

PAM is an international organization established in 2005, as the natural evolution of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) process, which began in 1990 under the auspices of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

PAM's main objective is to forge political, economic and social cooperation among the member states in order to find common solutions to the challenges facing the region, and to create a space for peace and prosperity for the Mediterranean peoples. The United Nations General Assembly granted the status of Permanent Observer to PAM, and this places our Assembly in an extraordinary privileged position vis-a-vis the UN system.

The Assembly tackles the challenges faced by the Mediterranean region through the work of three Standing Committees: the 1<sup>st</sup> Standing Committee on Political and Security Cooperation; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Standing Committee on Economic, Social and Environmental Cooperation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Standing Committee on Dialogue among Civilisations and Human Rights.

On this occasion, I would like to express the strong interest of PAM to formalise a cooperation strategy with the ICC on areas of common concern. For instance, our Assembly has already addressed, this year, the issue of the destruction of cultural heritage as a war crime. It is a goal of vital importance for all of us and, by working together and joining efforts, I believe that our organisations could greatly contribute to the protection of the world cultural heritage and in our case, particularly in the Mediterranean, the cradle of civilisation.

The fight against terrorism, which is one of the greatest challenges of our times, has always been a priority issue in PAM activities. Since 2007, the threat of terrorism in the region has greatly evolved, and consequently to tackle and address the phenomenon, we have all necessarily had to muster new approaches according to the changing situations.

The post Arab Spring instability in the Mediterranean region, and the Syrian and Libyan civil conflicts in particular, enabled terrorist groups to gain unprecedented momentum in the region, causing severe distress for local populations. At the same time, while the eastern shore of the Mediterranean is affected by growing tensions, these groups are exporting terror to the wider world through trained returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and even inspiring cells and lone-wolf terrorists to operate on national territory.

As an example of PAM joint activities with the UN system, PAM was entrusted with assisting in the implementation of the legislative aspects of UN Security Council Resolutions 2170, 2178 and 2199 – adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter – which outline the responsibilities of member states in addressing the FTFs phenomenon. Our Assembly is providing the parliamentarians of the region with a platform for dialogue on harmonizing counter-terrorism legislation with reference to the actions needed to combat the spread of FTFs, the financing of terrorism and the sanctions to prosecute terrorists.

Our working methods include seminars dedicated to Members of Parliaments, to increase capacity building, and a mutually beneficial cooperation with the relevant international actors committed to this cause, with the main goal of strengthening synergies and effectiveness of legal frameworks across the Mediterranean region.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, together with its member parliaments, is fully committed to support, through its mandate, the efforts of all relevant international actors in this crucial sector for our region. The PAM Secretariat will therefore duly refer to the Assembly the outcome of this conference, and will seek the cooperation of the national parliaments in the implementation of the necessary actions at the legislative level.

18 November 2015