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Parliamentary Engagement
in Preventing and Countering Terrorism

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

SIXTH MEETING OF THE COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES ON COUNTER-TERRORISM

Rome, Italy
6 December 2024



This document does not constitute official conclusions, nor does it provide an exhaustive record of all issues discussed during the Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism. It serves as a collection of key points, takeaways, and recommendations for potential future reference. While the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) endeavours to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the information presented, no guarantees, express or implied, are made regarding its completeness, accuracy, or reliability. The views and recommendations contained herein are provided solely for reference purposes and should not be considered conclusive or comprehensive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The [United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism \(UNOCT\) Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism](#), with the support of [the Shura Council of the State of Qatar](#), and in collaboration with [the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe \(OSCE PA\)](#), organized the Sixth Meeting of the Coordination Meeting for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism, on 6 December 2024, in Rome, Italy. The Meeting, hosted by [the Italian Parliament](#), brought together 70 in-person participants and 10 online participants.

Representatives from fourteen parliamentary assemblies attended, including the African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (Arab IPU), Arab Parliament, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), European Parliament (EP), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE PA), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA), Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC), and Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF). Representatives from the Shura Council of the State of Qatar also participated.

The expert panel included representatives from [the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament](#), the Service for Combating Extremism and External Terrorism of [the Italian Ministry of Interior](#), [the Senate of France](#), and [the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#). Leading experts from international organizations and think tanks also contributed, including [the Institute for Economics and Peace](#), the Arab Centre for Counter-Terrorism and Extremist Ideology of [the Arab Parliament](#), [the Centre for Global Studies](#), [the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean \(PAM\)](#), and [the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly](#).

The meeting featured the exchange of workplans and priority areas for 2025 among participating parliamentary assemblies. Key outcomes included insights into regional security trends related to terrorism and violent extremism, the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism, and recommendations on necessary measures and strategies for preventing and countering terrorism. The Meeting concluded with the election of PAM as the new Chair of the Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism and the adoption of amendments to its Terms of Reference.

The Coordination Meeting featured **four main sessions** that addressed:

- 1) Regional security trends related to terrorism and violent extremism;
- 2) The nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism;
- 3) Activities implemented and planned by participants of the Coordination Mechanism; and
- 4) Election of the Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism and revision of its Terms of Reference.

SESSION REPORTS

SESSION I. Regional security trends related to terrorism and violent extremism

The session highlighted ongoing and emerging security trends related to terrorism and violent extremism, with experts and participants offering the following key takeaways and recommendations.

Key Takeaways

- There are numerous global and regional problems that add to insecurity, including hate speech, the rise of extremism, climate change, the war in Ukraine, and conflicts in Gaza and other zones. The international community, with the support of the UN, must certainly make more efforts.
- The war in Ukraine has affected the security of the entire European region. Conflicts in the Middle East highlight the need for immediate adoption of counter-terrorism (CT) and preventing violent extremism (PVE) measures and responses. Artificial intelligence (AI) adds a new layer to the complexity of existing and emerging threats.
- According to [the Global Terrorism Index 2024](#), developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023 marked a peak in terrorist activity since 2017. While 2024 was worse than 2023, this trend is expected to continue in 2025, with a global increase in terrorist attacks. The epicentre of terrorism has shifted from the MENA region to the Sahel. In contrast, terrorism in Western countries has reached a 15-year low.
 - Terrorism is becoming more lethal and concentrated. The deadliness of attacks increased by 22%, from 1.6 deaths per attack in 2022 to 2.5 in 2023.
 - The number of countries reporting at least one attack fell from 60 to 50, and those reporting at least one death decreased from 44 to 41.
 - The Sahel region remains the most terrorism-affected area globally, with Burkina Faso ranking highest on the terrorism index.

Recommendations

- **Focus on Prevention:** Greater attention and effort should be directed towards prevention and timely interventions to curb terrorism. National parliaments should actively contribute to these efforts.
- **Cultural Change:** Addressing fundamental perceptions of tolerance, human rights, and individual freedoms through comprehensive education and awareness-raising programs, which should target both young generations and current policymakers to foster a culture of non-violence.
- **Address Root Causes:** Radicalization is often a gradual process that begins with grievances and frustration among populations and communities. Immediate action on these underlying issues is essential to prevent escalation into extremism and violence.



- **Support for Victims of Terrorism:** Protecting and rehabilitating victims of terrorism is critical. Failure to address this issue could lead to further cycles of violence and extremism. Urgent measures are needed in conflict zones and terrorism-affected societies.
- **Accountability and Governance:** Clear state policies and accountability mechanisms must ensure that state institutions do not exacerbate grievances through unlawful actions or human rights violations. The rule of law should be observed and enforced at all levels, primarily in counter-terrorism policies and measures.
- **Comprehensive Approaches:** Despite existing counter-terrorism policies, many regions lack robust, coordinated strategies at the national level. Addressing the root causes of terrorism within a limited window of opportunity is crucial. Parliamentarians must engage with civil society organizations, religious leaders, and youth to enhance CT and PVE measures.

SESSION II. Thematic discussion on the nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism

This session focused on the growing nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism, examining the interconnectedness of these threats and their evolving impact on global security. Experts and participants provided valuable insights into the complexities of this relationship and shared key takeaways and recommendations for addressing these challenges effectively.

Key Takeaways

- The nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism has become increasingly evident, as these entities often collaborate to amplify their destructive impact. Criminal organizations benefit from partnerships with terrorist groups, leveraging them for money laundering, destabilization of regions, and other illicit operations. A strong link exists between organized crime and financial crimes, particularly money laundering and illegal financial activities. The "Follow the Money" approach, first established in Palermo over 40 years ago, remains highly relevant and aligns with the UN Convention on Organized Crime (2000). This approach is instrumental in prosecuting both organized crime and terrorist groups involved in financing terrorism. Moreover, AI and emerging technologies offer significant potential for investigating terrorist crimes, particularly in countering the financing of terrorism.
- Terrorist organizations increasingly rely on criminal networks for financial resources, weapons, logistics, and recruitment. Illicit activities such as drug trafficking, human smuggling, illegal arms trade, and money laundering serve as critical lifelines for their operations. This dynamic is particularly acute in conflict zones, including Ukraine and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where weakened state structures allow terrorist groups to exploit vulnerabilities.
- In Africa and other regions, terrorist groups employ adaptive funding models that are often difficult to detect. These methods frequently contradict their declared ideologies, as seen in their involvement in activities such as kidnapping and drug trafficking. Furthermore,



foreign interference and proxy conflicts have become more prevalent in recent years. These activities often involve collaborations with criminal and terrorist organizations, further destabilizing regions and exacerbating security concerns.

- There is a rising concern about the threat of radiological and nuclear (R/N) terrorism in various parts of the world. According to [the UNOCT/UNCCT-INTERPOL Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives \(CBRNE\) Threat and Risk Analysis](#), the risk of radiological terrorism arises, inter alia, from potential access to materials through both legal markets (e.g., theft from state, commercial, or industrial facilities) and illicit channels. The threat of weaponization of radiological material is particularly pronounced in high-risk regions such as the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. While access to weapons-grade nuclear material remains unlikely in the short term and such materials are currently nearly unavailable on illicit markets, there is evidence of growing interest from malicious actors. Addressing intelligence gaps is essential, particularly in understanding how the Darknet facilitates access to R/N materials. Additionally, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence platforms have been identified as potential threat multipliers facilitating the development and weaponization of R/N materials with online information on Radiological Emission Devices (REDs) and Radiological Dispersal Devices (RDDs). Furthermore, the potential weaponization of commercial Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), transforming them into mobile radiological or nuclear devices, represents a significant and evolving threat that warrants urgent attention. In this context, it is important that all Member States adhere to relevant international legal frameworks, including the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, or ICSANT.
- AI and other emerging technologies have introduced both challenges and opportunities. While criminal and terrorist groups use these tools for propaganda and illicit activities, law enforcement and security agencies can also harness these technologies to counter organized crime and terrorism more effectively.

Recommendations

- **Focus on Investigation and Prosecution:** Advanced techniques and improved judicial procedures should be prioritized for investigating and prosecuting financial crimes related to organized crime and terrorism. National and international authorities must work together to strengthen these efforts.
- **Regulatory Frameworks for Emerging Technologies:** Clear regulatory procedures should be established to facilitate the application of emerging technologies in law enforcement and security operations. Policymakers, law enforcement, and judicial authorities need to collaborate effectively, supported by international cooperation.
- **Promotion of Early Warning Systems:** Early warning systems capable of detecting emerging threats should be developed and implemented to proactively identify potential risks associated with transnational organized crime and terrorism.
- **Capacity Building for New Technologies:** It is critical to train policymakers and law enforcement personnel on the use of cryptocurrencies, AI, and other emerging

technologies. Specialized training programs should focus on addressing vulnerabilities in economies heavily reliant on money laundering.

- **Assessment of International Tools and Frameworks:** A comprehensive review of existing international tools and frameworks for countering the financing of terrorism (CFT), including those established by the UN, is essential. These tools should be assessed and updated to address evolving threats effectively.

SESSION III. Activities implemented and planned by the participants of the Coordination Mechanism

In 2023, the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement, in its role as the Secretariat of the Coordination Mechanism, developed and maintained a calendar of activities for the participating parliamentary assemblies. This calendar is regularly updated and shared with all participants ahead of each meeting of the Coordination Mechanism.

In preparation for the Sixth Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism, held in Rome on 6 December 2024, the Secretariat collected inputs for the calendar and conducted an online survey. The survey focused on identifying activities, priority regions, and thematic areas for the participating parliamentary assemblies in 2025.

The responses highlighted that in 2025, the assemblies will sustain efforts to enhance coordination and information exchange among the national parliaments of their Member States in areas such as peace, security, counter-terrorism, and the prevention of violent extremism. These objectives will be pursued through a variety of activities, including joint events, plenary sessions, consultations, and research projects. Many initiatives will involve close collaboration with relevant UN entities, particularly UNOCT. Additionally, the calendar reflected increased collaboration and joint initiatives among the assemblies on parliamentary CT/PVE measures.

The survey responses also revealed two primary thematic focuses for 2025: (1) Youth and PVE, and (2) AI and New Technologies in CT/PVE. Secondary priorities included Victims of Terrorism, Gender in CT/PVE, and Cybersecurity (see Table 1). This marks a shift from 2023-24, where top priorities were Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) and Victims of Terrorism.

In terms of priority regions, activities will remain concentrated on the MENA and Africa regions, with special attention to the Sahel (see Table 2).

The UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement also presented its preliminary workplan for 2025-26, which features awareness-raising and partnership events, along with technical assistance and capacity-building projects. These will be implemented in close collaboration with participating parliamentary assemblies.



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Table 1

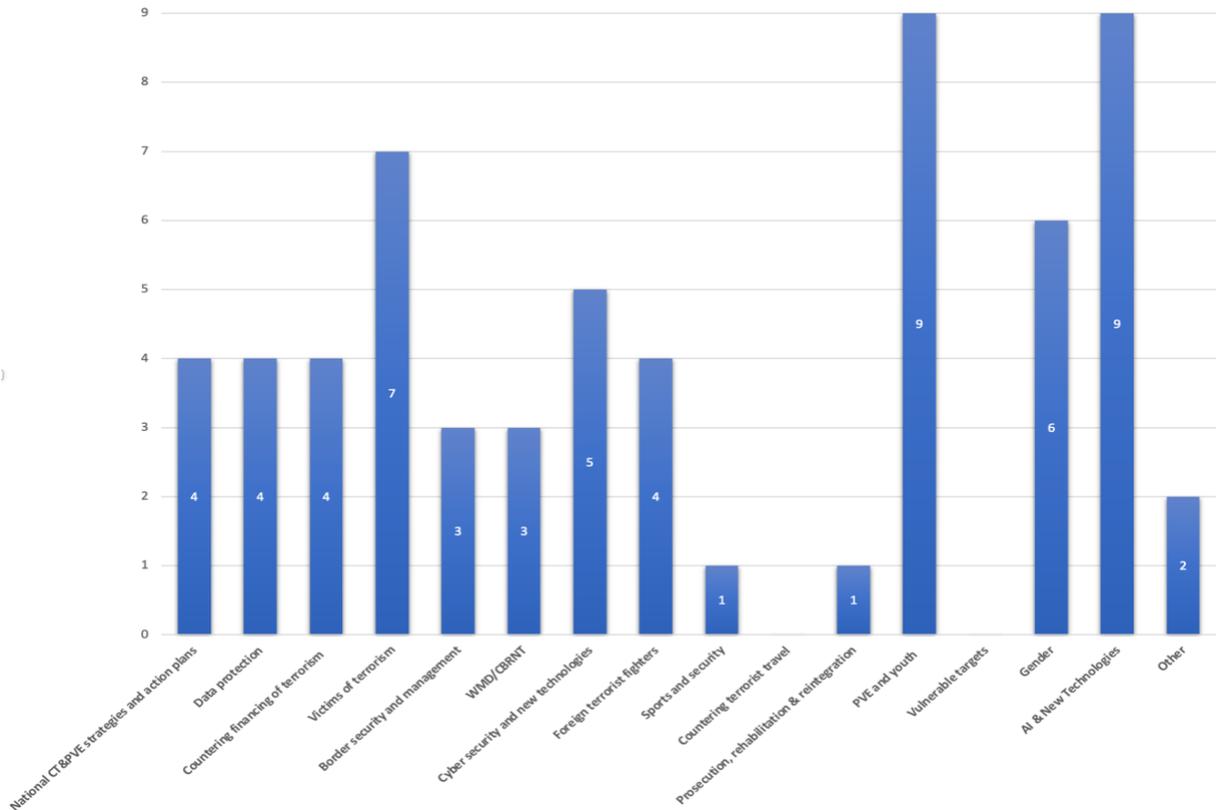
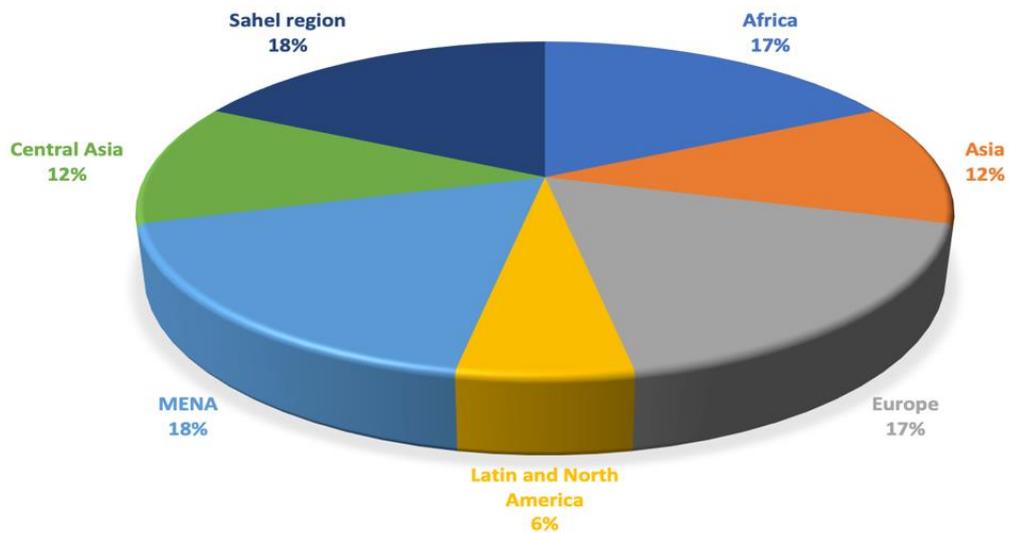


Table 2

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE



SESSION IV. Election of Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism, and revision of the Terms of References of the Coordination Mechanism

During the final session of the meeting, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), as the nominated candidate for the next term of the Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism, presented its vision to support, promote, and further develop the Mechanism.

The PAM's presentation outlined the following **strategic proposals**:

1. **Gathering Recommendations:** Collecting inputs from international parliamentary assemblies on the focus of future activities and disseminating them to participants of the Coordination Mechanism and other partners to promote collaboration among relevant stakeholders and entities.
2. **Developing a Live-Research Note:** Drafting an ongoing research note (document) on the Mechanism's two pillars—policy dialogue and operational coordination—based on its accumulated experience, and making it accessible [online].
3. **Expanding Participation:** Inviting additional parliamentary assemblies, particularly from Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, to join the Mechanism.
4. **Conducting an Independent Evaluation:** Producing a report by the end of 2026 to assess the Mechanism's effectiveness.
5. **Organizing Dual Track Meetings:** Hosting separate meetings for parliamentarians and Secretaries General to enhance the efficiency of coordination and communication between key stakeholders and partners.
6. **Enhancing Communication:** Developing a strategy to promote the Mechanism's objectives, initiatives, and events.
7. **Securing Funding:** Ensuring sufficient financial resources to support the Mechanism's activities, including through fundraising and the development of new partnerships.

Following the presentation, the participating parliamentary assemblies expressed unanimous support for PAM's candidature and voted for its Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism. PAM succeeded the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), which had presided over the Mechanism for the past two years.

The participating parliamentary assemblies and the UNOCT expressed their deep gratitude to the OSCE PA for its pivotal role in establishing and advancing the Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism. They acknowledged the OSCE PA's leadership and sustained commitment, which have been instrumental in shaping the Mechanism's foundation and fostering its growth.

The OSCE PA's successful collaboration with the UNOCT Programme Office on Parliamentary Engagement in Preventing and Countering Terrorism has led to the organization of numerous high-level international and regional conferences, parliamentary policy dialogues, and expert meetings focused on critical CT/PVE themes. These initiatives have significantly enhanced inter-parliamentary cooperation, facilitated the exchange of best practices, and promoted the integration of human rights considerations into counter-terrorism efforts.

Participants underscored the remarkable expansion of the Coordination Mechanism under the OSCE PA Presidency, highlighting its growth from an initial nine parliamentary assemblies to seventeen parliamentary assemblies from around the world actively participating in its work. They also emphasized the OSCE PA's dedication to strengthening parliamentary engagement in global counter-terrorism efforts and its unwavering support for multilateralism, dialogue, and collective action in addressing shared security challenges.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

As the session concluded, participants reviewed proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Coordination Mechanism, specifically addressing the process of joining the Mechanism. The new amendment stipulates that:

1. Parliamentary assemblies wishing to join the Coordination Mechanism must submit a formal written expression of interest to the Secretariat, specifying their relevance to counter-terrorism (CT) and preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE).
2. Upon receipt, the Secretariat will notify the Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism and all participating parliamentary assemblies.
3. The request will be included on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for consideration and decision.

It was further agreed that the updated TOR will be disseminated to all participating parliamentary assemblies for their review, feedback, and confirmation after the Coordination Meeting.

CONCLUSION AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

The Sixth Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies successfully convened representatives from parliamentary assemblies, along with experts and international organizations, to address critical global and regional security challenges. Through in-depth discussions and expert presentations, the meeting produced significant takeaways and actionable recommendations that highlight the indispensable role of parliaments in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

The Meeting's deliberations led to several important outcomes. Participants examined shifting security trends and emphasized the need for preventive measures, accountability, and comprehensive strategies to address terrorism and violent extremism. The interconnected nature of organized crime and terrorism was also explored, with discussions highlighting the potential of advanced technologies and international cooperation in countering these threats. Looking ahead, the meeting identified Youth and PVE, along with AI and New Technologies in CT/PVE, as central themes for 2025, with sustained focus on regions such as MENA and Africa, particularly the Sahel. A significant development was the election of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) as the new Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism, accompanied by amendments to the Terms of Reference to enhance membership processes and operational efficiency.

The recommendations developed during the Meeting are highly relevant to parliamentarians, national parliaments of Member States, and multiparty parliamentary assemblies. They serve as valuable references for designing and adopting effective CT/PVE policies while highlighting the unique role of parliamentarians in fostering comprehensive and inclusive responses to these challenges. By addressing prevention, accountability, and the integration of emerging technologies, these recommendations provide actionable insights to strengthen legislative frameworks and advance coordinated efforts.

To ensure the implementation of these outcomes and maintain momentum, the Secretariat of the Mechanism will disseminate the outcome document among all participants of the Coordination Mechanism, stakeholders, and partners. This dissemination aims to foster alignment, facilitate engagement, and support the realization of the Mechanism's objectives.

The next Meeting of the Coordination Mechanism is planned for the second quarter of 2025, with specific dates and venue to be confirmed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Press releases

[Sixth Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Coordination Mechanism for Parliamentary Assemblies](#)

[OSCE PA hands over the Presidency of the UN Coordination Mechanism on Counter-Terrorism after two years of successful engagement](#)

[PAM assumes the Presidency of the Coordination Mechanism of Parliamentary Assemblies on Counter-Terrorism](#)

Tweets

<https://x.com/oscepa/status/1865063178733863364>