



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

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Reflection Group on Terrorism inaugurates Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean 2009 Calendar

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean has launched its 2009 Calendar of Activities with a *Reflection Group on Terrorism* which met in Istanbul, Turkey on Friday 30th January. A dedicated group of Parliamentarians from national delegations of PAM Member States were hosted by the Turkish Parliament and welcomed by The Hon. Aşkın Asan, Head of the Turkish Delegation to PAM. Hon. Rudy Salles of France, PAM President, participated throughout the meeting and stressed the fact that building a common understanding of the issue of terrorism represented a major achievement for the PAM community.

The Group's work built on the results already achieved during 2008 by the Special Task Force on Terrorism instituted by the 1st Standing Committee on Political and Security-Related Cooperation. A Preliminary Report on Terrorism, authored by Mrs. Asan, was endorsed by the 1st Standing Committee meeting in Malta in September 2008, as a working document and provided a common background for the discussion held in Istanbul.

The Reflection Group concluded that while there exists a clear general understanding of the phenomenon among PAM delegates, more elements are required in order to possibly reach a common definition of Terrorism. State terrorism and its implications as well as the right to resist occupation were thoroughly discussed. A consensus was reached on the fact that no cause could possibly justify acts of terrorism and the killing of innocent people. It was agreed that a draft document will be prepared and circulated. Inputs from the Turkish and Palestinian Rapporteurs, the Palestinian delegations and all PAM delegations present in Istanbul, as well as from the Guest Speakers, academic experts and former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan's definition of terrorism, will be taken into consideration.

In Istanbul, the debate was enriched by a number of technical and political presentation by the following guest speakers: Mr. Mahmood Ayub, UN Resident Coordinator in Ankara, Mr. Walter Gehr, Chief of the Counter Terrorism Legal Services at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Vienna (Austria), Mr. Sedat Laçiner, Associate Professor and Director of the International Strategic Research Organisation (Turkey), and Mr. Mutlu Köseli, Major in the Turkish

Police Department and International Analyst on Terrorism. The Hon. Angela Napoli, member of the Anti-Mafia Committee of the Italian House of Representatives, gave an exhaustive overview of the steps taken by the Italian Parliament dedicated to the fight against international terrorism.

Further informal consultations will be taking place in Rome in mid-March, with the view to present a consensual text ahead of the June meeting of all Standing Committees.

“While the Assembly is closely following developments in the Middle East as a priority issue of its mandate with a programmed visit to the area in the near future, nonetheless other aspects of common interest to all Member States, both from the North and the South of the Mediterranean, are continuously under the scrutiny of our parliamentarians, who focus their attention on specific regional issues”, PAM Secretary General, Dr. Sergio Piazzi, said.

Ends/mm

For further information please contact:

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