

HOW TO PROMOTE PEACE IN DIFFERENT ROLES?

LEVERAGING PARLIAMENTARY FUNCTIONS TO BUILD LASTING PEACE

The peace and security ecosystem needs a profound change to deal with today's challenges. Diplomacy, politics, security, and real society need to work together to form a broad and global coalition to support the quality and durability of peace engagements. With a multi-stakeholder approach and tools to bridge the divide between on-ground realities and overarching strategies we can meld thoughts with action. If we manage to align actionable insights seamlessly with decision-making processes, we can enable decision-makers at all echelons. Therefore we are providing feedback loops, data and metrics, participatory reviews, and practical tools and illuminate the broader impacts of different actors, such as the parliamentary functions.

The world is experiencing a steady deterioration in peacefulness. Recent data suggests 1 in 6 people are estimated to have been exposed to conflict thus far in 2023; 50 countries are experiencing extreme, high or turbulent levels of conflict; and there was a 27 percent increase in political violence from mid-2022 to mid-2023.¹ Peacemaking is prone to fail when it is neither: broadly legitimate, able to deliver accountable security, or consciously transformative, through addressing the structural drivers of conflict, and ensuring peace dividends are broadly shared.²

Parliamentarians' mandate and functions equip them to become active agents of peace in precisely these areas. The March 2022 Inter-Parliamentary Union resolution Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace that was adopted by the 144th IPU Assembly urges them to seize this opportunity.³ These are the concrete steps Parliamentarians can take:

LEGISLATIVE

- exercise what is their ultimate **legal responsibility** for the implementation of peace agreements.
- achieve and mandate **institutional reforms** that promote the pluralistic and legitimate institutions that are necessary to build a peaceful society.
- initiate and serve on commissions of inquiry, select committees and other mechanisms to **advance key issues of concern** affecting different segments of society to progress towards peace in political debate.

OVERSIGHT

- ensure transparency** and accountability in the allocation of financial resources and practices of security forces, as a foundation of lasting peace.
- monitor progress** towards the implementation of peace processes, according to agreed timetables, and advance delivery against commitments including through ensuring peace dividends are defined and equitably shared as a critical dimension of legitimacy in the process.
- adopt metrics** and **oversee progress** in peace-related policy initiatives.

¹ACLED Conflict Index (acleddata.com)

²As identified by the extensive global consultations that led to the Principles for Peace see: www.principlesforpeace.org

³IPU together with its partners the Principles for Peace Foundation, the International Peace Bureau and the World Association for Arts and Science are producing an Inventory of Tools to provide further guidance to parliaments on contributing to peace.

REPRESENTATIVE

- gather and represent the diverse perspectives** of their constituencies in parliamentary debates on peace priorities.
- create a bridge** between policy-makers and constituencies, **sensitising** these to the cause of peace and **informing** them about unfolding government actions.
- ensure own political **messaging** is “**conflict-sensitive**” and does not exacerbate divisions and tensions, but rather **advances reconciliation**.
- work to **strengthen the functioning of parliament** as a venue for national dialogue; an engine of social contract renewal; and a space where performance of progress towards peace is assessed and adapted as it unfolds.

BUDGETARY

- advocate for meaningful budgetary** allocations to peace priorities, reparations, and support to victims of war.
- ensure continuous transparency** in peace priority allocations and expenditure (as part of budgetary oversight).
- encourage government to invest** in an inclusive socio-economic system and order that tackles historic exclusionary patterns that frequently drive conflict.

PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

- project solidarity** with people affected by war everywhere.
- counter global geopolitical fragmentation through **constructive scrutiny** of government’s foreign policy agenda to align it with the promotion of peace.
- network with other parliamentarians** working for peace as well as the wider peace ecosystem, in order to continually enhance parliamentary understanding and engagement in advancing a peaceful world.

ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE

The Principles for Peace were launched in 2023 in response to the global context of rising insecurity and legitimacy deficit in contemporary peacemaking. The P4P provide a common frame around which all stakeholders, including parliamentarians, can come together to catalyse a new way of working and build a more peaceful future, to promote the shifts in policy and practice necessary to achieve lasting peace, in a way that is locally grounded and internationally guaranteed. They can be thought of as a compass: providing a common lexicon, a diagnostic tool, and metrics that serve as an accountability measure.

By aligning actionable insights with decision-making processes, the Principles offer a feedback loop that not only informs but empowers decision-makers to course correct in real-time, ensuring more effective outcomes. The Principles for Peace can be used by parliamentarians to generate metrics on a country’s peacemaking performance, and to fulfil their functions and bridge the space between government processes and citizens, tracking progress towards lasting peace.

