



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

## **PAM Mission to the United States of America:**

**High-Level Segment of the 74th United Nations General Assembly, New York**

**and**

**Consultations with the US Administration, Washington DC**

*23 September – 4 October 2019*

## **Report**



## **Introduction**

Two high level delegations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) took part in the official visit to the United States of America. The first, in New York, was dedicated to the annual PAM participation in the High-level Segment of the United Nations General Assembly, on the margins of which were organized several bi-lateral meetings with Senior UN Officials. The second delegation travelled to Washington for high-level consultations with the US Administration and leading Think-Tanks.

Aim of the mission was to reinforce PAM's cooperation and interaction with the United Nations and the United States' Administration on key priority issues.

Throughout the two weeks, discussions focused on political and security developments in the Euro-Mediterranean region. More specifically, the key issues analyzed included: PAM proposal for the establishment of a mechanism of triage to address the fate of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters detained in North Eastern Syria and their families; the cooperation with the UN Security Council, and related bodies, in ensuring the harmonization of national laws on counter-terrorism; PAM support for national reconciliation in Libya; the Two-State solution for Israel and Palestine; the crisis between Egypt and Ethiopia on the access to the Nile water; facilitation of investments in the MENA and Sahel region; the reinforced cooperation between PAM and NATO and its commands; the enlargement of PAM to 34 countries with recent agreements with Qatar and UAE as Associate; as well as the support by the US Administration for recognizing PAM as a public international organization in the USA.

## **74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly**

In New York, PAM participated and contributed in the High-level Segment of the United Nations General Assembly. On the margins of the GA, PAM held a number of bilateral meetings with Senior UN Officials and Heads of national delegations to fine tune cooperation on counter-terrorism activities, support for peace initiatives and negotiations in the Middle East, economic development in the MENA and Sahel regions, climate change, and population movements, among others.

In meetings Amb. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary General for Counterterrorism (UNOCT) and Ms. Michele Coninx, Executive Director of Security Council CTED, PAM expressed concern regarding the fate of thousands of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) and their families, who are held in detention camps in North Eastern Syria, and PAM re-iterated its proposal to set up a triage mechanism, under UN mandate, to identify which country would be responsible for its nationals to be repatriated, prosecuted and, eventually, rehabilitated.

In the meeting with Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), PAM was requested to assist with the Parliamentary dimension of the national reconciliation efforts. Ahead of the Berlin conference, PAM will try to convene a meeting of a selected group of MPs, from both Tobruk and Tripoli, at the new PAM regional office in Naples, under the auspices and chair of the UN Special Representative. PAM SG was also requested to meet with the German Ambassador in Geneva and Italian authorities in Rome to prepare for the event.

In meetings with H.E. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Khaled Khiari, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Middle East, Asia and the Pacific in the Department of Political and Peace building Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO), PAM delegates discussed political and security developments in the MENA region.

Particularly, PAM delegates expressed concern about the threat to the water security in Egypt, as Ethiopia is building a dam on the Nile river and plans to fill it up in two years, thereby leaving Egypt without the critical amount of water necessary for human consumption and food production.

In a meeting with Ms. Ursula Mueller, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA), PAM was also asked to assist the UN, by using its privileged channels of parliamentary diplomacy in the region, to consider a visit to the families of FTFs in North Eastern Syria in order to assess the humanitarian situation, and to impress on the de-facto authorities in Sanaa, in order to grant access for UN experts to the SAFER FSO oil tanker, anchored some 5 km off the coast of Yemen. This is necessary to assess the damage suffered by the structure since the beginning of the conflict, and for the UN to carry out any emergency maintenance work needed to avoid a major environmental disaster.

### **High-Level Official Visit to Washington, DC**

Following the UNGA, another high-level PAM delegation, led by PAM President Senator Alia Bouran, paid a high-level official visit to Washington DC, from 30 September to 4 October. An extremely intense agenda, organized with the kind assistance of the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the USA, was prepared for the delegation.

At the **Department of State**, PAM delegates met with Mr. David Schenker, Assistant Secretary of Near Eastern Affairs, and with Mr. Chris Backemeyer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Assistance Coordination and Press and Public Diplomacy. PAM pointed out both the impact of the publicly perceived US growing disengagement and absence from the Middle East region, and the threat posed by Iran and its allies. Concerning the Israel-Palestinian Peace Process, PAM and the US counterparts agreed on establishing reinforced cooperation, particularly considering the imminent disclosure of the US proposal.

The discussion also focused on the stability in the African continent. The US State Dept. announced the establishment of a program called 'Prosperous Africa' to enhance socio-economic development, and also expressed its concern about the movements of terrorists throughout the continent.

In the consultations at the **Department of Justice (DoJ)**, PAM delegates met with Mr. David Burns, the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division and Mr. Dan Stigall, Counselor for International Affairs at the Office of Assistant Attorney General in the National Security Division. Both sides agreed that counterterrorism requires close cooperation and emphasized their willingness to work together on these matters.

During the discussion, the parties talked about possible joint activities on best practices to combat terrorism, emphasizing the need for harmonized legislation to ensure international cooperation on criminal justice matters. On the issue of countering radicalization, PAM delegates highlighted a program which allows, every year, 100 imams from Morocco to travel to Italy during the Holy month of Ramadan to lead prayers in the many recognized Mosques existing in that country.

The implications regarding the movements of FTF were discussed, as it relates to places like Libya, Sahel, Central Europe and the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt as destinations, as well as to countries such as Romania, which may be transit places for such movements.

The opportunity and added value of a MoU between the DoJ and PAM was welcomed by both sides.

In the meeting at the **US Agency for International Development (USAID)**, PAM delegates met with the Assistant Administrator of the Middle East Bureau, Mr. Michael T. Harvey. The discussion focused on current projects to invest in the economies in the Middle East and Africa.

Key issues of discussion included: The PAM Economic Platform; Elections in Tunisia as a positive development for the region; A proposal for a Marshall Plan for Africa; Safe, informed and voluntary return of Syrian refugees from Turkey; and the deteriorating situation in Lebanon.

USAID presented its key projects in Africa, focusing on agriculture and power supply, and a plan to double the US investments in Africa and the economic exchanges with Africa over approximately 5 years.

Focusing on Egypt, USAID assured that they were very focusing their efforts on young people. USAID also highlighted the importance of a partnership with countries like Romania, as they have invaluable experience in democracy building processes.

In the meeting at the **Department of Defense**, PAM delegates met with Mr. Michael Patrick Mulroy, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East. The discussion centered on the worrisome situation in the Middle East and in the Persian Gulf regions.

In this regard, representatives of the Department of Defense listed some current US strategies, such as an active economic, rather than military, campaign on Iran to pressure them towards a better nuclear deal, as well as the MESA (Middle East Strategic Alliance) initiative of the White House, divided into 4 pillars: political, economic, energy and security.

In the meeting at the **Middle East Institute**, PAM delegates met with Mr. Gerald M. Feierstein, Senior Vice-President, Mr. Jonathan Winer, Non-resident Scholar and expert on Libya and Mrs. Amal Kandeel, Director of the Climate and Human Security Program. The parties highlighted that Libya has an extraordinary development capacity, but the quantity of money available and to be allocated among the actors concerned is, at present, part of the problem.

In this regard, the interlocutors described a need for a political settlement between the two sides in Libya, which should include the involvement of other countries, nonetheless noting that there are doubts about the future and duration of President Trump's policy of non-intervention in Libya.

The discussion also highlighted that climate change was a major driver of population movements, and the issue of migration has been securitized rather than dealt with at the environmental level.

Furthermore, regarding counterterrorism, the experts underlined the great efforts made to push back ISIS, but also acknowledged the growing threat from new terrorist groups, such as Hayat Tahir al-Sham (HTS), which have become increasingly dangerous.

In a meeting at the **Washington Institute for Near East Policy**, PAM delegates met the Executive Director, Mr. Paul Satloff, and a number of senior scholars. The Representatives of the Washington Institute pointed out the policy of the US Administration to further reduce the role of the US in the Middle East, which was noted with concern by PAM delegates.

The issue of Turkey hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees was raised, and the plans to resettle some of them in North Eastern Syria, was noted with concern by the US experts.

The link between the security in the Middle East region and security in the Black Sea region was also highlighted.

In a meeting with officials of the **White House National Security Council**, PAM delegates met with Dr. Victoria Coates, Senior Director for the Middle East, and Mr. Jacon M. Kramer, Director for North African Affairs.

White House's officials expressed strong support with regards to establishing a mechanism of triage, emphasizing that each country should be responsible for its own citizens. Furthermore, Dr. Coates explained that for what concerns the American military intervention in Syria, the President's goal was to defeat ISIS and would be limited afterwards. She also supported PAM's request for a Presidential Decree regarding the PAM status in the USA, similarly to that already granted to the IPU office in NY.

During the meeting, PAM delegates expressed appreciation to the Administration for a statement that supported Egypt's perspective on the dangerous impact of the dam being completed at the Ethiopian border.

Overall, the meetings in Washington strengthened the excellent relationship between PAM and the USA and ensured the continuation of the fruitful dialogue between the parties in order to achieve common solutions regarding the challenges faced in the Euro-Mediterranean area.

#### **PAM Delegation to the UN General Assembly**

- Hon. Mohamed Alami (Morocco), PAM Rapporteur on Political and Security issues in MENA Region
- Hon. Costel Alexe (Romania)
- H.E. Mohamed Abu El-Enein, PAM President Emeritus and Permanent Observer to the League of Arab States
- Ambassador Sergio Piazzi, PAM Secretary General
- Ambassador Shaukat Fareed - Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York
- Ambassador Jean Paul Laborde – PAM Senior Advisor on Counterterrorism
- Ms. Elham Mohamed Abdelsalam Aboulel Fath – Communications Officer
- Ms. Amal Reda Mahmoud Khalil – Communications Officer
- Mr. Andrei Popa – Political Advisor
- Mr. Adrien Curley – PAM Officer
- Mr. Taib Cohen – Political Advisor

#### **List of PAM Delegates for Washington Visit**

- H.E. Senator Alia Bouran (Jordan) – PAM President
- Ambassador Sergio Piazzi – PAM Secretary General
- Sen. Lhou Lmarbouh (Morocco) – PAM President Emeritus
- Sen. Auriel-Horea Soporán (Romania)
- H.E. Mohamed Abu El Enein (Egypt) – PAM President Emeritus and Permanent Observer to the League of Arab States
- Ambassador Majallie Whbee (Israel) – PAM Senior Advisor on the Middle East
- Ms. Elham Mohamed Abdelsalam Aboulel Fath (Egypt) – Communications Officer
- Ms. Amal Reda Mahmoud Khalil (Egypt) – Assistant
- Mr. Mohamed Taib Cohen (Morocco) – Advisor
- Ms. Dumitrita Gliga (Romania) – Advisor

**Program for PAM delegation for the 74rd session of the General Assembly (23-27 September 2019)**

<b>PAM Program</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Organiser</b>
Monday, September 23	10:00 am	United Nations Climate Action Summit	GA Hall	United Nations
	3:00 – 4:30 pm	Nexus between Climate Change, Organized Crime, Terror and Fragility: Global Policing and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	Conference Room E	Permanent Mission of Nigeria, UN DPA, Interpol
	8:00 pm	<b>PAM Coordination Meeting at the Roosevelt Hotel</b>	<b>Roosevelt Hotel</b>	
Tuesday, September 24	9:00 am	General Debate of the 74 <sup>th</sup> Session	GA Hall	United Nations
	1:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Ministerial meeting on the Syria crisis	CR.1	European Union
	3:15 pm	Bi lateral meeting with Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for Middle East, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO)	<b>S-3472</b>	
	6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Reception with H.E. Frans Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission and H.E. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission	666 Third Avenue, 31st floor, between 42nd and 43rd Streets	European Union Delegation to the United Nations
	7:00 pm	Climate Change, Water Security and National Security for Jordan, Palestine, and Israel	Columbia Law School 435 West 116th St. Room 103	Sabin Center for Climate Change Law, Columbia Law School
Wednesday, September 25	7:30 am – 8:45 am	[TBC] Business in Action: Sustainable Practices in the Food Sector	CR.B	PM of Italy
	8.15am - 9.45am	Breakfast Dialogue at the EU Delegation to the UN: Unlocking the Mediterranean Generation's Agency for Global Peace-building & Climate Resilience	666 Third Avenue, 31st floor, between 42nd and 43rd Streets	European Union Delegation to the United Nations
	10 am – 1:00 pm	Ministerial Meeting on the Syrian crisis	Room to be confirmed	European Union Delegation to the United Nations
	10 am – 1:00 pm	Summit on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	United Nations Headquarters	United Nations
	11:45 am	Bi-lateral meeting: With Mr. Ghassan Salamé of Lebanon - Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)	<b>S-24MM1</b>	
	2:00 pm	Bi-lateral meeting: With Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix of France - Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations	<b>S-3571</b>	
	3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Climate Change and Migrants, Refugees and Displaced People	CR.6	African Union
Thursday, September 26	10:00 am – 1:00 pm	(Part 1) High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development	TCC	Permanent Mission of Canada
	10:00 am	ASG Ursula Mueller, UNOCHA	<b>S-3322</b>	
	11:00-1:00 pm	High-Level Plenary Meeting to Commemorate and Promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons	Conference Room 4	United Nations
	1:00 pm	Libya: Crisis Within a Crisis	Scandinavia House, Conference Room, 58 Park Ave, New York	Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime
	1:15 pm – 2:30 pm	Time for Action: Addressing the Nexus between Climate Change and Youth, Peace and Security	CR.9	UN-Habitat
	3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	High-Level Plenary Meeting to Commemorate and Promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons	Conference Room 4	United Nations



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**PAM High-level mission to Washington DC**

**30 September - 4 October 2019**

**Program**

**29-30 September 2019**

*Arrival of members of the delegation*

**Tuesday 1 October**

**10:00 PAM Coordination Meeting – Hotel Lombardy**

*Address: 2019 Pennsylvania Ave NW*

**11:00 Department of State:**

**Mr. David Schenker**, Assistant Secretary for the Bureau for the Near East Affairs, and  
**Mr. Chris Backemeyer**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Assistance Coordination and  
Press and Public Diplomacy

*Address: Department of State, 2201 C St NW (contact: Peter Howard: Desk: 202-647-3658 Mobile: [202-746-9681](tel:202-746-9681) [HowardPM2@state.gov](mailto:HowardPM2@state.gov) or Jonathan Pearl: Desk: 202-647-3656 [PearlJW@state.gov](mailto:PearlJW@state.gov))*

**14:00 Department of Justice:**

**Mr. David Burns**, the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division

**Mr. Dan Stigall**, Counsellor for international Affairs, Office of Assistant Attorney General, National Security Division Department of Justice

*Address: Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Ave NW (arrive at “constitutional/visitor entrance” by 13:45, where **Mr. Stigall** will escort the delegation)*

**Wednesday 2 October**

**14:00 US Agency for International Development (USAID):**

**Mr. Michael T. Harvey**, Assistant Administrator of United States Agency of International Development’s Middle East Bureau

*Address: USAID, Ronald Reagan Bldg and International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW (contact: Rayma Baran, 202-712-5440 or 571-215-7004)*



**Thursday 3 October**

**10:00**            **Department of Defense:**

**Mr. Michael Patrick Mulroy**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East

*Address: Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 3504 International Dr NW*

**13:00**            **Middle East Institute – Roundtable**

**Mr. Paul Salem**, President

*Address: Middle East Institute, 1763 N St. NW*

**Friday 4 October**

**9:00**            **The Washington Institute for Near East Policy:**

**Mr. Robert Satloff**, Executive Director

*Address: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1111 19th Street NW Suite 500*

**13:00**            **White House National Security Council**

**Dr. Victoria Coates**, Senior Director for the Middle East

*Address: Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 3504 International Dr NW*