

Some Reflections on Capacity Building for Parliamentarians on International Security Frameworks
Regional Parliamentary Workshop to Promote Universality and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention & Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)
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On behalf of the UNDP's Country Director who is unable to attend due to other engagements. Our Country Director has been invited to the 28th meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies in Africa, organized by UN Office on Drugs and Crime and hosted by Tanzania. She sends her greetings and best wishes for a successful workshop.

We thank the Parliamentarians for Global Action for inviting us to participate in important workshop and for the opportunity to deliver a few remarks on Capacity Building for Parliamentarians on International Security Frameworks.

As UNDP, we are delighted to be associated with this workshop for two main reasons. First, this workshop seeks to enhance the role of parliament in advancing a hugely important matter: the implementation of the biological weapons convention and United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1540 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Second, this workshop's focus on parliament, is of special significance to UNDP in general, and UNDP Tanzania, in particular. UNDP Tanzania is currently supporting the Parliament of Tanzania in implementing a 5-year capacity building initiative – the Legislative Support Project (LSP) which started in 2017 and will run until 2021.

Through this partnership and with the generous support of the embassies of Ireland, Denmark and Sweden, and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), we seek to achieve five main objectives:

1. Increase the capacity of parliamentary committees to scrutinize legislation and engage citizens in that regard;
2. Enhance the capacity of the National Assembly to analyze and oversee Government activities, and the budget;
3. Strengthen functions and capacity for representing the interests of citizens in the National Assembly;
4. Strengthen effective engagement of the National Assembly in strategic leadership, transparency and external engagement, and finally,
5. Mainstream gender in all functions of the National Assembly.

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This strong and growing partnership between UNDP and the National Assembly of Tanzania has seen a number of important initiatives aimed at strengthening the legislative, budget control and oversight capacity of the Parliament.

For example, the project has supported the National Assembly to develop guidelines and toolkits which amplify Parliament's own legislative and regulatory provisions – as contained in the Standing Orders - in relation to legislative scrutiny, public hearings, field visits and engagement with civil society, and ratification of international conventions.

To the extent that UN Security Council Resolution 1540 enjoins UN Member States to adopt effective laws to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and also establish controls over equipment, materials and technology that could be diverted for proliferation activities especially by non-state actors, this workshop is in sync with the scope of Legislative Support Project's knowledge development, access to information, sharing of experiences and skills development work.

In many jurisdictions, the legislature performs a very important function: that of ratification of international agreements such as the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). But, ratification is premised on reasonable knowledge of the objectives and implications of such international agreements among those responsible for ratifying such conventions, hence the critical importance of workshops such as this one. Building knowledge of parliamentarians, civil society and media organization of the BWC and UN Security Council Resolution 1540, among others, is central to increasing the opportunities for ratification, subject of course to political and financial considerations.

However, important as ratification may be, lessons from around the world on the implementation of and reporting on other international conventions, clearly illustrate that ratification is necessary but insufficient for change, reform or transformation to happen. Domestication, legislative reform, adequate budget allocation and oversight of government action, are required. The legislature has important roles to play in this regard.

Indeed, while governments and inter-governmental organisations the world over are seized with the issue of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, increasingly, there is recognition that this matter requires the full involvement of all stakeholders, including MPs and civil society organisations.

Proliferation presents multi-faceted, national as well as transnational human security challenges that the representatives of the people must understand, interpret and find solutions for.

Over the last few years, there have been some seminal activities focusing on the role of MPs in lending support to non-proliferation efforts in Africa. For example, in February of 2016, the National Assembly of Ivory Coast hosted an IPU seminar for African MPs on the successful implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540.

One of the key highlights of the seminar was the observation that in order for implementation of the resolution to succeed, "Parliaments and governments should be encouraged to find ways of

working together in synergy. The resolution should not be dealt with only by government, as parliamentarians are representatives of the people and their aspirations”.²

What could be done to enhance the parliamentary dimensions to non-proliferation including:

1. The need for a practical handbook detailing “*experiences and good practices in terms of legislation, oversight, budget allocation and representation*” which was made during the February of 2016 IPU workshop in Ivory Coast is an important recommendation which could potentially improve parliamentary action against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Oftentimes, parliamentarians find themselves with the will power but without the means and resources to play their part and contribute towards international peace and security,
2. The case for model laws (such as Model Law on HIV and AIDS, Model Law on Access to Information in Africa - ACHPR) to support the proactive alignment of existing legislation and institutions with the international conventions such as Biological Weapons Convention & UN Security Council Resolution 1540,
3. Promoting networking opportunities for African parliamentarians working on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (experiential peer to peer learning).
4. Supporting all-party parliamentary groups (caucuses) that have an interest in non-proliferation. LSP works closely with the APNAC, Tanzania Youth Parliamentary Group, Tanzania Parliamentary Friends of Environment and Tanzania Women Parliamentary Group, and linking these groups with relevant portfolio/departmental committees in parliament for effective oversight,
5. Strengthening collaboration with civil society, academia and research institutions – e.g. Institute for Security Studies,
6. Parliaments also play a critical but often overlooked function: agenda setting, raising awareness and stimulating public debate through their role as leaders and key stakeholders in society. Through this role, public awareness is enhanced thus enhancing advocacy for ratification or domestication, as the case may be,
7. Use of oversight mandate and collaboration with civil society organisations to ensure that countries do indeed submit regular and periodic reports to treaty bodies (e.g. Resolution 1540 Committee),
8. Exploring regional networking and information sharing opportunities for parliamentarians in the context of regional and international inter-parliamentary bodies: Linking the discourse between the national, the sub-regional (EALA, SADC-PF, ECOWAS Parliament) and the regional (PAP) – sub-regional and African Peace and Security Architectures,
9. Reflecting on the gender dimensions of proliferation - state security to the human security dimensions – for improved understanding of the (non-security) implications of the convention and resolution – drawing links with the development context (sustainable development goals) and
10. Addressing the root causes of terrorism. These include youth unemployment, ethnic, socio-economic, religious and political exclusion and lack of good governance

²Inter-Parliamentary Union. Effective implementation of Resolution 1540 in Africa: opportunities for parliaments. Regional Seminar for African parliaments. Abidjan, 22 – 23 February 2016

Allow me to end by congratulating the Parliamentarians for Global Action for organizing this workshop. Initiatives such as these are important for parliamentarians' awareness, involvement and oversight of regional and international initiatives that are of public and national interest.

Asanteni sana.