



Parliamentarians *for Global Action*
Parlamentarios para la Acción Global
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires
برلمانيون من أجل التحرك العالمي

Global Parliamentary Code of Democratic Conduct

Adopted at PGA's International Council Meeting on 19 March 2021

Global Parliamentary Code of Democratic Conduct

Concerned about global trends in democratic backsliding, as illustrated by the pervasiveness of misinformation, disinformation, and the progressive deterioration of political discourse, including through dangerous/hate speech (defined as a form of expression that can increase the risk that its audience will condone or commit violence against members of another group).

Conscious that democracy is as much a recognized ideal as it is an objective -and a process -, based on values shared by individuals worldwide regardless of political, social, cultural, and economic differences.

Recognizing that democracy hinges on the preservation and promotion of universal human rights and freedoms, equality before the law, justice, non-discrimination (inter alia based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and national origin), as well as on peace, human security, gender equality, social development, economic stability, environmental safety.

Reaffirming that democracy and all its components – including freedom of speech and freedom of assembly – are interdependent.

Recognizing that democracy requires separation of powers to ensure that governments remain accountable to their constituents. As an essential component of the rule of law, the three branches – the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary – exercise their constitutional prerogatives by creating checks and balances on each other.

Acknowledging that, in recent years, there has been a loss of faith in democratic institutions, including the legislative branch.

Reminded that the freedom and independence of the press (traditional media) as well as any form of social media is an essential feature of democracy, enabling citizens to receive accurate information to inform their decisions.

Guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which establish that everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference and to express them freely. This right includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers, through any media.

Aware of the crucial importance of members of parliament in fostering an enabling environment for a vibrant and efficient democracy through the nurturing of democratic institutions and culture in their interactions with stakeholders, including their peers as well as the citizenry.

Conscious that members of parliament are accountable to the electorate for their **Global Parliamentary Code of Democratic Conduct** performance in office and integrity of conduct, including by engaging in responsible and transparent political speech in all fora and circumstances.

We, Members of Parliament, pledge to:

Global Parliamentary Code of Democratic Conduct

- 1** Base our political discourse on facts and evidence.
- 2** Refrain from spreading misinformation and disinformation.
- 3** Refrain from using inflammatory or defamatory language [that is based on non-corroborated facts].
- 4** Refrain from using threats, hate speech or inciting any form of violence against any person or group of persons and any form of discrimination.
- 5** Condemn any individual or campaign promoting attacks on democratic institutions and principles, on human rights, and on any law-abiding person exercising their constitutionally protected human rights.
- 6** Condemn any acts of vandalism or incitement to violent public disorder committed or threatened by government officials, candidates, citizens, or any other person.
- 7** Support access to free and independent media, with the support of a regulatory framework that applies equally to all media-including social media-whenver these tools are used for the exercise of civil and political rights.
- 8** Refrain from using national security or states of emergency as open-ended justifications for the erosion of democratic principles and practices beyond the strict limits provided by the principles of proportionality and necessity in tackling a national or transnational emergency (e.g., natural disaster, armed conflict or similar situation).
- 9** Use our parliamentary prerogatives to strengthen democratic values and principles; promote universal human rights; combat racism, homophobia, misogyny and any other form of discrimination, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia; and increase effective, transparent, and fair participation of the citizenry in democratic processes.