



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

147th IPU Assembly

Luanda, Angola
23–27 October 2023



Assembly
Item 2

A/147/2-P.1
16 October 2023

Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 147th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Pakistan

On 13 October 2023, the IPU Secretary General received from the delegation of Pakistan a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 147th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

“Countering Islamophobia and the rise in extremist Islamophobic events through understanding and education, the promotion of tolerance and interfaith harmony, and fostering an environment that encourages respect and empathy among different faith communities”.

Delegates to the 147th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 147th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Pakistan on Tuesday, 24 October 2023.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject.
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE IPU SECRETARY GENERAL
BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE OF PAKISTAN**

Islamabad, 5 October 2023

**Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 147th IPU Assembly to
be held from 23rd to 27th October, 2023 in Luanda, Angola**

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The Parliament of Pakistan intends to propose the inclusion of the following emergency item in the agenda of the 147th IPU Assembly to be held from 23 to 27 October 2023 in Luanda, Angola:

“Countering Islamophobia and the rise in extremist Islamophobic events through understanding and education, the promotion of tolerance and interfaith harmony, and fostering an environment that encourages respect and empathy among different faith communities”.

A draft resolution, along with an explanatory memorandum, is attached herewith, with the request that the IPU Secretariat may circulate these documents to the delegates participating in the work of the Assembly under the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Muhammad Sadiq SANJRANI
Chairman of the Senate

COUNTERING ISLAMOPHOBIA AND THE RISE IN EXTREMIST ISLAMOPHOBIC EVENTS THROUGH UNDERSTANDING AND EDUCATION, THE PROMOTION OF TOLERANCE AND INTERFAITH HARMONY, AND FOSTERING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES RESPECT AND EMPATHY AMONG DIFFERENT FAITH COMMUNITIES

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Pakistan

On 28 June 2023, the sentiments of over 2 billion Muslims worldwide were offended when a copy of the Holy Qur'an was desecrated outside Stockholm's largest mosque during the joyous Islamic Eid al-Adha festival. It is saddening that in a modern era in which we celebrate diversity, such atrocious abuse and desecration of holy personalities, scriptures and religious sentiments are allowed to continue under the guise of freedom of speech.

The desecration of the Holy Book of Muslims in Sweden was not a one-off event. Such incidents have been witnessed the world over, in one form or another, and have increased in frequency in the past two decades. And while the international community has been swift in condemning these events, concrete measures to prevent such episodes have been very rare. This has not only jeopardized regional and global peace efforts, but also undermined our collective goals of ensuring global stability, tolerance and interfaith harmony.

Pakistan, along with the entire Muslim community the world over, remains deeply committed to principles of tolerance, peace, prosperity and love for humanity and human life. The Holy Qur'an, our sacred book, stands as a timeless guide, strictly discouraging violence and emphasizing the importance of upholding peace. Furthermore, Islam strictly teaches us never to disrespect other religions, prophets or holy books. In fact, a person is not considered a Muslim until they believe in all the preceding prophets of the existing Abrahamic religions and their holy books. This is the respect and stature of other religions in Islam, yet frequent Islamophobic actions prevail and are often swept under the rug in the guise of freedom of expression.

We must also acknowledge that such acts of desecration not only fuel violence but also provide a platform for fundamentalists and extremists to compromise peace for the majority of the people in the world. Our collective efforts should focus on dismantling the misconceptions surrounding Islam, addressing the root causes of intolerance, and promoting unity among diverse religious communities.

Pakistan strongly believes that there is much that we, as parliamentarians and world leaders, can do to prevent such actions. It is with this intent that Pakistan has decided to request that the 147th Assembly of the IPU include this matter as an emergency item in the interest of regional and global peace and inter-faith harmony.

The IPU, the global organization of parliaments, has an indispensable role in encouraging consensus between nations, and driving parliamentary and government action. It is requested that concerted parliamentary action to influence and promote interfaith harmony, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding between all religions, be initiated. Together, let us work towards dispelling misconceptions, cultivating an environment that celebrates diversity and upholds the principles of peace and justice.

COUNTERING ISLAMOPHOBIA AND THE RISE IN EXTREMIST ISLAMOPHOBIC EVENTS THROUGH UNDERSTANDING AND EDUCATION, THE PROMOTION OF TOLERANCE AND INTERFAITH HARMONY, AND FOSTERING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES RESPECT AND EMPATHY AMONG DIFFERENT FAITH COMMUNITIES

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of PAKISTAN

The 147th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Recognizing* the fundamental principles of equality, non-discrimination, and respect for all individuals and their religious beliefs, as enshrined in international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- (2) *Acknowledging* the rise in incidents of hatred, discrimination and prejudice directed towards individuals and communities based on their Islamic faith, commonly referred to as Islamophobia,
- (3) *Affirming* the importance of fostering an environment of mutual understanding, tolerance and respect among different cultures, religions and communities,
- (4) *Reiterating* the commitment to upholding freedom of religion or belief for all individuals without distinction,
- (5) *Noting* the significance of addressing the root causes of Islamophobia, including socioeconomic factors, misinformation and negative stereotypes,
- (6) *Recognizing* the valuable contributions of Muslim communities to cultural, social and economic development in various societies,
- (7) *Conscious* of the need to counter the spread of Islamophobia and promote a more inclusive and cohesive global society,
 1. *Encourages* Member Parliaments to educate and raise public awareness about the negative impacts of Islamophobia and its consequences for social harmony and peaceful coexistence;
 2. *Advocates* for educational initiatives that promote religious literacy, cultural sensitivity and interfaith dialogue to counter misinformation and stereotypes about Islam and Muslims;
 3. *Calls upon* Member Parliaments to enact and enforce laws that distinguish between freedom of speech and hate speech, and that prevent and address hate crimes, discrimination, and incitement to violence targeting individuals based on their Islamic faith;
 4. *Encourages* media outlets to promote responsible reporting and portrayals of Islam and Muslims, avoiding sensationalism and stereotypes that perpetuate Islamophobia;
 5. *Supports* inclusive and community-based strategies to prevent radicalization and violent extremism by addressing grievances and fostering a sense of belonging among all segments of society;
 6. *Recommends* international cooperation and exchange of best practices among Member Parliaments to address Islamophobia effectively, share experiences and develop joint initiatives;

7. *Urges* Member Parliaments to develop comprehensive national strategies to counter Islamophobia, incorporating measures that promote understanding, social integration and diversity;
8. *Encourages* Member Parliaments to support research and data collection on Islamophobia, helping to identify trends and challenges, and to devise and implement effective countermeasures;
9. *Also encourages* collaboration between parliaments, governments, civil society organizations, religious leaders, academics and community representatives, to raise awareness and implement initiatives to counter Islamophobia;
10. *Further encourages* dialogue and collaboration among different religious groups to enhance mutual understanding and respect, thereby fostering a culture of religious tolerance and coexistence;
11. *Recommends* the establishment of a reporting mechanism to review the progress of Member Parliaments in countering Islamophobia, including sharing best practices and identifying challenges;
12. *Also recommends* periodic reviews of the implementation of this resolution, taking into account the evolving nature of Islamophobia and its impact on societies;
13. *Reaffirms* the commitment of Member Parliaments to combat all forms of discrimination, including Islamophobia, and to promote a world where diversity, understanding and respect prevail;
14. *Calls upon* Member Parliaments, international organizations and civil society to work collectively to counter Islamophobia and create an environment of inclusivity and harmony.