

Parliaments as the basis for strengthening education for peace, security and the rule of law

We live in a historic juncture where major changes and shifts occur on an international scale. Traditional perceptions are transformed and people have to choose if human civilization can and must insist on living with human values, human rights and international law, or if a different and reactive path is being prepared.

At the same time we live in the age of great technological achievements. The new digital world and the rapid growth of technology offer tremendous ease in a range of disciplines. The 4th Industrial Revolution radically changes the planet, and it is demanded that the changes which are taking place are for the benefit of humanity and life.

Despite all the above, however, the problems have not disappeared, while conflicts and violence lie in the daily lives of thousands of people.

Recently, Europe and the wider Mediterranean region have also been tested by a huge refugee wave caused by conflicts and wars that are raging in the Middle East.

Yet, even in the Western world there is a revival of extreme opinions, undemocratic attitudes, and an increase in rhetorical hatred. Far-right racist parties claim power, while fake news introduces us to new concerns. The society of "post-truth" is a society that needs to revive traditional values such as co-operation, truth, coexistence and tolerance of diversity.

Today, we must be aware that social contracts and decades of success have been called into question. And here we have to be clear: Peace, justice and security are inextricably linked concepts. In the modern world, these two concepts have been linked to another synonym: sustainable development. Poverty and social inequalities remain the root cause of problems and conflicts, and if we want to be effective, we need to devise policies that aim at reducing social inequalities.

So, let us first agree that peace and security can be established by the concern for social justice and the development of the poorest societies on the planet. It is a tragic political mistake to allow, because of arrogance and political choices, the army of impoverished people.

We are also well aware that the wider region - the countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East - have experienced many difficulties in recent years. Destabilization and the conflicts that have prevailed have made co-operation and coexistence a difficult affair, while it is true that often our countries were at the forefront of imperialist interests and interventions. Now we are experiencing renewed tensions, mainly because of wars, energy paths and the redeployment of geopolitical power. But if this is the one truth, the other truth is that we, the citizens' representatives, should not see economic opportunities as a competitive field, but as an area of convergence, cooperation, peace and co-development, for the benefit of our peoples and countries.

We must do everything in our power to bring peace, security and stability to the region. Anyone who seeks to implement these goods must fight terrorism and sharpen competition. To defend human rights, including the social and peoples interests. Promote international cooperation on the basis of international law.

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Stability, justice and security means to stop the war in Syria, but also in Iraq. There should be a major rational rebuilding program for these countries.

To stabilize the zones of instability and to resolve the Kurdish issue in a peaceful and lasting way.

Peace and security means recognizing the great work that Jordan and Lebanon offer in order to cure the effects of the region's wars against large population groups. It means the financial support of these two states. The aim is not only to treat large numbers of refugees, but also to create new economic, productive infrastructure, as well as rural and industrial zones.

The environment and our world must become more stable and secure. To a large extent the development of each society depends on the environment that is shaped by the others. At the same time, ongoing instability requires countries to work together to promote a positive common agenda to address the new challenges. Establish security and stability areas.

The parliaments, of course, can play a role in this process. For example, my country, Greece, has created and led a major summit, which is composed of the world's premier cultures, and aims to create common perceptions about peace, science and development.

At the same time, it created and pioneered tripartite and four-party meetings with countries of its immediate and indirect neighborhood, with the sole purpose of co-development and peace. Such initiatives can open up thinking and shape new directions and are "good practices" in the field of peace and international relations.

Recently, for example Greece ,also, ended a chronic name struggle with its northern neighbor, now called Northern Macedonia, and not "Macedonia", as this country had been known till now. Both countries have decided to leave behind their differences and to give an effective hit to nationalism and the irredentism that he stood in the region, building co-development, peace and cooperation.

In my opinion, parliaments, if they want to defend peace, security and the rule of law, should concentrate on some aspects.

A) Termination of wars, terrorism and immigration

The Eastern Mediterranean is a migratory route for a very large number of illegal immigrants and refugees and it is imperative to address this phenomenon through an integrated approach and using all the tools provided by the parliaments.

It is necessary to control illegal trafficking networks and transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. Continued conflicts and growing radicalization perpetuate the phenomenon. Particular attention should be paid to the stabilization of conflict-prone areas as soon as hostilities have ceased.

It is necessary to draw up plans and policies that focus on religious tolerance and the prevention of radicalization of young people. The growing number of young and educated but unemployed people demonstrates the importance of providing equal opportunities for all to employment and thus to prosperity. Economic progress must be combined with educational programs and initiatives to promote inter-religious dialogue and solidarity between citizens. If we do not address the issue of wars and immigration as an interrelated issue with many parameters, we will find it constantly ahead of us.

B) Enhance security and stability.

A positive agenda for cooperation between the different regions of the globe needs to be developed.

It is necessary to establish permanent parliaments of dialogue that will lead to practical steps overcoming differences, as a long-term investment for peace, security and stability.

All initiatives should be based on respect for international law, the inviolability of the borders established by the Treaties, such as the **Lausanne** Treaty and the avoidance of any interference with the internal affairs of other states.

It is for this reason that working groups can be set up between parliaments, which will draw up plans to tackle major challenges in the region, such as a) terrorism; b) authoritarianism in relations between states; c) ideological, religious and cosmopolitan fanaticism;) the external interventions.

C) Strengthen Cultural Co-operation and work in the fields of education

The best way to boost peace and security is to create the conditions for a peaceful and dignified life. Parliaments and committees dealing with culture and education issues can design policies that are relevant to education.

Intensive transcontinental and regional seminars and university programs for young researchers and postgraduate students covering a wide range of academic areas such as development, the environment, the fight against

terrorism, religious tolerance, post-war reconstruction, peace, education the citizens and the resilience of democratic institutions. To facilitate cultural knowledge and thus tolerance and coexistence on the planet.

In conclusion, these issues, peace and security, though they are general concepts, can acquire substantive concrete content with concrete practical initiatives. Trust and peace are being built day by day and is about the daily lives of millions of people.

Holistic approaches and holistic solutions are needed. The migratory problem is not irrelevant to wars and climate change. Security is not irrelevant to economic prosperity and social cohesion. As far as we understand this, we will also achieve more effective education for peace, security and the rule of law.