



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

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## **Talking points for H.E. Francesco Maria Amoruso**

**PAM Honorary President**

On the occasion of the

134<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

*Lusaka, Zambia, 19-23 March 2016*

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, I wish to start my intervention by conveying the greetings of Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an organization to which our Assembly is strongly linked.

The issue we are discussing today is of a great importance: for the Inter-Parliamentary Union, for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean and for all countries of the world and their citizens.

If you consider that almost half of the world's population is under the age 25, we can well understand how important is for us to tackle this issue.

Debating on Youth and Democracy means to refer to the need of ensuring a social space for their full citizenship and participation in political, economic and cultural life in our societies.

Today young people have all opportunities and skills to communicate, act, network and influence. Nevertheless, the challenges that they are facing, especially in the Mediterranean region – such as climate change, unemployment, inequalities and social exclusion – are unprecedented.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In recent years, young people from all over the world raised their voices asking to be heard. Starting from Tunis, the Mediterranean squares became the place where young Egyptians, Turkish, Italians, Spanish and Greeks, shared anger and protests, but also launched proposals and claims. Their exclusion has today led to serious instabilities in some countries of the Mediterranean region.

We, parliamentarians, have the duty to listen to their voices, respond to their appeals, and include them in the decision-making process. We have the responsibility to work with them in the management of the major issues that concern us, such as employment, political inclusion, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and, very important, the construction of a shared culture.

We must not forget that half of the great flows of migrants crossing the Mediterranean region are young people and children fleeing wars, violence, poverty and human rights violations.

The Syrian conflict is having a devastating impact on children and, in the long term, it may result in the loss of an entire generation. It is, therefore, more than ever necessary to break this cycle of violence, and play a constructive role in restoring the stability of Syria and the Mediterranean region in general.

In addition, it is extremely important to keep in mind that young people are also the first victims of violent ideologies and recruitment by extremist groups. This is very clear in the methods ISIS uses to recruit Foreign Fighters. Crisis of identity, sense of injustice and social exclusion are some of the reasons that lead these young people to embrace these violent ideologies. It is our duty to show them that a better world is possible by involving them in the decision-making process, promoting the protection of human rights and combating social exclusion.

There is no democracy without the active participation of all social actors. Therefore, we, parliamentarians, are strongly committed in achieving this goal and protecting their aspirations, in order to ensure a better future for the peoples of the Mediterranean. This is a challenge that PAM embraced and for which we ask your support and effective contribution.

Thank all of you for your attention.