



## **24-Month Project to table an international treaty at The United Nations General Assembly**

### **Mission Summary:**

This project is the advanced phase of a global campaign to enact an 'International Treaty to Ban the Political Abuse of Religion', aiming to introduce a crucial legal framework to eliminate the root causes of religious conflicts and discrimination worldwide.

The principles embodied in the **proposed treaty** are meant to be universal, not subject to compromise, and not expressed in a form that would target any particular state, offend any religious group, or provide leverage to extremists.

This campaign follows an inclusive approach, grounded in the utmost respect for all religions and beliefs, to introduce clear, precise, comprehensive and irrefutable international rules to ban:

- all political abuses of religion that undermine human equality,
- all religious discrimination in rights and duties,
- all religious exclusions,
- and all restrictions to freedom of religion or belief.

Over the past four years, we have garnered substantial and growing global support due to this fair respectful approach, which would make it an act of self-condemnation for any government to reject these fundamental justice rules. No principled counter-argument could be made.

The objective is to reinforce human rights, equality, and the rule of law by introducing a global norm justifying more effective international rules to engender functioning societies, enhance stability, and pave the way for sustainable development.

Our mission is formally on the international agenda, with an imminent supporting **resolution at the Council of Europe**, direct engagements with several governments, and extensive support in more than 80 countries.

This initiative is not an attempt to separate religion and politics, a step that suits some countries but could potentially damage the stability of others. Rather, it aims to build global consensus on eliminating all forms of religious oppression by the state.

### **The Mission:**

As quoted in the supporting **motion for resolution at the Council of Europe**: *"We recognize that all existing international conventions related to human rights principles and values are still being sidelined by national legislation in many countries. They need crucially to be consolidated and affirmed by a highly focused and more effective new international treaty to combat specifically all forms of discrimination on religious bases"*.

This campaign aims to secure the adoption of the **proposed treaty** by several governments from different regions at the United Nations General Assembly. This will be achieved by;

- Building support among legislators, officials and influential dignitaries,
- Lobbying governments to endorse and adopt this mission on the international stage,
- Working with governments to elevate this initiative within the United Nations,
- Coordinating the multilateral proceedings at the UN General Assembly.



## Global Campaign to enact an: 'International Treaty to Ban the Political Abuse of Religion'

To date, the work has been funded through donations of time and money by Board members and other supporters of the initiative. At this advanced phase, BPUR is aiming to establish a more efficient organizational system to engage more decision-makers worldwide.

The provision of information and advocacy to politicians and high-level officials is an essential part of our strategic operation. It involves initiating engagements with officials, holding meetings, and organizing events to find synergies between our objectives and their policies.

We require high standards in our work as we consistently strive for a sensible, effective, and transparent system to ensure ethical communication with those we engage. We adhere to core principles of accountability and openness in all our interactions. We make every reasonable effort to verify the truth and accuracy of all statements and information shared with third parties.

### **Project Background:**

This Project is led by BPUR International, a non-profit NGO **registered and regulated in the United Kingdom** since 26 February 2019, Number 11848450. It was officially launched at the first board meeting on 15 July 2020.

The initiative was ignited following an overwhelmingly supportive response to an article by founder **Salam Sarhan**, published in **The Independent on 31 January 2019**, highlighting why the international community needs such a treaty to address the major drivers of current and future conflicts.

The founder is an Iraqi British writer who, over four decades, observed his homeland engulfed in the abusive mixing of religion and politics. Many members of his family were killed or displaced due to their religious identity. This initiative comes from a deep comprehension of the intricate sensitivities to foster a global consensus rooted in respect and understanding.

The evidence is clear that religious oppression is behind many of the most common violations of equality and human rights. The number of victims is beyond any statistics, not only women, children and religious minorities but also significant portions of the majorities in many countries.

Rightfully, the international community has always been cautious when dealing with religion, fearing to single out and thereby antagonize any specific religion or country. This is a global problem and requires universal, indiscriminate rules for all humanity. History demonstrates that no region is exempt from the political abuse of religion, especially during times of unrest.

The initial **proposed treaty** was drafted by prominent officials, including **Lincoln Bloomfield Jr**, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State; **Nabil Fahmy**, former Egyptian Foreign Minister; **Giulio Terzi**, former Italian Foreign Minister; and the late **David Kilgour**, former Canadian Secretary of State. The formal text would be drafted by the adopting governments.

With very limited resources, our initiative built support by engaging one supporter after another, over time reaching thousands of lawmakers, officials, religious leaders, and victims of religious persecution worldwide. This is a testament to the feasibility and viability of the initiative.

All supporters share the belief that the proposed treaty would be a morally potent tool to enforce equality, the rule of law and all international humanitarian objectives by enhancing stability and effectively protecting victims of religious discrimination, especially women, children, and people of different beliefs.

As the world continues to unite in a shared destiny, we believe that the proposed treaty will have



## Global Campaign to enact an: 'International Treaty to Ban the Political Abuse of Religion'

a significant impact on the lives of billions across the globe, both directly and indirectly. It would affect every aspect of life and contribute to world peace and prosperity.

### **The Track Records:**

For various reasons and diplomatic considerations, we are featuring only a limited section of support on **our website**. In many instances, we are obliged to keep encouraging engagements with certain officials and governments off the record.

This project is formally on the international agenda with a supporting **motion for a resolution at the Council of Europe**, tabled by 41 lawmakers from 19 countries, as listed in the motion. The forthcoming adoption of the resolution would request all **46 member states** to adopt this campaign on the international stage.

Many long lists of lawmakers in several countries have appealed to their governments to adopt this mission, including Morocco, the United Kingdom, Austria, Italy, Belgium and Bangladesh. We also have advanced engagement with more than 20 governments from around the world.

This mission is also supported by hundreds of legislators, officials, and social and religious leaders in over 80 countries, especially in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, where it is most needed. We also have rapidly growing institutional support, as **listed on our website**.

We have organised several events, including an **international conference** in Rabat, Morocco in May 2022. Now we are preparing for an international conference in the Italian Senate on 25 September 2025 to bring together the Council of Europe and officials from around the world to draw the roadmap of our mission towards the UN General Assembly.

Based on current progress, the first state adoption is anticipated by June 2025. This, in turn, could prompt many endorsements by other countries.

### **The Tasks of the Project:**

Our engagements are growing rapidly with hundreds of parties, including officials, lawmakers, and international organizations. This 24-month project requires the dedication of experienced executives to implement the following tasks:

- Lobbying officials and lawmakers to adopt our mission on the international stage.
- Assisting the **Rapporteur of our motion for resolution** in the Council of Europe.
- Copywriting documents involving governments and international organizations.
- Managing the contributions of all members and supporters.
- Organizing, attending and speaking at relevant events, fora and conferences.
- Managing the admin structure and the short and long-term agenda.
- Forming and managing working partnerships with international organizations.
- Managing documents in different languages with the requisite accuracy.
- Updating and developing the website regularly.
- Bookkeeping: transparent audited accounts in full compliance with British laws.
- Presenting the records and documents for sponsors and supporters.

### **The impact and the outcome:**

This campaign is a direct response to the devastating aftermath of the growing trend of religious



## Global Campaign to enact an: 'International Treaty to Ban the Political Abuse of Religion'

oppression and conflicts worldwide, notwithstanding numerous international conventions on human rights, which are being sidelined by local legislation in many countries.

We are witnessing responsible governments struggling to enforce human rights standards for fear of extremists misleading the masses. Many officials and lawmakers in these troubled countries are supporting the proposed treaty as an effective tool to empower and legitimize their efforts to curb extremism.

This simple, indisputable approach would expose all violations respectfully, depriving the extremists of any opportunity to benefit from a perceived provocation. It would be difficult for any government to justify rejection or disregard of the fair rules of the proposed treaty.

Banning religious discrimination would also strip political parties founded on religious exclusion of legitimacy, as such parties are directly violating the terms of the proposed treaty.

This mission will go on, after enacting the proposed treaty, to establish a global monitor to provide verified data on all violations to empower governments, organizations and individuals to apply effective moral and political pressure on those who persist in committing such abuses.

### **References:**

BPUR International would be pleased to provide any additional information, documents or any required lists of our supporters. We stand ready to connect you with any of the prominent members or supporters of our initiative.

The following links are a selection of video speeches by some of our prominent supporters;

- **Lord Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury.**
- **Playlist of several dialogues with prominent supporters of BPUR International**
- **Martin Engelberg, Legislative Sponsor of BPUR International in Austria.**
- **Amina Bouayach, president of the National Human Rights Council in Morocco.**
- **Professor Ephraim Isaac, director of the Institute of Semitic Studies, USA.**
- **HE Omar Saif Ghobash, Assistant UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs.**
- **Giulio Terzi, former Italian Foreign Minister**
- **Benjamin Kalu, the legislative sponsor of BPUR International in Nigeria.**
- **Naguib Sawiris, member of the board of BPUR International.**
- **Mary Kelly Foy MP, Legislative Sponsor of BPUR International in the UK.**
- **Lukas Mandl, legislative sponsor of BPUR Int. in the European Parliament.**
- **Touriya Lahrech, Legislative Sponsor of BPUR International in Morocco.**
- **Opening Session of our Global Conference in Morocco 11-12 May 2022.**

★ BPUR is registered and regulated in the United Kingdom as a nonprofit organisation with 6 members on the board; **Naguib Sawiris** (chair), **Elisabetta Zamparutti**, **Naseer Shamma**, **Struan Stevenson**, **Mila Bessmann** and **Salam Sarhan** (Secretary General).

★ All our audited accounts and members of the board are listed in our registration on **the British authorities website at this link.**



Global Campaign to enact an:  
**'International Treaty to Ban the Political Abuse of Religion'**

- ★ **BPUR's constitution (Bylaws) is attached and in this link.**
- ★ **All underlined words in this document are hyperlinks to relevant web pages.**