

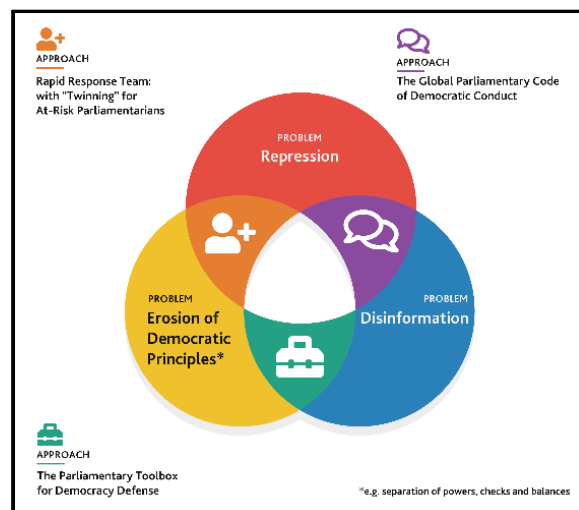
## Mobilizing Legislators in Defense of Democracy: Parliamentary Campaign for Democratic Renewal and Human Rights

### The Parliamentary Rapid Response Team (PARRT)



When human rights abuses amass, democratic practices are abandoned, and justice retreats, **parliamentarians** are on the frontlines. As representatives of the democratic branch closest to citizens, members of parliament (MPs) have the mandate and responsibility to resist attacks on democracy. However, parliamentarians themselves are increasingly at risk in contexts of democratic backsliding. A recent surge of assaults on democracy and civic space often entails physical and psychological attacks on MPs; in 2019, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians logged 533 violations of MPs' human rights in 40 countries. A growing number of parliamentarians cite relentless abuse as their reason for stepping down from office prematurely. A disproportionate number of those are women and members of vulnerable and at-risk groups.

In the face of the scale, complexity, and ever-evolving nature of the threats against them, parliamentarians must now take action to support democracy and one another. As the largest global network of legislators with more than forty years of experience, Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is uniquely aware of the power of solidarity among members of parliament. PGA is thus assembling the **Parliamentary Rapid Response Team (PARRT)** as "first responders" in cases of urgent action. This unique cohort of democracy champions reflecting geographic variety and heterogeneity of levels of democratic development, gender balance, and diversity across the political spectrum can respond nimbly, intervening when parliamentarians and human rights defenders are at risk.



Based on reports from members of PGA's worldwide network and credible monitoring by partners in civil society, academia, and the media, PARRT members will mobilize peers in their domestic legislators and PGA's global network for timely and strategic advocacy, using both legislative prerogatives (e.g. hearings, resolutions, demarches, and political levers) and public platforms to highlight at-risk parliamentarians' cases on the global stage. Each PARRT member is paired with an individual parliamentarian at-risk, working together to develop protection strategies; enlist MP colleagues to join advocacy initiatives based on "action alerts" with recommended legislative, political, and diplomatic actions; and, where necessary, provide legal defense. The PARRT supports threatened MPs remotely and on-the-ground as possible.

These strategies draw on lessons learned and strategies to respond to attacks on human rights defenders, adapting to the unique context of MPs under threat, systematizing and scaling PGA's numerous prior instances of immediate action in the face of intimidation of or attacks on parliamentarians, including national-level legislative action and global statements with regard to situations in [Bahrain](#), [Brazil](#), [Cameroon](#), [Chad](#), [Ecuador](#), [Guatemala](#), [Hong Kong](#), [the Maldives](#), [the Philippines](#) and [Venezuela](#), *inter alia*.

To learn more about the PARRT and the Parliamentary Campaign for Democratic Renewal and Human Rights, including how you can help, please contact Ms. Rebecca Shoot at [Rebecca.Shoot@pgaction.org](mailto:Rebecca.Shoot@pgaction.org).