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47th Session of the Committee to promote respect for International Humanitarian Law Convened in Istanbul

Speaker Farrugia chaired the 47th session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The session was convened in Istanbul within the framework of the 152nd Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union.

The Committee reviewed progress made since its previous session, focusing on priority areas such as humanitarian crises, the eradication of statelessness, implementation of humanitarian disarmament treaties, promotion of IHL, and strengthened partnerships. Members shared updates on national and parliamentary actions undertaken in these areas.

The session focused on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Lebanon following the escalation of hostilities in March 2026. Participants expressed grave concern over the displacement of more than one million people, significant civilian casualties, and widespread damage to infrastructure. Contributions from UNHCR and ICRC representatives underscored the urgent need for protection of civilians and adherence to international humanitarian law. The Committee agreed to highlight the situation in plenary discussions.

The session also addressed the challenges posed by contemporary armed conflicts, including urban warfare, emerging technologies, and the protection of medical facilities. Members reaffirmed the critical role of parliaments in upholding humanitarian norms and supporting pathways to peace, and received updates on the ICRC's Global IHL Initiative.

In addition, the Committee discussed preparations for the Third Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions to be held in Laos in September 2026, emphasizing the importance of universalization and effective national implementation. Participants also discussed how Parliaments could mark the 75th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, highlighting the need to strengthen global commitment to refugee protection frameworks. The meeting concluded with discussions on the Committee's future workplan and a briefing on the situation in the Gulf.