



# STRATEGY 2021-24



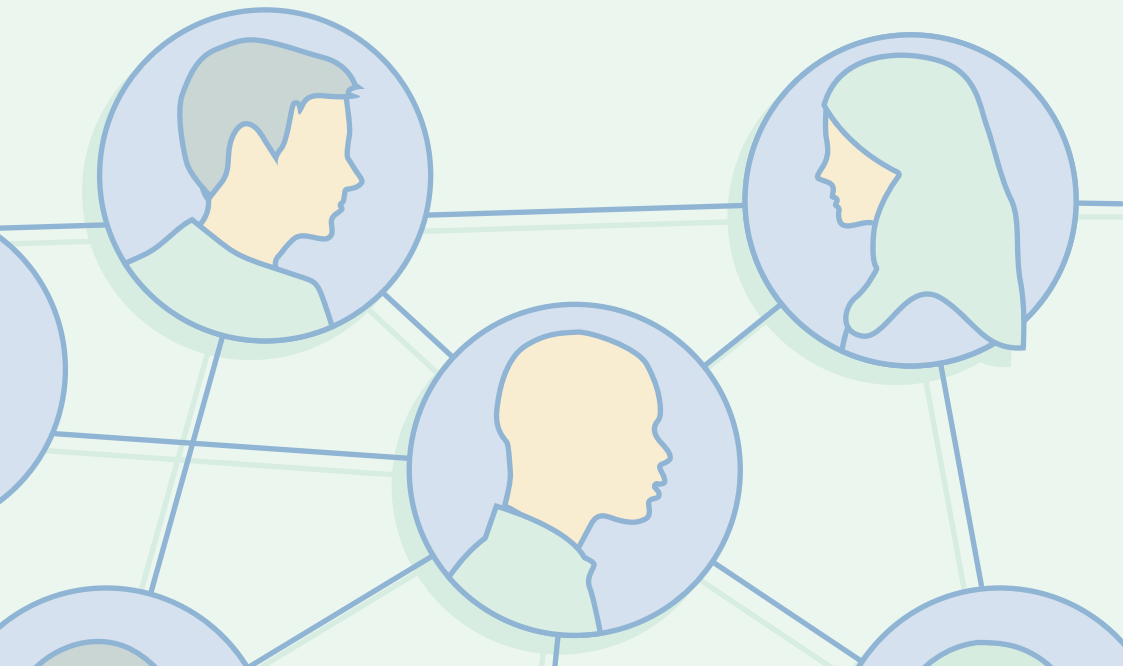
International Panel of  
Parliamentarians  
for Freedom of Religion  
or Belief

# WHO WE ARE?

IPPFoRB is a global network of former and sitting parliamentarians, acting in their individual capacity to promote and advance freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for everyone, everywhere.

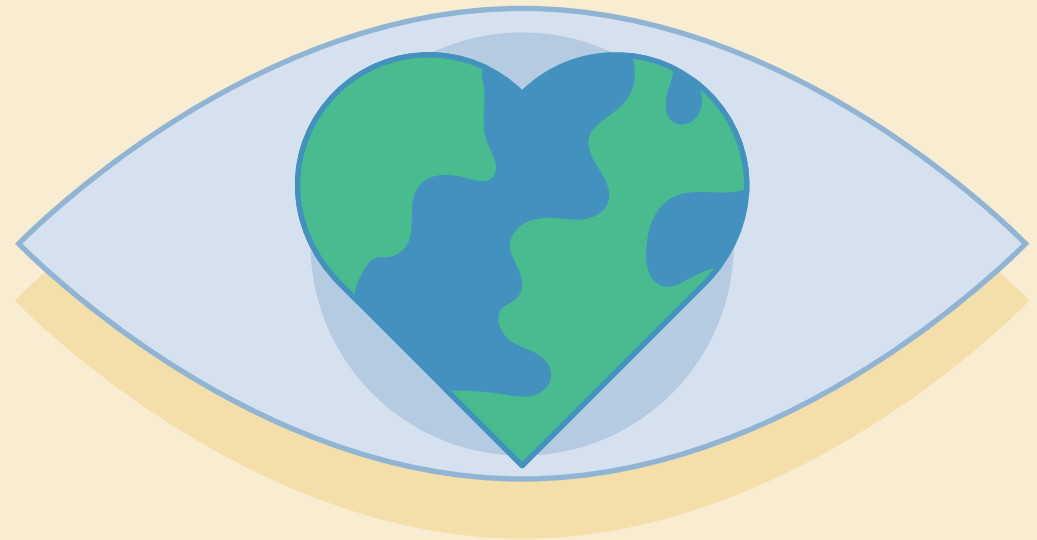
IPPFoRB anchors its work in Article 18 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These articles enshrine the right to thought, conscience and religion, including the right to adopt or to change a religion or belief, and the freedom to manifest this religion or belief individually or in community with others.

IPPFoRB is overseen by a Steering Group comprising former and sitting parliamentarians and is supported by an international Secretariat.



# VISION

Our vision is a world in which everyone enjoys their inalienable right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.



# MISSION

IPPFoRB connects, equips, and supports parliamentarians from around the globe to facilitate their advocacy for freedom of religion or belief. IPPFoRB seeks to contribute to the strengthening of a deliberative space with respect to the right to freedom of religion or belief on the national and international level.

# CORE VALUES

## Diversity:

In carrying out its mission, IPPFoRB is committed to political, religious, geographical, and gender diversity.

## Equality and Non-discrimination:

IPPFoRB is guided by the principle that all human beings are born free and equal and that no one shall be subject to discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, colour, class, ethnicity, location, religion or belief, or other differences.

## Solidarity:

IPPFoRB seeks to create a sense of community and mutual support, where every member can work in solidarity for a common cause. We cooperate with international, regional, and local partners to advance freedom of religion or belief.

# HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

In 2014, a group of parliamentarians from different countries, with diverse political and religious backgrounds, met at the University of Oxford to consider how concerned parliamentarians could work together to address violations of freedom of religion or belief.

Following this meeting, the International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief (IPPFoRB) was launched in November 2014 at the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo, Norway.

Thirty parliamentarians from around the world signed the *Oslo Charter for Freedom of Religion or Belief* with commitments to promote freedom of religion or belief for all persons through their work and respective institutions and to enhance global cooperation. The Oslo Charter reaffirms the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion as defined by Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.





# THE ROLE AND PRIORITIES OF IPPFORB

Worldwide, there are growing threats to freedom of religion or belief, including discrimination, acts of violence and the politicization of religion or belief. Therefore, the need for parliamentarians to be equipped and resourced to work together to protect the right to freedom of religion or belief as an integral part of the broader human rights framework has never been more important.

Parliamentarians have a key role to play in defending and promoting freedom of religion or belief. This builds on the roles parliamentarians play as leaders and facilitators, bridging the state and civil society. They do this by advancing work at home and leveraging that work for international solidarity in defence of freedom of religion or belief.

## **IPPFoRB's goal for the next four years is:**

Strengthening a broad coalition of FoRB-sensitive parliamentarians working in partnership with other relevant stakeholders for freedom of religion or belief on the national, regional, and international level.

To achieve this, IPPFoRB will:

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**Mobilize parliamentarians in actions and advocacy initiatives in support of freedom of religion or belief:**

- Support parliamentarians who wish to establish freedom of religion or belief initiatives. This may include supplying information, providing contacts with like-minded legislators, and providing connections to advocacy organizations. The focus will be on encouraging legislators to act in their unique roles as parliamentarians.
- Mobilize the wider coalition in support of individual members' initiatives.
- Create platforms for networking, peer-to-peer support and learning and interaction.

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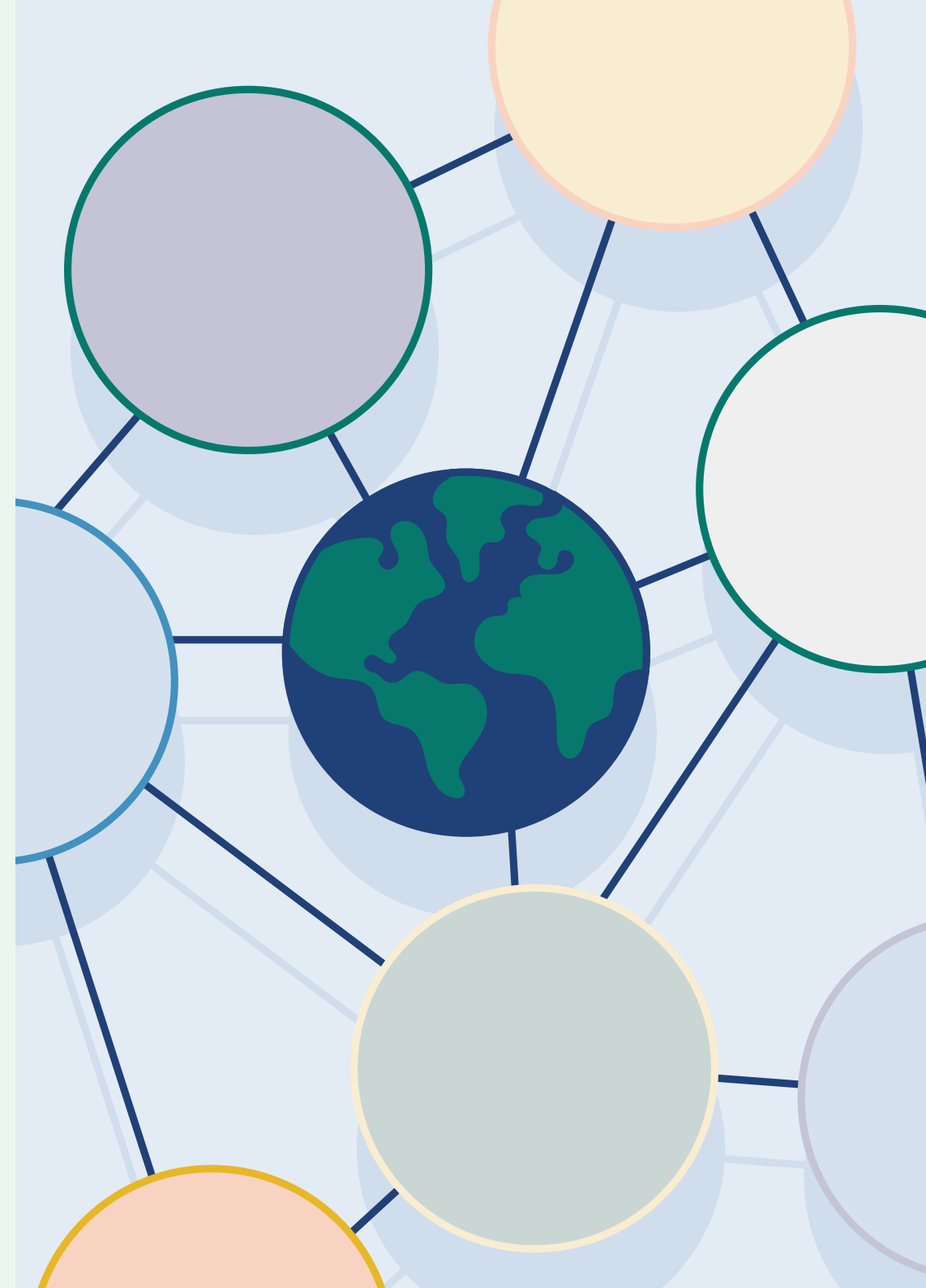
**Equip parliamentarians with necessary tools and resources for advocacy on freedom of religion or belief:**

- Enhance parliamentarians' knowledge and understanding of freedom of religion or belief, facilitate the sharing of best practices, and encourage members to identify the interdependence between freedom of religion or belief and other human rights.

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**Promote cooperation and partnerships that strengthen IPPFoRB's position as a reputable actor and partner on freedom of religion or belief:**

- Encourage Parliamentarians to develop parliamentarian-driven national and regional networks and models for accountability and transparency that allow these networks to support their members.
- Develop strategic partnerships with international actors and civil society organisations that share IPPFoRB's basic commitments to human rights and diversity.
- Ensure IPPFoRB's participation in relevant freedom of religion or belief fora on the national, regional, and international level.



# FINANCES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Solid and predictable finances are a prerequisite for IPPFoRB's ability to operate with clout and engage in long-term planning. During the next period IPPFoRB will seek to identify additional donors in line with the network's commitments and values.

IPPFoRB has had a variety of positive partnerships. These include, but are not limited to, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA); the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO); the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief; Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS); the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF); ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) and African Parliamentarians Association for Human Rights (AfriPAHR). During the next three years, IPPFoRB will seek to strengthen and expand partnerships and networks.

To increase the sustainability of the network, IPPFoRB will continue to develop monitoring, learning, and evaluation systems to identify strengths, weaknesses, and potential problems as they occur, and provide appropriate actions and adjustments where needed.

