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**Report of APA Coordinating Meeting**

**On the Sideline of the 140th IPU Assembly**

**April 06, 2019**

**Doha (Qatar)**

APA Coordination Meeting was held on 06 April 2019 on the sideline of the 140th IPU Assembly in Doha-Qatar with Professor *Mustafa Şentop* Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey in chair. Delegates from 21 member parliaments attended the meeting as follows:

*Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mongolia Nepal ,Oman\* Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar\*, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam,*

*\*Oman and Qatar attended as observers*

Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi, APA Secretary General, started the meeting with a short welcome remark, followed by presentation of the draft Agenda of the meeting, which was unanimously adopted by the participants.

Then, the Chairperson of the Meeting, Professor *Mustafa* *Şentop*, in his capacity as President of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly opened the meeting with his impressive address.

1. **Opening Address by Professor Mustafa *Şentop*,**

The Chairman opened the meeting with his deepest sorrow for the killing of Muslim worshipers in the terrorist attack at the community of worshipers in the Friday Prayer at Christchurch in New Zealand as well as those who lost their life in the flood stricken areas in Iran.

He then expressed his pleasure for being in Qatar on the 140th IPU Assembly and welcomed the participants present at the APA meeting. He underlined the importance of APA as an appropriate platform for parliamentary diplomacy. He also referred to APA as one of the main objectives pursued by Turkey in a bid to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation for peace, prosperity and social relations in Asia.

In another part of his remarks, he touched on the significant progress made in various fields in Asia, more particularly in economic arena as a driving force for reducing poverty. He added that the rich human resources of the countries in the region offer good potential for progress in many areas of development such as science, technology, innovation, climate change, disaster management, sustainable agriculture, green growth, renewable energy, water resources and health.

The Chairperson then underscored important status of Turkey as a country with great interest to develop its relations with the countries in Asia. He also referred to the foreign policy of the Republic of Turkey in the fight against terrorism and management of regional crisis as two issues with greatest priority. He pointed out that struggle against terrorism in a sincere, determined and coherent manner should be pursued as common goal of all the countries in Asia.

1. **Report of the Secretary General:**
2. **APA Activities Report in 2018**

APA Secretary General started his report with a short welcome note to the attending delegates and expressed his appreciation to all the Member Parliaments who responded to the invitation of APA Secretariat for participation at this Meeting. He then congratulated His Excellency, Professor MustafaŞentop for his election as the new Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

As per the past usual practices, Dr. Majidi APA Secretary General presented a brief summary report on the activities of APA Secretariat in 2018, followed by the list of programs planned for 2019.

The Secretary General listed various meetings held in 2018 as follows:

1. APA Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development in *Pissouri-Cyprus* in 27 June 2018.
2. APA Standing Committee on Political Affairs and SCCAP Meeting at *Gwadar-Pakistan* on 30 October 2018,
3. APA Social and Cultural Standing Committee Meeting and First Executive Council Meeting at *Cesme, Izmir* ( Turkey) on 04-06 October 2018
4. The 11th Plenary Meeting in Istanbul (Turkey) on 28 Nov.-03 Dec. 2018**.**

The Second Executive Council Meeting of Asian Parliamentary Assembly convened in Istanbul, Turkey on 29 Nov. 2018. APA Parliamentary Delegations from 21 Member Parliaments attended this event.

The outcome of the 11th Plenary and 2nd Executive Council meetings, *inter alia*, was adoption of several resolutions, which encompass varieties of issues as follows:

1. **Six Resolutions adopted by the Standing committee on Economic and Sustainable Development**

* Asian Integrated Energy Market,
* Environment,
* Financial Affairs, ensuring efforts for economic growth,
* Poverty Eradication,
* The Role of APA Parliaments in supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals,
* Water and Sanitation in Asia for All

1. **Nine Resolutions adopted by the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs under the following issues:**

* Measures to promote cultural diversity and protection of cultural heritage in Asia,
* Asian Integration through information and communication technology,
* Collaboration on health equity in Asia,
* Asian Parliamentarians against corruption,
* APA Parliamentarians on Women,
* Promoting Inter-faith dialogue and harmony among world religions,
* Legal and Legislative Cooperation in Combating the Smuggling of Cultural Items in Asia,
* Effective cooperation in combating illicit drug trafficking in Asia,
* Humanitarian aid to Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Gaza and Myanmar on the verge of humanitarian catastrophe,

1. **Seven Resolutions adopted by Standing Committee on Political Affairs:**

* Towards an Asian Parliament,
* Good Governance,
* The Rule of Law and Judicial Empowerment,
* Good Parliamentary Practices,
* Building Prosperity in Asia through Friendship and Cooperation,
* Asian Parliaments and Governments together for prosperity in Asia,
* Asian Parliaments’ unwavering support for the Palestinian people,

1. **Standing Committee on Budget and Planning:**

Planning APA Budget

1. **APA Programs in 2019:**
2. Meeting of APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs, Bangkok (Thailand) on 12-15 Feb. 2019, with participation of 21 Member Parliaments. The meeting debated and adopted ten draft resolutions.

*Meanwhile, based on APA Res/2014/16 Resolution to establish Special Committee of APA*

*Women Parliamentarians under the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs,*

*the meeting opened its session and discussed the matter.*

1. Meeting of Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development, Naryan-Mar( Russian Federation) 18-21 April 2019,
2. Meeting of the Standing Committee on Budget and Planning, Baghdad( Republic of Iraq), date to be confirmed
3. Meeting of APA Political Standing Committee, Tehran( Islamic Republic of Iran)-date to be confirmed,
4. The First Executive Council( Turkey), date to be confirmed,
5. The 12th Plenary Session and 2nd Executive Committee to be followed by transfer of APA Presidency from Turkey to Pakistan( venue and date to be confirmed)
6. **Consideration of Emergency Items:**

Following the interventions made by Kuwait, Indonesia and Turkey as sponsors of the three emergency items, they unanimously agreed to merge their proposals with that of Morocco in favor of one single title, which fully encompasses all the concerns of the world of Islam. It was also proposed that the draft text for submission to the Assembly should be provided in such a manner to include the denied rights of the Palestinians as well.

The items proposed by Kuwait, Indonesia, Morocco, Netherlands and Turkey read as follows:

1. Kuwait: “ *Providing international protection for the Palestinian People*”
2. Indonesia:” *Protection of the rights and dignity of Muslim minorities around the world”*
3. Morocco:” *Establishing and delivering an international protection mechanism for the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law: the role of parliaments and the IPU”*
4. The Netherlands: “ *Call for urgent international action to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe hit by Cyclone Idai*"
5. Turkey: *“Preventing and combating racism, intolerance, Islamophobia and xenophobia”,*

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Then the Chairman gave the floor to the sponsors of the proposed items to say a few words in defense of their proposals:

Delegate from Kuwait took the floor and presented the justified reasons for proposing such item. He touched on the terrible situation of Palestinians, citing that Palestine has been occupied by Israel for years and their rights are being denied in defiance of all the binding international instruments. Finally, he expressed readiness of his delegation to consolidate the items proposed by his subject parliament with that of Indonesia.

Jordan delegate also called on Kuwait, Indonesia and Turkey to merge their proposals in order to reach a consensus for one single proposal. Indonesia also took the floor and seconded the viewpoints of Kuwait for merging the two proposals.

In defense of its proposal, delegate of Turkey took the floor and said Islam is a religion, which preaches integration. Muslims and Islamic society should not spread hatred and cause discrimination. It is time to reach an explicit position against the prevailing violence. We are in support of Islamic countries and raised the concerns of world of Islam. Inter-face discourse should be supported, if it is to defuse violence against Islamic groups. He then asked to support the item proposed by the Grand National Parliament of Turkey.

Once again, Jordan took the floor and stated that the items proposed by Kuwait, Indonesia, Morocco and Turkey are in one way or another similar in substance and thus called on the sponsors of the four items to merge their proposals in order to prepare a single text.

The Chairman then gave the floor to the delegate of Iraq who expressed deep sorrow of her delegation for the tragic massacre of the terrorist attack in New Zealand, which took lives of many Muslims. She then referred to the decision adopted by the Arab Group, which strongly opposed US position for recognizing Golan Heights as territory of Israel. She finally expressed support for merging the items proposed by Kuwait, Indonesia, Morocco and Turkey.

The delegate from Iran also took the floor and thanked the humanitarian aid provided for the flood stricken people of Iran by Kuwait and Turkey. He also seconded the proposal for merging the items slated by Kuwait, Indonesia, Morocco and Turkey into one single text.

Delegates from other Member Parliaments, including Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar and Oman also expressed their deep concern for the terrorist attack in New Zealand and the atrocities exercised against people of Palestine. They declared their support for merging the four proposals as recommended by other delegates.

At the end, the Chairman called on the delegates of Kuwait, Indonesia and Turkey as three members of APA and Morocco a member of Islamic and African Groups to form a working committee in order to prepare a single text, subject to inclusion of concerns of all the three proposing member parliaments and Morocco.

In his closing address, the Chair referred to APA as an appropriate bedrock for working in the overpopulated continent of Asia. Asia is strongly in need of such platform, which can serve as manifestation of peace in the world. However, further action needed to be taken in order to reach some more tangible outcome.

The Chairman closed the meeting thanking the APA Secretary General and Staff of the Secretariat for holding the Coordinating Meeting on the sideline of the 140th IPU Assembly. He also thanked all the delegates who participated at the meeting.