



APA Coordinating Meeting alongside of the 147th IPU Assembly

Monday, 23 October 2023, Hour 15:00
Luanda (Angola)

Summary Report

At the invitation of the APA Secretariat, the Coordination Meeting of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) was held on the sideline of the 147 IPU Assembly on Monday 23 October 2023 in Luanda- Angola with participation of the delegates from the following member parliaments:

Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Timor Leste, Turkey, United Arab Emirate, Yemen

This event was chaired by H.E Mrs. Asuman ERDOGAN, Head of the Turkish Delegation to the IPU, who represented the APA President at this Meeting.

Before the meeting goes into session, the Chairperson asked the participants to observe one minute silences in commemoration of the victims of the ongoing Israeli atrocities, most particularly women and children.

Then, the APA Secretary General, Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi called the meeting to order and invited the participants for adoption of the agenda.

The Agenda of the APA Coordinating Meeting was presented by the Secretary General and unanimously adopted. Items of the Agenda included as follows:

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Adoption of the Agenda,
2. Opening Remarks by Chair of the Meeting,
3. Report by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi, APA Secretary General on:

- a. The activities of the APA Secretariat since its last meeting in Manama and APA Calendar of regular events in 2023,
(Under this item the APA Secretary General gives a brief report on the APA regular meetings held so far and the meetings to be held by the end of 2023)
 - b. How APA can come up with a better strategy to coordinate a unified position on international issues of importance to the APA,
(Under this item the APA Secretary General will brief the participants on certain other issues of importance to the APA and the measures needed to be taken to get the better of the APA meetings alongside the IPU Statutory Assemblies,
4. Consideration of the Emergency Items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 147 IPU Assembly,
 5. Any other matters,

Opening Remarks by the Chair of the APA Coordinating Meeting:

Madam Erdogan, the Chair welcomed the participants and thanked them for attending this important event. She also expressed her gratitude to the APA Secretariat for organizing this event.

She continued by saying that APA meetings are concrete manifestation of the important role played by parliamentary diplomacy in the context of foreign policy and international relations.

As regards the ongoing Israeli's atrocities in Gaza, she said "as we hold this meeting today, our region and the world is facing yet with another unrepresented challenge". She added" While the international community has yet with to find a solution to the war between Ukraine and Russia, the world woke up to a new crisis on October 7".

She stated the world was shocked by the scale of escalation and violence in Palestine and Israel. It is highly important to contain the escalation and expansion of this conflict before it leads to a permanent damage in the region,

The loss of civilian lives is unacceptable. And Turkiye is exerting all possible means of diplomacy to contain the escalation. It is the responsibility of all the APA lawmakers to call for restraint and immediate halt to attack civilians.

Turkiye will do its best to calm the situation, simultaneous to doing utmost effort on delivering humanitarian aid.

In another part of her address, the Chair stated that these developments once again showed the importance of the two- state solution for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

She concluded to say “Parallel to its growing prominence, Asia’s responsibility in overcoming global challenges and uncertainties is also increasing. Thus, our role and responsibilities as APA members have become even more important. As APA Members we should demonstrate the culture of diplomacy and working jointly”.

Madam Erdogan remarked that the world was passing through and extraordinary critical time. Terrorism, extremist tendencies, hate speeches and acts, regional crises, illegal migration, trafficking in human development problems, poverty, humanitarian crises, environmental problems, food supply disruptions have become constant items on the agenda of international community

[\(Attachment I\)](#)

SG’s Report on the activities of the APA Secretariat:

APA Secretary General, Dr. Majidi began his report with some words of thanks to the APA delegates from APA Member Countries who honored the APA Secretariat and attended the meeting. He said his report this time included two parts as follows:

- a) **Part I:** APA activities and programs during the year 2023,
- b) **Part II :** How APA can come up with a better strategy to coordinate a unified position on international issues of importance to the APA?

As regards the APA activities APA SG gave a report on the regular meetings of the Standing Committees which respectively was held and hosted by the concerned Vice-Presidents as follows:

- SC on Cultural and Social Affairs (Baku),
- SC on Economic and Sustainable Development (Manama)
- SC on Planning and Budget together with the WG on Statutory Documents (Iran) .

He also touched on the Calendar of events to be held in future which include:

- SC on Political Affairs to be hosted by Iraq,
- Executive Council Meeting by Turkiye

- The 14th APA Plenary to be hosted by Azerbaijan, the nominee for APA President during the year 2024-2025, if so elected.

On Section II of his report, Dr. Majidi referred to the APA Resolution adopted in 2008 to underline the need to hold APA meetings on the sideline of international events, most particularly alongside the IPU Statutory assemblies as part of the initiative to enhance cooperation among the APA members on international issues of importance to APA.

He continued by saying the main purpose of the APA sideline meetings is to seek certain objectives as follows:

“To discuss and coordinate positions of the APA Member parliaments on major international issues of importance to APA and to identify good practices for parliamentary actions accordingly.

APA SG underscored the impacts of the APA decisions at various meetings on the National Legislation of the member parliaments and encouraged the APA members to take a coherent position in this respect as far as possible. Finally, he said” Let’s get together for a change of our vision if we are to have deeper integration into our community.

[\(Attachment II\)](#)

Now it was the time to consider item 4 of the Agenda, and the Chair gave the floor to the participants who wanted to raise any comments in this respect?

Azerbaijan was the first to take the floor: “We consider it crucial to strengthen and advance cooperation with Asian Parliamentary Assembly as a platform to promote parliamentary diplomacy in order to achieve a common ground. Convening of this meeting is highly important for cooperation in this critical situation. APA Member countries can take practical measures in the course of their cooperation for achieving peace and stability in the region and the world.

He continued “Cooperation among Asian Nations is of vital importance to Azerbaijan, because this country is located in a very crucial region. As a cradle of many civilizations, Asia can serve as an important Hub for the world development.

In another part of his intervention, the Azerbaijan’s lawmaker stated that his subject country places great importance on establishment of bilateral and multilateral relations with the Asian Nations.

Therefore, Azerbaijan makes every effort to put into effect this objective in the context of parliamentary diplomacy. As a result, cooperation with APA is very important for Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's MP also touched on the effort made by Milli Majlis as APA Vice-President to host the meeting of SC on Social and Cultural Affairs in Baku as the policy of his subject country to enhance further solidarity with Asian countries. Under this initiative Azerbaijan decided to officially declare its candidacy for the APA President during 2024 -2025. He underlined that his subject country has garnered fruitful experiences in hosting international conferences and called on all the APA member parliaments to extend their support for the candidacy of Azerbaijan.

Consideration of Emergency Items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of 147 IPU Assembly

As regards this item of Agenda, the Chair asked the MP from Indonesia to brief the meeting about the emergency item proposed by the Indonesian delegation to the IPU.

Indonesia: MP from Indonesia expressed his gratitude to the APA SG for holding this meeting and added that APA is a major parliamentary body in Asia. He continued this parliamentary capacity should be duly used for better cooperation and coordination.

As regards the current tensions facing Palestinians in Gaza enclave, he stated that the tension in Gaza is rising as a result of the reckless bombardment of Palestinians by Israel leading to the killing of thousands of civilians, particularly women and children as concrete manifestation of crime against humanity.

He continued; "We are witnessing a heightened tension in the Palestine as the current situation in Gaza is a crime against humanity. He called on the Asian Parliamentary Assembly to rise their voice ever than before and take practical actions to halt the ongoing violations and mass killings of the innocent people in the Gaza enclave. In fact, under such circumstance, the APA should optimize the effort to end the aggression and put crimes against humanity to an end".

To achieve ceasefire, he underscored "we should take a unified position so that the required condition for entrance of humanitarian aid for the people of Palestine through safe corridor to Gaza can be facilitated.

“We should, he said,” try to find long-lasting peace instead of being emotionalized in order to be able to find common ground among IPU members”.

It was under such condition that Indonesia decided to propose an emergency item concerning a halt to aggression and mass killing of the Palestinians by Israel in order to achieve a ceasefire for realization of lasting peace in the region, he concluded.

The next Speaker on this item was MP from Pakistan who elaborated the position of his delegation by saying that before eruption of the current tension in the Middle East, Pakistan had proposed the Item on “*Islamophobia*” as part of the policy to encounter the scenario planned in the western countries trying to spread blasphemy and hate speeches against Islam and Islamic faith.

However, he continued “the ongoing heightened tension in Gaza and Israeli’s resort to inhuman war against defenseless people in the Gaza enclave slaughtering thousands innocent Palestinians as a concrete manifestation of crime against humanity urged Pakistan delegation to withdraw its proposal in support of the people of Palestine.

He added much to our regret silence of international organizations as well as inaction of western countries in the face of such crimes followed by supply of ammunitions by the US in support of Israel neglecting the inalienable right of Palestinian to resist for their self -determination left no other choice for Pakistan delegation to express its full support for the proposal co-sponsored by Indonesia and Algeria against Israeli’s aggression to Gaza strip.

Following the comments of the MP from Pakistan, the Chair denounced the position adopted by the Western countries in the face of the ongoing Israel’s massacre in Gaza and stated that Western countries had left a blind eye to crimes perpetrated by Israel in Gaza as part of their double standard policy .

In defiance of the Western double standard policies, Mrs. Erdogan called on the fellow parliamentarians to voice their outrage against such inhuman acts adding that Western countries are all accountable for such crimes.

She also remarked that “We can not witness slaughtering of women and children and mass destruction of schools and hospitals in Gaza and remain silent. We must be the voice of innocent people of Palestine”.

Mr. Nouri Gezeleche, MP from the parliament of Iran was the next who took the floor to express the position of his delegation on the current crimes by the Zionist in Gaza.

He said “the Asian Parliamentary Assembly enjoys a huge potential for addressing the issues in the Asian region through enhancement of cooperation among member countries in the context of parliamentary diplomacy”.

Heightened tension in the Middle East triggered in the aftermath of the Zionists’ massive aggression against innocent people of Gaza and brutal massacre of the people, particularly women and children has led to the vigilance of the people across the world in the face of the crimes perpetrated by this criminal regime, he remarked.

He also underlined that continuation of massacres in Gaza may lead the situation to go out of control endangering peace and stability in the world more than ever. In fact, the Zionist’s aggression against people in Gaza is a clear indication of violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. In conclusion, he expressed full support of the Iranian delegation of the proposal submitted by Algeria on the ongoing crimes of Israeli regime in Gaza.

Representatives of Syria, Yemen, Iran and Iran also took the floor to express their viewpoints on the current situation in Gaza as follows:

Syria: It is over 12 years that people in Syria are grappling with the plague of war and aggression. Syrian people have earned a bitter experience as a result of the war imposed on their subject country.

He also expressed full support of his delegation of the emergency item proposed in favor of the people of Gaza adding this is a central issue for us and should make our focus on it.

Yemen: The MP from Yemen stated that 50 percent of the people in the Continent of Asia were Muslim and that we all have lived in each other’s neighborhood since the beginning of history.

Therefore, he continued, “We should strive and do everything to cease Israeli’s massacre in Gaza and express our full support of the innocent people of Gaza. Palestine is a territory that existed even before the time the UK came to conspire for creation of Israel. This is a reality that calls on us to unite for stopping continuation of the mass killings and war crime in Gaza”.

Iraq: “ We call on all the Islamic countries to support the proposal on emergency item in favor of the people of Gaza. What is unfolding in Gaza is a clear manifestation of genocide and war crime, the deadly crimes that have continued for 70 years ago in this region”.

“Israel considers itself beyond and over international law and has no shame on perpetration of crimes in Gaza. In fact, Israel entitles itself to commit such crimes with no right for the people of Palestine to defend themselves”.

The MP from Iraq continued” We should voice out our full support for the people of Palestine and Gaza and while condemning the Israeli’s crimes, spare no efforts and do everything in our power to stop the war in Gaza and rise in defiance of western double standard in the face of the unfolding crimes in Gaza.

Iran (Mr. Zolnouri) Vice-Speaker of the Islamic Parliament of Iran said that the APA members should not let this vast Continent of Asia with the highest number of populations fall into trap of mischievous plots of Western countries. It’s incumbent on the people in Asia to mobilize all their material and spiritual capacities to oppose the imperialist policies of the West and bar them from interfering in their affairs.

“Asian countries, he added, “should not allow an illegitimate regime in their neighborhood slaughter people of Palestine and denies their inalienable rights. Israel is an illegitimate regime which has usurped legal lands of the people of Palestine with support of Western countries and consider itself to be entitled to perpetrate mass killing of the defenseless people of Palestine”.

At the end of the meeting, APA SG asked the Chair to make a closing remark, if she would like to do so.

In her closing remarks, Mrs. Erdogan once again thanked for the convening of this event and the fruitful points raised by the participants.

She appreciated Azerbaijan officially announcing candidacy for APA President in the upcoming term of 2024-2025 and stated that there would be a good support for Azerbaijan candidacy.

The Chair continued “As we heard in the course of our deliberations, Asia carries a high and prominent status in term of territory and population and APA members should try to appear more powerful. There are numerous issues for discussion, including climate change, reduction of poverty and empowerment of women, but under such critical situation in the Middle East where our brothers and sisters in

Gaza are under heavy bombardments by Israel, it is incumbent on us all to be the voice of people of Palestine and extend our full support for them.”

As there was no other comments, the Meeting was adjourned.

Attachment I

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MS ASUMAN ERDOĞAN, HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF
TÜRKİYE TO THE IPU**

COORDINATION MEETING OF THE ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

23 OCTOBER 2023

Distinguished members of the Parliament,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you at the Coordination Meeting of the Asia Parliamentary Assembly.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to our hosts for the successful organization of 147th Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union.

APA meetings are concrete manifestation of the important role played by parliamentary diplomacy in the context of foreign policy and international relations.

Unfortunately, as we hold this meeting today, our region and the world is facing yet another unprecedented challenge.

While the international community has yet to find a solution to the war between Ukraine and Russia, the world woke up to a new crisis on October 7. We are shocked by the scale of escalation and violence in Palestine and Israel.

It is highly important to contain the escalation and expansion of this conflict before it leads to a permanent damage in the region. The loss of civilian lives is unacceptable. We strongly condemn it. Türkiye is exerting all possible means of diplomacy to contain the escalation. At this stage, we all should give correct messages to all sides concerned.

I believe APA Parliamentarians have a bigger responsibility now to call for restraint and immediate halt to attack civilians. We were outraged by the loss of lives of hundreds of people in the attack carried out by Israel on Ahli Hospital in Gaza.

The international community needs to put an end to this by taking concrete steps.

Türkiye will do its best to calm the situation. We are also working on delivering humanitarian aid. First shipments arrived recently to Egypt, waiting to be delivered to Gaza. These developments once again show the importance of the two-state solution for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

As APA members, we need to channel the soft power of the parliamentary diplomacy to address these challenges and create working mechanisms to contribute to the solution of the problems.

Esteemed colleagues,

We are passing through extraordinarily critical times. Terrorism, extremist tendencies, hate speeches and acts, regional crises, illegal migration, trafficking in human, development problems, poverty, humanitarian crises, environmental problems, food supply disruptions have become constant items on the agenda of the international community.

There are still various challenges in Syria ranging from economic deterioration to clashes on the ground. Concerning all clashes around the world, returning to the path of peace negotiations on the basis of established international parameters is crucial.

Humanitarian and economic crises continue to pose huge challenges for Afghanistan.

We remain concerned by the situation in Myanmar, which has been deteriorating since the military coup in 2021. The international community should do more in burden-sharing and humanitarian relief efforts.

Hatred against Islam has reached an alarming level especially in Europe but also in Asia. Unfortunately, populist politicians in some countries are encouraging anti-Islam sentiments.

Dear friends,

Climate change and environmental problems have become one of the most challenging global crises we have to face. The impacts of climate change and rising geopolitical tensions further endanger development prospects as well as global food security.

Regardless of the development level, no country is immune from their negative effects.

The pandemic has deepened the existing inequalities, and as a result, rendered the achievement of 2030 Agenda even more challenging. There is no doubt that women and children particularly suffer from the deteriorating humanitarian and economic conditions in all these regions. The only way to combat these challenges is to act together and establish close cooperation regionally and globally in a sincere manner.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Asia is once again becoming the centre of gravity of the world. Developments in Asia are now setting the world agenda. Parallel to its growing prominence, Asia's responsibility in overcoming global challenges and uncertainties is also increasing. Our role and responsibilities as APA members have become even more important.

We need to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation for the sake of peace, stability, human-centered development, rule of law and good governance. As APA members, we should demonstrate the culture of diplomacy and working jointly.

I am confident that our meeting today will contribute further to our efforts in this regard.

Once again, I would like to extend my best regards and wish a successful meeting.

Now, I give the floor to the Secretary General to present his report.

Attachment II

**Asian Parliamentary Assembly
APA Coordinating Meeting on the sideline of the 147th IPU Assembly
APA Secretary General's Report**

Monday, 23 October 2023, Hour 15:00

**Madam President
Distinguished Parliamentarians
Dear Colleagues,**

Once again, we were blessed with another excellent opportunity to sit together on the sideline of the IPU Assembly here in Luanda on the occasion of the 147 IPU Assembly.

Let me thank you for accepting our invitation to participate at this meeting. Also allow me to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the government, parliament and the friendly people of Angola for their hard work to generously organize and host this IPU Assembly.

May I also seize this occasion to express my sincere appreciation to H.E Mrs. Erdogan the Ex- Head of the APA Group of Turkiye and the representative of the Honorable APA Term President, *Prof. Mustafa Sentop* for her close cooperation with APA Secretariat during the past five years. It is also a great pleasure for us to see that Ms. Erdogan has regained her seat in the Parliament and can continue her parliamentary cooperation with us as the Head of the IPU Group in the Parliament of Turkiyeh

As you have noted the meeting agenda, my report this time is not allocated merely to APA activities during the past six months, but rather I have tried to share new experiences with you, as representatives of the APA member parliaments, to urge further involvement and contribution on your part here in order to give further impetus to the outcome of our gatherings on the sideline of the IPU Statutory Assemblies. Therefore, my report includes two parts:

(Part I)

A) APA activities in the year 2023:

As per the usual practice, my report includes the activities so far implemented since our last meeting in Manama and the programs the APA Secretariat expects to be covered before the end of the current year as follows:

1) Meetings of the Standing Committees:

The Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development:

- This Standing Committee held its regular Session on May 16-17,2023, at the invitation and generous hospitality of the Council of Representatives

of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the APA Vice-President and Chair of the concerned Standing Committee with participation of delegations from 21 member parliaments.

- The Committee had before it 9 draft resolutions for consideration. Two of the drafts (Roadmap for Green Finance and Asian Climate Financial Initiative) proposed by delegation of the Russian Federation were merged into one new draft titled: "Asian Climate Financial Initiative". Thus, amendments to the 7 draft resolutions were considered and adopted accordingly.

2) The Standing Committee on Budget and Planning followed by the 2nd Session of the Working Group on Statutory Documents:

- In its capacity as the APA Vice-President, the Islamic Parliament of Iran generously hosted and chaired the following two highly important events between 09-12 July 2023, with participation of 20 member parliaments:
 - The Meeting of the Standing Committee on Planning & Budget,
 - Second Session of the Working Group on Statutory Documents,

As two events of key importance, which play a vital role in the continued efforts of the APA, the two bodies are in one way and another are directly involved in respect of the budget of the organization on one hand and on its development plans on the other.

3) The Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs:

- At the invitation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Standing Committee on Cultural and Social Affairs was hosted and Chaired by the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan as the Vice-Chair of the Committee on 21-22 September 2023.

The Committee had before it 16 draft resolutions for consideration. After extensive debates and exchange of views on amendments, a good number of the draft resolutions were updated and adopted by consensus.

B) The APA Future Meetings:

1. The Meeting of the Standing Committee on Political Affairs is due to be hosted and chaired by Iraq as Vice-Chairman of the Committee on 09-12 November,

2. The Meeting of the Executive Council due to be held by the GNA of Turkiye as the APA Term President (the date TBC)
3. The 14th Plenary Session: The date and Venue are to be confirmed.
Note: The Republic of Azerbaijan has expressed its interest in running for the position of APA President through a formal letter addressed to the APA Secretary General.

Part II

How APA can come up with a better strategy to coordinate a unified position on international issues of importance to the APA

It is over 15 years that the APA has tried to promote its status and position in the course of its activities for enhancement of cooperation with other regional and international parliamentary organizations. This initiative grew out of the idea for creation of a mechanism helping to increase visibility of our organization in its interaction with other parliamentary bodies.

To this end and following its establishment in 2006, the APA has spared no effort to benefit from every parliamentary forum in favor of interactions between lawmakers and exchange views on issues of common interest. This measure was taken as part of its principal policy intended to strengthen the shared values with the aim of enhancing parliamentary democracy in the region in compliance with the APA Resolution of 2008 mandating the APA Secretariat to hold coordination meetings in a volunteer country or the country of the APA President, as necessary and on the sideline of the IPU Statutory Assemblies in order to discuss and coordinate positions of APA Member Parliaments on major international issues of importance to the APA.

In essence, as you may be well aware, our gathering on the sideline of the IPU Assemblies within the framework of the APA Coordination Meetings seeks to embrace the features as follows:

To discuss and coordinate positions of the APA Member Parliaments on major international issues of importance to APA and to identify good practices for parliamentary actions accordingly.

It was with reference to this initiative that I sent a letter to all the APA Members calling on them to coordinate their position and inform the APA Secretariat beforehand in favor of more comprehensive decisions if we are to have a fruitful takeaway from our meetings here and there (**The letter is now before you**).

I have been able to harvest fruitful experiences from organizing the meetings alongside the IPU Assemblies and participation at certain other parliamentary forums since I took over the responsibility as APA Secretary General over six years ago. We should be able to get

better of this potential and focus on a more advantageous takeaway from our IPU sideline meetings.

I even go far beyond and think of coordinating a common position with other IPU Parliamentary Observers in a bid to organize a bigger meeting and gradually try to give further impetus to our collective measures on our IPU sideline meetings instead of sticking to a merely stereotyped gathering as solid and robust step in favor of bigger objectives.

We should also do our best to witness the impacts of our decisions at various APA Meetings in the national legislation of the member parliaments and to this end try to encourage the APA members to take a coherent position in this respect as far as possible. Let us get together for a change of our vision if we are to have a deeper integration into our community.

I am confident that your contribution in this respect will help us advance our programs within the framework of the development plan intended to be pursued by the APA Secretariat for restructuring and revitalization of our organization in the best way possible.

Thank you for your attention