

142nd IPU Assembly

Monday, 24 May 2021 - Thursday, 27 May 2021

Speeches

Assembly / Assemblée		
Country / Pays	Name / Nom	Language / Langue
	Opening remarks by the IPU President, Mr. Duarte Pacheco Allocution d'ouverture du Président de l'UIP, M. Duarte Pacheco	English / Français
Afghanistan	Mr. / M. Mir Rahman Rahmani, Speaker of the House of the People / Président de la Chambre du peuple	English
Afghanistan	Mr. / M. Mohammad Alam Ezedyar, Deputy Speaker of the House of Elders / Vice-président du Conseil des anciens	English
Algeria / Algérie	Mr. / M. Salah Goudjil, President of the Council of the Nation / Président du Conseil de la Nation algérien	Français
Andorra / Andorre	Ms. / Mme Roser Suñé, Speaker of the General Council / Présidente du Conseil général	Français
Bahrain / Bahreïn	Ms. / Mme Fawzia Bint Abdulla Zainal, Speaker of the Council of Representatives / Présidente du Conseil des représentants	English
Belarus / Bélarus	Mr. / M. Sergei Rachkov, Member of the Council of the Republic / Membre du Conseil de la République	English
Botswana	Mr. / M. Phandu T.C. Skelemani, Speaker of Parliament / Président du Parlement	English
Canada	Mr. / M. David Mcguinty, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group / Président du groupe de l'Union Interparlementaire	English
China / Chine	Mr. / M. Wan Exiang, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China / Vice-président de la commission permanente de l'Assemblée populaire nationale de Chine	English
Egypt / Égypte	Mr. / M. Hanafy Gebaly, Speaker of the House of Representatives / Président de la Chambre des Représentants	English
Gambia / Gambia		English
Germany / Allemagne	Mr. / M. Ulrich Lechte, Member of the German Bundestag / Membre du Bundestag allemand	English
Ireland / Irlande	Mr. / M. Seán Ó Fearghaíl, Speaker of the House of Representatives / Chambre des Représentants	English
Japan / Japon	Mr. / M. Suzuki Shunichi, Leader of the Japanese Delegation / Chef de la délégation japonaise	English
Japan / Japon	Mr. / M. Kanehiko Shindo, Deputy Leader of the Japanese delegation and member of the House of Councillors / Chef adjoint de la délégation japonaise et membre de la Chambre des conseillers	English
Jordan / Jordanie	Mr. / M. Abdelmonem Al-Odat, Speaker of House of Representatives / Président de la Chambre des Représentants	English
Malaysia / Malaisie	Mr. / M. Asmak Husin, Head of Delegation of Malaysia to the 142nd IPU Assembly / Chef de la délégation de la Malaisie à la 142ème Assemblée de l'UIP	English
Montenegro / Monténégro	Ms. / Mme Jovenka Bogavac, Leader of the delegation / Cheffe	English

	de la délégation	
Mozambique	Mr. / M. Eduardo Joaquim Mulémbwè, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group / Président du Groupe de l'Union interparlementaire	English
Nepal / Népal	Mr. / M. Ganesh Prasad Timilsina, Chairperson of National Assembly / Président de l'Assemblée nationale	English
Poland / Pologne	Mr. / M. Piotr Babinetz, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group / Président du Groupe de l'Union interparlementaire	English /Français
Qatar	Mr. / M. Ahmad Bin Abdulla Bin Zaid Al Mahmoud, Speaker of the Shura Council / Président du Conseil de la choura	English
Rwanda	Ms. / Mme Nyrasafari Esperance, Vice President of the Senate / Vice-présidente du Sénat	English
San Marino / Saint-Marin	Ms. / Mme Mariella Mularoni, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group / Présidente du groupe de l'Union Interparlementaire	English
Serbia / Serbie	Mr. / M. Ivica Davic, Speaker of the National Assembly / Président de l'Assemblée nationale	English
Sri Lanka	Mr. / M. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker of the Parliament / Président du Parlement	English
Switzerland / Suisse	Mr. / M. Christian Lohr, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Group / Président du groupe de l'Union Interparlementaire	English
Tunisia / Tunisie	Mr. / M. Ben Belgacem Fathi, Member of the Assembly of People's Representatives / Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple	English
Arab Parliament / Parlement arabe	Mr. / M. Adel Bin AbdulRahman Alasoomi, President of the Arab Parliament / Président du Parlement arabe	English
Asian Parliamentary Assembly / Assemblée Parlementaire Asiatique	Mr. / M. Mohammad Reza Majidi, Secretary General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly / Secrétaire général de l'Assemblée Parlementaire Asiatique	English



**Statement by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi
Secretary General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)**

On

Item 1 of the 142nd Assembly Agenda

**“Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of
parliaments “**

(May 24-27, 2021- Geneva)

(Virtual Format)

**Dear Colleagues,
Distinguished Delegates**

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to present my viewpoints through this paper to the participants of the 142nd IPU Assembly. Now that the prevailing global pandemic has deprived us from sitting together face to face in physical meetings, this virtual session should be welcomed as a precious opportunity to share our views as much as possible; thanks to technological advancements which has provided us this invaluable condition.

The theme of general debate for this Assembly is of key importance considering the traumatic aspects of the pandemic which has so far taken great toll as an unprecedented crisis in the recent history. In that, this tragic situation has further brought to fore and challenged the already fragile world economic system, leading to further unveil inequalities more visible.

Under such circumstances, the role of Parliaments becomes more relevant than ever before. Strong parliamentary approaches should be called to seek solution in the face of the virus crisis parallel to the services to be rendered by the governments. It should be underscored that this is a global tragedy in nature and calls for global response. This is why the Inter-parliamentary Union and certain other parliamentary bodies have spared no efforts to plan strategies at **both domestic and international arena** in an attempt to introduce best practices for better controlling the situation .

1. As regards domestic strategies:

- Parliaments should do everything within their power to ensure that governments treat this new crisis with foresight and resolute action in order to contain its effects while they can still be controlled.

- Parliaments must be on full alert to impose their check and balance on the executive power to better serve the people. This inherent duty is redoubled in such emergency case when the executive may resort to various excuses to limit freedom of the people. However, it should be noted that parliaments themselves are faced with certain restrictions in running their every day parliamentary business, due to not being able to hold their regular sittings as usual.
- Parliamentarians, while playing their central role through effective legislation, representation and oversight, need to push for investing more in health sector which in turn could translate into accelerating the efforts aimed to curb further spread of the corona virus pandemic.
- Parliamentarians are the mainstay and centerpiece of measures that should be duly adopted to ensure efficient and equitable distribution of medical equipment and vaccination process. It is under diligent exercise of their oversight and adoption of strict policies in favor of transparent acts that force governments to avoid resort to any disproportionate measures as part of their mandate within the context of immunization strategies.
- However, despite all such measures, percentage of successful coping with the pandemic in every country most particularly in the democratically developed countries depends on the level of trust placed by people in their government. According to Muhammad Ali Pate, Global director for Health, Nutrition and Population at the World Bank

” Transparency is essential to earn the trust of people. Without it, vaccination campaigns will not be successful. We need trust at all levels to overcome this pandemic and get on a path to recovery.”

2. As regards strategies at international level:

In the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, multilateral cooperation tops the global agenda, though the already shaky system of international relations has shown its further weaknesses in the aftermath of the current pandemic. Yet history shows us that in moments of such shared and extreme hardship, the world can come together in a spirit of solidarity to lay the

foundations for a better future. In fact, building better tomorrow strongly depends on the policies we adopt today.

As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said: “How fast we emerge from this crisis will depend not only on the solidarity we show within our communities and our countries, but also on the degree to which governments, scientists, businesses and of course parliaments can cooperate together across borders and continents. This is the meaning of multilateralism. It is not an ideology; it is simply a methodology, the best one we have, to deal with truly global challenges.

Under such circumstances, all countries are concerned about access to medical equipment, including vaccines and medicines. Here the core essence of parliamentary diplomacy within the framework of health diplomacy as an important measure at regional and international levels finds its real meaning. One important concern of the countries is their financial ability and equal access for all, including those most vulnerable and marginalized. This makes the need for parliamentary dimension of regional and international cooperation more urgent.

According to the IPU Secretary General, Martin Chungong, “The COVID-19 pandemic impacts everyone, but especially the poor and marginalized groups such as migrants, refugees and stateless people. Each parliament has a responsibility to ensure that all the people, including the most vulnerable, have access to a vaccine- it is a question of rights and safety for all.”

Personal interests and short-term benefits should not sacrifice a cooperative system and long-term benefits. This is the important point that should be duly taken into consideration. Having said that, one should note that the role of multilateral organizations today is to guard against any tension, which may cause degradation of international relations. International and regional parliamentary organizations should work together and demonstrate that with shared decisions we will be better off against this invisible enemy as well as others. This is the central point addressed by the Asian Parliamentary Assembly at its first virtual meeting last year.

As a regional parliamentary body in pursuit of realization of democratic standards, APA with 44 members in the vast and densely populated Continent of Asia believes that response to pandemic should be seen as a family unit. To this end, in the course of its actions it has

underlined the vision for supply chains of goods and services as an important step for well being of populations under this disastrous situation when a large number of families have lost their main source of income and livelihood.

In the declaration adopted under the title of

“Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in public health, economy and other fields in the Asian Continent”

Adopted by APA members on July 09, 2020, participants at the First APA Virtual Meeting underscored the vision of action on an equal basis without any discrimination to ensure COVID-19 Vaccines reach all countries and counter any selective policies in distribution of the vaccines expected to be produced

Effective multilateralism and rules-based international system as an open and inclusive, transparent and fit for the purpose of improving global pandemic prevention, preparedness and response capacity was also a matter of grave concern for the APA participants at this virtual meeting.

Therefore, currently we stand in a historically seminal moment and thus the right time to take the right decision, because destiny of our future to lessen further losses, in the area of economic restructuring, social and environmental benefits for everyone extremely depends on our decision today.

Thank you