

Speech by Dr. Ali Irajani Hon. Speaker of the Islamic Parliament of Iran

In the Name of God the most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deem it necessary to express my gratitude to Mr. Chowdhury for the invaluable efforts he has made over his capable chairmanship over the IPU. I am also delighted that the present conference is being held under the beautiful title of "Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want"

The real question posed by this great conference attended by a large number of honorable speakers and the parliamentarians of the various countries, is as follows: is democracy really at the service of sustainable peace and development in the world today?

There is no doubt that sustainable development comes with the three elements of political stability, democracy and balanced economic growth. However it is a matter of great regret that the logic that prevails in practical politics on the ground is that of force not the one found in the beautiful and theoretically correct debates of conferences. Therefore, as long as such a paradox persists, people of the world will continue to suffer from violence, wars and displacement.

There are two really surprising points here. One is that there are certain governments that seem to favor democracy for their own people only and support dictatorships and despotic and violent regimes lying outside their borders. The second surprising point is that the theory of warmongering under the pretext of expanding democracy has resulted in an inappropriate behavior internationally. Actually, there are some governments that are trying to enforce democracy in other countries with bombs and machine guns. The afore-mentioned reality has led to several wars being waged in the world today like the doleful pain of the oppressed people of Palestine and the military atrocities of the Zionist Regime in my region as well as the occupation and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan or the war in Yemen and armed conflicts in Syria.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Colleagues,

The peaceful nuclear program of Iran once again showed that bullying doesn't work anymore. Certain powers tried to impose sanctions on us but the great Iranian people chose the way of perseverance and ultimately their resistance became victorious over sanctions and intimidation and the difficult and intensive nuclear talks led to an agreement which is of course supported by us.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

Based on what I have already said, we the parliamentarians need to try harder if we really want democracy to be placed at the disposal of peace and development. The governments really need to comply with the motto and not allow the democracy, peace and sustainable

development which are the loftiest concepts of our time to be ruined in the name of national interests.

Honorable Colleagues,

There is no doubt that in conferences of this sort we need to place two important things high on our agendas: 1- diagnosing problems 2- offering solutions

The parliament needs to play a bigger role in reforming the politics on the ground. The parliaments can become serious barriers erected before occupations. The parliaments can direct the budget spent on occupation and aggression towards development and progress of their own countries. If even one tenth of the budget spent on occupying Iraq and Afghanistan would have instead been dedicated to development and prosperity, we would definitely have not insecurity and terrorism in those countries.

We have to know that the people of the world and especially the youth are awake and more than ever are familiar with political shenanigans as well as with their rights. They are left with no choice but to revolt against suppression and occupation. This is where they may fall prey to terrorist groups. If the powerful countries want the flames of terrorism to subside they need to abandon their bullying, adventurous and occupying ways.

Excellencies,

In this conference we consider democracy as the pillar for peace. Therefore, is not better to prescribe the same thing for the oppressed people of Palestine so that they may choose their government through a referendum?

I hope this conference will come out with concrete achievements for the nations of the world in fulfilling the valuable theme it has chosen.

Thank you for your attention