



KINGDOM OF BHUTAN

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**STATEMENT BY
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SPEAKER
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BHUTAN**

**FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENTS
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
1 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Colleagues,**

I bring with me the warm greetings and best wishes of His Majesty The King and the people of Bhutan.

2. We meet at a historic and defining moment as the United Nations marks its 70th Anniversary.
3. The UN is in many ways a “global parliament” where nations come together to discuss and deliberate on a wide range of issues. To find solutions to many trans-national challenges in a spirit of solidarity and collective resolve. As a truly global organization underpinned by multilateralism, the UN, and its purposes and principles, remain indispensable to secure the hopes and aspirations of our people.
4. This is particularly true at a time when the international community is at the threshold of adopting a new global transformative development agenda that seeks to eradicate poverty and put the international community on a path of sustainable development.
5. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is ambitious and comprehensive. In this context, the theme of our deliberations today is most appropriate and relevant - peace, democracy and development must go hand-in-hand, complementing and mutually reinforcing each other.
6. The principles of sustainable development – that development must not be seen from one dimension, but in a holistic manner, is consistent with Bhutan’s development philosophy of Gross National Happiness.
7. Gross National Happiness is premised on the four pillars of sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, conservation of the environment, preservation of culture and good governance.
8. In pursuit of good governance, we embraced democracy in a unique manner in 2008. Democracy was not born out of popular demand or struggle, but at the behest of a King who believed in the collective wisdom and the capability of the people to govern and shape their own destiny. Today, democracy in my country is on an irreversible path and continues to flourish under the enlightened leadership of our present Monarch, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

9. Although we come from diverse backgrounds, we are bound by shared values, ideals and aspirations. As parliamentarians, we represent the will and voice of our people. We carry a huge responsibility to enact legislation, ensure accountability, checks and balances and effective governance. We have to exercise leadership to meet the expectations of the people we represent; act on challenges we face and strive to promote development. We are on the front lines of serving those that elected us - to mobilize and spur action by the government for the common good. We must remain steadfast in our efforts to strengthen democracy and the rule of law and prevent arbitrary and unconstitutional practices.

10. The fundamental objective of our endeavours is to ensure that democracy advances peace and development. It is our firm conviction that democracy is the best guarantor for protecting and advancing human progress, freedom and prosperity.

11. Parliaments have an important role to ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Governments must be held accountable for the realization of the sustainable development agenda. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the Declaration that we will adopt tomorrow.

12. In a world defined by interdependence, we must embark on a collective journey that brings about shared prosperity and peace while protecting our planet. The challenge before us is to ensure the successful implementation of this new development agenda for the benefit of our people.

13. On behalf of the Parliament of Bhutan, I assure you that despite being a young democracy, we will continue to work with unwavering commitment to strengthen democracy so that it is well placed to serve the aspirations of our people.

14. In closing, allow me to renew our commitment to the principles of IPU. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Union and other members in the interest of strengthening democracy, peace and cooperation amongst our peoples.

Thank you!