

Speech of
H.E the Assistant Speaker of the Shura Council, Dr.
Hanan bint Abdulrahim Al-Ahmadi,
at the (145th) Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary
Union
Kigali - Republic of Rwanda 11-15/10/2022

In the name of Allah the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,

Praise be to Allah, Prayers and peace be upon our Prophet, Muhammad, his family and all of his companions,

- **Your Excellency the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Rwanda, Mrs. Donatel Mukabalisa**
- **Your Excellency the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Duarte Pacheco**
- **Your Excellencies, Speakers of Parliaments**
- **Your Excellencies, heads and members of the participating delegations**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you,

I am honored to be among you today at this major event which I hope will enhance joint cooperation and open dialogue in order to activate the roles of parliaments and legislative councils to confront major challenges threatening our world today. On behalf of myself and on behalf of my fellow members of the Shura Council delegation from the Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the government, people and parliament of the Republic of Rwanda for their great efforts in hosting this significant parliamentary event.

Honorable attendees:

Our meeting today coincides with the 10th anniversary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union's launch of the Plan of Action for Gender-Sensitive Parliaments, with the aim of enhancing the role of parliaments in enacting legislation supporting gender equality and women's empowerment.

We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are also witnessing the passage of ten years since one of the most important decisions in the context of women empowerment in the Kingdom, which is the issuance of the noble royal decree to amend the system of the Council to grant women full membership in the Shura Council, in a historic step that brought about a major shift in women's participation in decision-making, and paved the way for other subsequent steps in empowering them. Women therefor have begun to practice more effective legislative, oversight and parliamentary roles inside the council and in international parliamentary events.

Honorable attendees:

In April 2016, the Kingdom launched its Vision 2030, a national plan to build an ambitious nation, a vibrant society and a thriving economy.

The Kingdom's vision has created a great movement on the social, economic and cultural levels, and my country has made great leaps in various international indicators, including, but not limited to, the Kingdom's recent advanced positions in the United Nations e-Government Development Index, the Global Innovation Index, the Education and Knowledge Index in the Global Digital Competitiveness Ranking, and the Corruption Perceptions Index, and others. The Kingdom has achieved a full score in the index of equality and non-discrimination in wages in the World Bank report regarding "Women, Business and the Law" for the year 2021.

Honorable attendees:

The Kingdom's Vision 2030 has made women empowerment one of its main priorities, which reflects the belief of Saudi Arabia's leadership in the importance of investing all means, capabilities, and resources to build a strong and balanced society. The Kingdom has made great strides in the field of women empowerment as a result of the great investment in education, training and scholarship programs, as the gender gap has vanished in all levels of education, including higher education, and in scientific and technical disciplines.

The concept of gender equality is one that has its roots in Islamic law, therefore, been echoed in and the Basic Law of Governance in the Kingdom to affirm its importance as the basis for a fair and just society. The Kingdom has established a solid legislative basis for empowering women, ensuring their rights

and equality in society, and removing all obstacles that hinder their empowerment, taking into account the commitment to the teachings of the tolerant Islamic Sharia and the values, culture, and identity of the Saudi society.

Believing in the educational role of women as mothers and heads of families, several support programs that aim at enabling women to achieve a balance between their professional aspirations and family responsibilities have been established. Today, the participation rate of Saudi women in the labor market has reached more than 33%, as a result of the increase in job opportunities and the diversification of employment fields in sectors that were not previously available to women.

The participation of women in leadership positions has increased, and women's assumption of leadership positions in the Kingdom was not a symbolic initiative, or a formality measure but rather came as a result of the presence of qualified competent women, and the belief and conviction of the leadership of my country and society in the importance of women's participation in decision-making and in building the nation's future.

Your Excellences,

Saudi Arabia, under the wise leadership of the Custodian of The Two Holly Mosques and his Crown Prince, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad Bin Salman, the Prime Minister May Allah protect them, is assiduous in unifying all international efforts in order to address all crises and threats that

face our world, supporting the principle of international legitimacy to maintain international peace and security and combat all forms and shapes of terrorism and extremism.

Saudi Arabia always considers and looks for aspects of new cooperation opportunities to achieve peaceful solutions to all conflicts, and to deepen partnerships, and strengthen cultural, civil and social exchanges in order to achieve security, stability and prosperity. This is driven by Saudi Arabia's central Islamic, political, economic and humanitarian position. Saudi Arabia has many initiatives in these aspects, the latest of which was the mediation initiative of his royal highness the crown prince to release ten prisoners from different nationalities from Russian prisons.

Distinguished Guests,

On the economic level, the Kingdom seeks to support the balance of the global economy and enhance the stability of energy markets, while at the same time keeping pace with the world's interest in climate change and its effects, and affirms its commitment to the "Paris Climate Change Agreement" and its support for its objectives through a number of initiatives and projects for environmental protection, such as the Green Saudi Initiative, the Green Middle East Initiative and the Circular Carbon Economy.

In the humanitarian field, the Kingdom was ranked among the top three donor countries at the international level to countries and peoples most in need and those affected by natural disasters and humanitarian crises, without discriminating against anyone

in its support on political, ethnic, or religious ground, with aid provided by King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center in 2022 so far, amounting to about six billion US dollars.

Your Excellences:

The Kingdom has its firm and clear positions on regional and international issues. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports the right of Palestinians to establish their independent state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

My country also affirms its commitment for a political solution in Yemen on the basis of the three established references, and supports the international efforts in this regard. Saudi Arabia also affirms the continuation of its role as the largest supporter of the brotherly Yemeni people and Yemen's economy through King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, and the Saudi Program for the Development and Reconstruction of Yemen, and through the United Nations' organizations, where the volume of aid provided by the Kingdom to date has reached more than nineteen billion US dollars.

Honorable attendees:

Based on the Kingdom's vision 2030 and its future aspirations, the Kingdom has officially submitted a request to host Expo 2030, with the spirit of the concept: "The era of change: moving our planet towards the future." As this event will constitute a unique opportunity to share with the world our learned lessons, and the results of our efforts related to this

unprecedented transformation produced by the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

In Conclusion: I extend my heartfelt gratitude to you on the efforts to make this meeting a success, with my sincere wishes that we all succeed to produce positive results that serve and support the stability of our countries and achieve the prosperity and well-being for our peoples.

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.