

## Speech Ralph BRINKHAUS, German Delegation

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

first of all, and this is very important to us, on behalf of the German delegation, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our Bahraini hosts for your hospitality and for organizing this very important assembly. Our thanks also go to the IPU Secretariat and to our President Duarte Pacheco. We know how extensive and laborious the preparation of such a big event is.

I would like to start with a rather optimistic message:

>>> The IPU was founded in 1889. At that time, there were about 1.5 billion people living in this world. A large part of them under very bad living conditions. Today, with 8 billion inhabitants, more than five times as many people live on this planet. And despite this enormous growth, life in many parts of the world has become much better.

>>> - many diseases and epidemics have been defeated

>>> - infant mortality in this world has dropped dramatically

>>> - life expectancy has almost doubled worldwide

>>> - hunger and malnutrition have been overcome in many parts of the world

>>> - the individual danger to perish by violence and war has strongly decreased

>>> - Religious minorities have more and better rights in many regions.

>>> - Equal rights for women and men have not yet been achieved, but are becoming more widespread.

>>> - the full acceptance of LGBTQ is not yet given - but also here many things are developing in a better direction in many countries.

>>> - we can share knowledge better in this world, we can communicate better, we can travel better and „we can do so many things that give hope and confidence. I repeat, that gives hope and confidence. Because nothing is more important in these times than hope and confidence. Because it is a great privilege to live in the 21st century in this world with these opportunities.

>>> But is this true for all people on our planet? No it is not - unfortunately, not at all. And that is why it is our task as parliamentarians to continue on this road - and this is even as important – to make accessible to all people what mankind has achieved in the 21st century.

>>> But it is also our task to preserve all our achievements and the world around us for future generations. This applies in particular to the preservation of our livelihoods, our environment. Climate change and environmental pollution are certainly the greatest challenges mankind is currently facing. And it is quite clear that we can only solve these challenges in solidarity with nations all over the world regardless if we are coming from the north or the south, from the east or the west. It goes without saying, that we Germans and we Europeans are aware of the fact that we bear a special responsibility. Not only because of our past.

>>> I would have loved to end my speech with the affirmation of Germany's commitment to play a vital role in taking on these global challenges. But I feel deeply obliged to use the opportunity to address something else: We are currently in a situation where peaceful coexistence between peoples is under attack. The

aggressor is clear: It is Russia, which has criminally invaded Ukraine. Russia is responsible for murder, robbery, looting and rape. And I ask the Russian delegation, I ask very personally the colleagues of the Duma: What did you do against this, how and when did you oppose this breach of international law in your parliament? Where did you defend in your parliament the values of the IPU. I ask you – are your hearts not breaking, when you see the pictures of Ukrainien aswell as Russian mothers mourning at the graves of their sons and daughters?

>>> Truth is that the criminal Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is, unfortunately, only one conflict among many. We see war, conflicts and violence not only in Europe but unfortunately also all over the world. And to be honest, over the threatening events in Ukraine, we in Germany sometimes lose sight of hardship and misery in other parts of the world. That is why our goal of „Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolcerance“ is of utmost importance. Manama will send a strong signal to the world: We as parliamentarians have to be the watchdogs of our joint values. Moroever, we have to be the guardians of peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies.

The spoken work shall prevail