

Mr. President of the IPU;

Honorable Speaker of the National Assembly of Bahrain;

Honorable members of assemblies;

Director General of the IPU;

Ladies and gentlemen;

Assalamu Alaikum!

I'd like to start my speech by expressing my gratitude for the generosity of the honorable speaker of the National Assembly of Bahrain for his warm hospitality.

I would also like to thank all those involved in making this event possible, from the high-ranking national and international officials behind the planning to the workers on the ground. Shokran Jazeela to you and them all!

As an Islamic concept inspired by numerous verses of the Holy Qur'an, "Peaceful coexistence and tolerance" is of great importance to us. The Islamic civilization is the result of tolerance and peaceful coexistence. It's widely accepted that it's better to build "bridges" than "walls". While racial discrimination and xenophobia make it easy to create walls between nations, we can build bridges through dialogue.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has, since its inception, incorporated the peaceful teachings of Islam in its policy using creative initiatives to strengthen multilateralism and develop peace and cooperation in international forums. We believe that the remedy for racism, xenophobia, violence and hatred can be found in dialogue, tolerance and democracy.

Now, in order to understand the position of my country on tolerance and peaceful coexistence, one only needs to know two of the most famous quotes in Iran. One is by Imam Ali. Some 1400 years ago, he famously said, "People are of two groups. They are either your brothers in faith, or your equals in humanity

The other famous saying is a line of poetry by one of Iran's most popular poets of all time, Hafiz, who famously had the holy Quran memorized. He wrote "Peace, in this life and the next, can be summed up in a mere two concepts: Compassion for friends and Tolerance for the others."

But unfortunately, this Iranian tolerance has seldom been returned in kind. During the first and second world wars for instance, my country had chosen the most peaceful position possible. It had declared neutrality. The result however

was not so peaceful for Iranians because their country ended up being occupied by the British and Soviet forces.

I'm sure you agree that the problem with the lack of tolerance and peaceful coexistence in our world, does not stem from a shortage of assemblies on the topic.

Sharing an appreciation for peaceful coexistence and tolerance is only one step in this long and hard battle.

A much bigger step is sacrifice. Like the many sacrifices Iranians have made to overthrow a Western-backed monarch, defend their with empty hands, put up with sanctions on everything from technology to medicine, and facing the martyrdom of their scientists.

It's only through sacrifice, that any nation can become a force to reckon with, and as a result be granted a share of peaceful coexistence. It's due to these sacrifices that today, I stand before you as a representative of the great Iranian nation, despite a most recent American hybrid attempt at a sport it calls regime-change.

It's also thanks to these great sacrifices that Iran was able to have a decisive role in the defeat of DAESH a.k.a ISIS terrorists. Today, throughout the world,

countless people owe their security to the sacrifices of the likes of Iranian commander General Ghassem Suleimani who was martyred by the supporters of these terrorists. Which brings me to my final point.

The Islamic Republic from its very inception, has stood with oppressed nations such as the Palestinians affected by the in the illegal Israeli occupation. It's also due to this understanding that when the war-ridden nation of Syria was recently hit with a major earthquake, it was the Islamic Republic of Iran and Muslim and Arab countries that rushed to the rescue, when many others did not dare to extend a helping hand for the fear of American sanctions on the country.

So, I'd like to wrap up my talk with an emphasis on our position and our pledge.

The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly stands with every nation's right to peaceful coexistence. We believe that this right must be and would have been readily granted to all nations, had we lived in a perfect world.

We stand by the pledge we made decades ago since the inception of the Islamic republic and that is to be friends of the oppressed and a voice for the voiceless. Therefore, we welcome mutual cooperation to help strengthen other nations so

that they all can demand an equal share of power which can help prevent the monopoly of power by hegemonic entities and facilitate peaceful coexistence.

Motshakiram. Thank you all