



STATEMENT

BY

HON. ADVOCATE. J. F. N. MUDENDA

SPEAKER OF ZIMBABAWE PARLIAMENT

ON THE THEME OF THE

146TH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION ASSEMBLY

ENTITLED:

***“Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive
societies: fighting intolerance”***

at

Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

11-15 March 2023

Mr. President;

Dear Colleagues;

Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies as well as fighting intolerance is the kernel of our IPU Assembly's theme. In that context, need I remind this Assembly that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1995 the United Nations Year for Tolerance in response to the ubiquitous intolerance in the world where peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies were blatantly under naked threat to humanity. That year, which coincided with the golden jubilee of the United Nations, was opportune to reflect and reacquaint ourselves with the historical antecedents that preceded its formation. These antecedents included the darkest hours of humankind largely defined by the ***"denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men (women), and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men (women) and race¹."***

¹ Constitution of UNESCO

Furthermore, through the UN Resolution 61/2007, member states reinforced ***"the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence"*** in the desire ***"to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence²"***. Accordingly, this Assembly's theme is an affirmation of the criticality of the 1995 United Nations Year for Tolerance. To that an extent, our Parliaments under the umbrella of the IPU should strive for bullish parliamentary diplomacy that rides on the pedestal of robust roundtable dialogue to achieve global peaceful coexistence.

Mr. President;

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is unequivocal in its proclamation that the foundation of peaceful and inclusive societies rests on the promotion and protection of the inalienable rights of humankind regardless of race, creed, political affiliation, gender and sexual orientation. Essentially, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights supported by the United Nations Charter and International Law anchor the need for

²<https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FRES%2F61%2F271&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

geopolitical peaceful coexistence, inclusive societies and tolerance. Yet, while progress has been made towards this compelling and perpetual hankering for coexistential justice, peace and harmony, recent history records the archetypal banality of our efforts.

Mr President;

The recent COVID-19 pandemic, the catastrophic climatic shocks and the devastating earthquakes such as the recent one in Turkiye-Syria as well the flash floods and the more calamitous cyclones affecting Southern Africa and worldwide, are some of the holocaust threats societies continue to face in their endeavour to coexist peacefully. This situation of human insecurity has been exacerbated by the adverse ripple effects of the Russia-Ukraine war which has negatively destabilised global economies in terms of imported high inflation, increased energy and food prices. All these exigencies call for peaceful coexistence, inclusive and tolerant societies in mitigating the existential global human challenges. Accordingly, ***Mr. President,*** our Parliaments are enjoined to play a palpable role

instructively in formulating laws and policies that systematically deconstruct the multiplicity of barriers that threaten peaceful coexistence, inclusivity and caustic intolerance. Furthermore, Parliaments should ensure that all the multilateral agreements that promote peaceful coexistence are ratified and domesticated into municipal laws wherever possible. National Budgets passed by our Parliaments must be so stout as to be inclusively pro-poor, pro-gender equality, sensitive to youth development and empowering persons with disabilities. These perspectives resonate well with our Zimbabwe President's development mantra of **"leaving no one and no place behind"** in the national development agenda as anchored by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, in their representative role, Parliaments should be the voice of the voiceless in espousing an inclusive democracy matrix in choosing who should govern them and how they should be governed accountably.

Finally, Parliaments should have an assiduous oversight role over the Executive by ensuring that Governments

and all their agencies operate in a non-partisan manner that promote peaceful co-existence, inclusivity and tolerance within the societies while pursuing their national economic development agenda.

Mr. President, in this way our Parliaments would be eloquently fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 16 whose clarion call is for peaceful coexistence, equitable justice, accountability and inclusive institutions at all levels of governance. Indeed, no man or woman is island on this planet! Our African philosophy of **UBUNTU** which affirms that **I AM BECAUSE YOU ARE** – is an incontrovertible testament to the IPU Assembly's theme we are interrogating here in the Kingdom of Bahrain!!!

LONG LIVE THE KING AND KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN!!!

LONG LIVE THE IPU FAMILY FOR DEMOCRACY AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE!!!

THANK YOU!!!

SHUKRAN!!!