

Speech of
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Former President of the United Nations General
Assembly's 61st Session, Former Ambassador of
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**The Inaugural Ceremony of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-
Parliamentary Union**

Kingdom of Bahrain
Saturday, 11 March 2023
7:00 p.m.

**In the name of God the most Merciful, the most
Compassionate**

I am pleased and honored to address this distinguished gathering of members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, welcoming them to my country, Bahrain, a land of pluralism, tolerance and acceptance of others, in a country that is proud to host a wide range of nationalities, religions and sects, all of whom coexist under fair laws that ensure their security and safety.

This country welcomed a generous visit from Pope Francis last November in a visit of peace, dialogue and coexistence. The mass prayer he led with the large audience present unambiguously was a testament to Bahrain's commitment to dialogue, coexistence, and tolerance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our world today is full of conflicts, whether they are ethnic, racial or economic conflicts, whether they are cold or hot conflicts. International law is being breached, especially in relations between neighboring countries. As the President of the United Nations General Assembly during its 61st session through that international stage, I had the honor of following closely how conflicts arise and interests collide, and in some cases, there are clashes of cultures.

Our region was hit weeks ago by a devastating earthquake that killed innocent lives and demolished cities, mosques, churches and roads, leaving behind thousands of bereaved and tens of thousands of homeless. At that time, humanity realized that the current century is also full of human earthquakes. A previous earthquake overthrew governments and plunged peoples into a devastating civil conflict whose echoes we still hear around us. If we cannot prevent nature from committing its crimes, let's try to prevent earthquakes that human greed unleashes. Let us abandon the illusions of uniform clothing, predominant color and expansion on the maps of others, and prejudice to murderous ethnic, religious or sectarian identities.

A significant part of these conflicts is due to a lack of understanding of others or an unjustified appetite for acquisition, which escalates matters between countries and leads to wars. Entering war, as history has taught us, is like entering a dark room from where no one knows how to get out of it, except through massive exhaustion and heavy losses.

Today, in our international community, wars rage on, conflicts extend, and many inhumane sufferings manifest in the form of displaced people plagued by cold, hunger, and disease.

It is a world that needs people like you to raise their voices and insist on the importance of tolerance, resolving disputes through negotiation, and providing opportunities for citizens to live freely and equally, with security being the basic human need today along with honorable ways of earning a living.

The magnitude of hatred surrounding us grows with the development of social media, which in all languages and cultures spews its toxins into the social fabric, magnifying differences, sowing doubts and spreading false news.

Our mission, ladies and gentlemen, is to promote a new culture that spreads tolerance, leaving room for modern scientific knowledge, and giving new generations some hope for the future. It is a culture that sets a wide door for justice, human progress and dignity, a paved road and removes the mines from politics and geography. These efforts must be collective and supportive, and it is not better for this elite to open windows to a new world in order to promote these virtues in its societies. Peace is cheaper than war and tolerance is nobler than hatred.

May God help you and we would like to welcome you again to the Kingdom of Bahrain.