

Madame President, ladies and gentlemen,

Esteemed delegates to the 147-th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly,

As a member of the Bulgarian National Assembly, I am honoured and privileged to address you today and to present our position and commitments on the theme of "Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions."

I would like to use the opportunity to express our gratitude for hosting this year's Assembly in Luanda, Republic of Angola. This is highly symbolic and reflects the spirit of global cooperation.

We welcome the recently announced **membership of the African Union in the G-20** and Africa's deserved aspiration to play a leading role in global affairs. It represents a great opportunity to debate the proposals of the African states for their and our global future. Africa has **increased its geopolitical importance** in the fast-changing global context. Therefore, African countries should make their voices heard. At the same time, they can contribute essentially to peace and stability as well as to the solution of regional and global challenges.

Parliamentary activity has a pivotal role in maintaining and strengthening global peace and justice. We firmly believe that the parliamentary process can unite, resolve conflicts, and promote justice and stability within our institutions.

Bulgaria's long historical journey reminds us of our enduring commitment to the principles of peace, justice, and strong institutions which lie at the core of human development. We strongly commend the efforts of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in promoting diplomacy and peaceful dispute settlement. Cooperation between parliaments of different nations is crucial in achieving these goals.

Madame President, **Justice** is an integral part of a sustainable peaceful environment and we must work diligently to strengthen our institutions and improve the rule of law. Investing in education and training encourages the creation of strong and independent institutions that guarantee justice and equality.

Strong institutions are the fundamental pillar of every democracy. We believe that the parliament should be a reflection of the public will and a guardian of democratic values. We promote open dialogue with citizens and their involvement in the decision-making process. Only in this way, can we build stronger and more responsible institutions.

Furthermore, the establishment and maintenance of strong parliamentary institutions require commitment and cooperation at both - national and international levels. **Here comes the crucial role of the Inter-Parliamentary Union which serves as an important forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences among member states.** It provides an opportunity to exchange good practices and to work together to achieve common goals.

Moving forward to the topic of promoting peace. Nowadays, we are becoming accustomed to talking about different types of security such as energy security, cyber-, food- or climate security. **All of them are closely related to the concepts of peace and stability**, because the lack of these security aspects may provoke lasting tensions and even conflicts.

Our world today is characterised by a **fast-changing global context of insecurity, hybrid attacks, instrumentalization of energy supplies, food security, and migration.** The complex character of these challenges in the mid to long-term perspective will require more attention to topics such as hybrid threats, cyber security, countering disinformation and

mitigating the consequences of climate change. Without any doubt, the new global dynamics of power politics and geopolitical competition demand urgent readjustment of our existing policies not only in the field of security and defence but also in other sectors, such as energy and economics.

Last but not least, strong multilateral institutions are of shared interest for all States that put peace, security and democracy high on their agenda. **Multilateralism is the most effective way to address global challenges** that no State or organisation can face alone. More than ever, we need a well-functioning, rules-based international order, with an effective United Nations at its core.

We recognize that the full achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals is at risk and that this will further deepen global inequalities and disproportionately affect the most vulnerable. In this regard, we believe that we need to redouble efforts towards the full and timely implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the current system is failing to deliver on our priorities and that is why Bulgaria **supports the United Nations reform efforts** led by the UN Secretary-General.

For Bulgaria, the implementation of the commitments undertaken in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have been and continue to be a top priority.

The SDGs are linked to peace, security and human rights. **There is no peace without development and there is no development without peace!**

Ladies and gentlemen,

We note with appreciation that parliaments around the world give priority attention to the improvement of national legal and institutional frameworks for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

National legislation that complies with international standards for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential prerequisite for the effective functioning of the judicial system.

The long-term experience of Bulgaria from its participation in the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and sub-regional organizations in South-East Europe and the Black Sea sub-region shows that enhanced national human rights legislation, independent national human rights institutions and effective judicial systems significantly contribute to the strengthening of regional peace, security and stability.

Allow me to conclude by expressing my faith in the power of parliamentary diplomacy and the conviction that through the united efforts of nations and their parliaments, we can achieve peace, justice, and sustainable institutions worldwide! Thank you.