

147th IPU ASSEMBLY
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)

ITALY
SPEECH of the HEAD of the ITALIAN DELEGATION,
Sen. Pier Ferdinando CASINI

Dear leaders, dear colleagues,

It is a great pleasure for me to take part in this 147th IPU Assembly and speak on one of the most sensitive and topical issues of our time: Goal 16 of the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies that can ensure access to justice and equal rights for all. This is probably one of the most ambitious and complex goals that the entire Agenda has set itself to achieve and it is probably *the* prerequisite for all other goals.

There is a profound link between peace and justice. In order not to be volatile or fragile and to be as authentic and lasting as possible, peace must be based on justice. But justice cannot be ensured, unless we have strong and fair institutions. This is why peace, justice and good governance should increasingly be seen not only as a means of development, but as its outcome.

The transition that followed the collapse of the world divided into two blocs, the globalization of the economy, which widened the wealth gap globally, the re-emergence of new regional instabilities following the Arab Spring of 2011, the numerous environmental disasters that have caused famine and migration in many areas of the world, the continuing war in Ukraine with its aftermath on food and energy and, last but not least, the tragic events following Hamas's brutal aggression against the State of Israel which has brought the Israeli-Palestinian issue again to the foreground – and which we all had guiltily removed from the multilateral agenda of international politics – showed how much of the world lives in insecurity on a daily basis and, ultimately, how many regions of the planet are at risk of violent conflicts.

Parliaments have a duty not to remain subordinate to the approach of governments and to stand up and condemn what is unacceptable: no political expediency can ever justify false and hypocritical double standards.

Hamas's violence is a dark page in modern history, the Palestinian state must exist and live, and its cause cannot be advanced through these methods.

The Two State Solution is the only possible way forward and Israel's policy of constantly building new settlements in the Palestinian territories is - let us not forget it - illegal.

These are issues that cannot be ignored or evaded. Despite the joint efforts of the institutions, UN data are still alarming. Of the 430 million people that are expected to live in extreme poverty in the world in 2030, 75% will live in highly violent countries. These data defy the ability of our countries to develop regulatory and political instruments that can effectively prevent and respond to the sheer size of these challenges and commit us parliamentarians to listen to each other and develop a common stance, in line with all SDGs of Agenda 2030.

Dear colleagues,

over the years, the IPU has developed several initiatives to promote and uphold peace, strengthen international cooperation, encourage the involvement of developing countries in global decision-making, but our work would be meaningless without a common political meeting ground.

I would like to invite you to consider that challenges so massive may only be tackled if we act multilaterally. This is not just inevitable, it is beneficial.

On this occasion I cannot help recalling that my home-town is ready to welcome, in 2025, the Jubilee announced by Pope Francis. I would therefore like to invite you all to take part in one particular event: the Jubilee of Government Leaders. This is a very important occasion to call everyone, believers and non-believers, to be responsible builders of a better world. The Holy Father has recalled several times, and particularly in the Encyclical "Fratelli tutti" – which shares a common vision with SDG 16 – that brotherhood and taking care of Creation are the only ways towards comprehensive development and peace.

Rome is also the city that, over the course of its three thousand years of history, has made inclusion one of the peculiar traits of its identity. If, as I hope, it will be chosen as the host for Expo 2030, it will once again be able to serve as a place for encounter and discussion to reflect on the challenges awaiting us, share best practices and find answers from which we can all benefit together, so as to ensure a better future for all peoples on Earth.