

***‘Parliamentary Diplomacy: Building Bridges for peace and understanding’***

**Hon'ble Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha  
148<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the IPU, Geneva**

**Hon'ble President**

**Hon'ble fellow Parliamentarians**

- It is indeed an honour to address this distinguished gathering on the theme of this Conference.
- In this era of increasing interdependence and inter-connectedness, the world today is faced with several transnational challenges.
- While addressing these complex challenges, parliamentary diplomacy offers one more avenue for fostering collaboration, dialogue and peace among nations.

- As we embark on this discourse, I am hopeful that it will afford us the opportunity to adopt a forward-thinking approach on how we can harness the transformative power of parliamentary diplomacy to shape a more harmonious and peaceful world.
- '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*' (वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्) i.e. one earth, one family is the core value of Indian civilization. The theme of India's G20 Presidency was 'One earth, One Family, one future'.
- The theme of this debate i.e., building bridges for international peace, is reflected in this concept.

- As the '**Mother of Democracy**', deliberative and advisory bodies have worked in India since ancient times.
- These deliberative bodies received foreign emissaries including those from Greek and Roman empires even in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC. The famous Buddhist King Ashoka around 220 BC sent several Ambassadors from India to South-East Asia to spread the message of peace and non-violence. Further, in 48 AD, princess of Ayodhya went to South Korea to establish diplomatic relations and married their crown Prince.

Friends,

- The importance of Parliamentary diplomacy in promoting international peace can hardly be overemphasized.

- Parliamentarians are uniquely positioned to influence government as well as the public opinion. Indian Parliament plays important role in shaping India's bilateral and multilateral relations, effectively.
- Members of Indian Parliament engage, as elsewhere, actively in various diplomatic activities. They, thereby, have contributed to promoting global peace and prosperity by fostering dialogue and collaboration.
- India's G20 Presidency in 2023 began with the theme, '**One earth, One family, One future**' at a time when the world as well as the G20 grouping was indeed very divided.

- India decided to put the interests and issues of the Global South right at the heart of G20 with an ambitious agenda with a view to nudging, the otherwise binary discussions towards consensus.
- India successfully brought the weight of the Global South to G20 which, in turn bridged the divide at the New Delhi Summit.
- The future indeed belongs to the Global South both demographically as well as economically and our vision for future must have this at its core.
- The 9<sup>th</sup> P20 Summit hosted by India during its G20 Presidency underscored our commitment to shaping the global order through consensus and collaboration.

- While inaugurating the Conference, our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said, "**A divided world cannot provide solutions to the major challenges facing humanity**".
- This convergence of global leaders and parliamentarians highlighted the significant influence wielded by the collective voice of Parliamentarians worldwide.

Friends,

- Our parliamentary delegation, in various bilateral and multilateral fora, have highlighted the need for reforming **international governance structures**

**including UN Security Council and International Financial Institutions to reflect ‘contemporary realities’.**

- In recent years, multilateral cooperation has encountered unprecedented crises. While in the United Nations, the crisis has manifested in the form of fund cuts and ever-increasing policy paralysis in its Security Council, other institutions, like Bretton Woods, have faced skepticism of effectiveness.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has also exposed vulnerabilities of the international system, particularly those of multilateral institutions.

- Besides, we should work for promoting and facilitating the showcasing of good practices on legislation and oversight.
- India believes in nurturing parliamentary partnerships at the regional and international levels and is also ready to help other countries in capacity building by sharing its knowledge and experience.
- I reiterate the commitment of the Indian Parliament in extending cooperation to international efforts towards maintaining peace and security.

Thank You.