



REMARKS BY

HONOURABLE PROF. PETER H. KATJAVIVI, MP

SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

148TH IPU GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNDER THE THEME:

**“PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY, BUILDING BRIDGES FOR PEACE AND
UNDERSTANDING”**

23-27 MARCH 2024

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Check Against Delivery

Dr Tulia Ackson President of the IPU;

IPU Secretary-General;

Various Speakers of parliaments from IPU member states;

Members of Parliament of member countries present;

Invited guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, let me use this opportunity to thank many of you and other colleagues from various international parliaments and organisations that extended messages of condolences to Namibia, during the bereavement of our fallen beloved President, H.E. Dr. Hage Geingob. Indeed, it was a sign of solidarity and brotherliness. As we may all recall, Namibia was midwifed by the global community and our late President was at the midst of it all. Thank you for observing a minute of silence in the honour of our late President.

It is a privilege for me to stand before you today and to present my contributions on behalf of the Namibian parliament. Let me express my gratitude to the IPU for hosting us for the 148th Assembly. This Assembly's theme gives us parliamentarians a chance to examine how parliamentary diplomacy may play a key role in fostering international understanding and peace. Given all the challenges we encounter these days, this theme is, in fact, more pertinent now than it was in the past.

It is important that all Parliaments be rooted in the principles of dialogue, cooperation and we should take advantage of our strength as legitimate representatives of the citizens, to foster communication and collaboration on both domestic, regional and international levels.

President of the Assembly

Members of Parliament,

This IPU platform enhances parliamentary diplomacy and facilitates communication between parliamentarians from various member states. This goes beyond conventional diplomatic practice thereby finding solutions to critical issues and getting a common ground that serves as a solution to conflict resolution.

Furthermore, parliamentary diplomacy embodies principles of accountability and transparency and its important that we leverage on these principles, creating activities aimed at promoting peace and inclusion. We are happy to have been informed by the IPU- SG, this morning that we have a slight increment in women parliamentarians. In the case of Namibia, we have achieved a 50/50 gender representation in the National Assembly.

President of the Assembly

Members of Parliament,

Permit me to draw attention to the work of the IPU Task Force on Ukraine and Russia, as I believe it is a noteworthy illustration of how parliamentary diplomacy can contribute towards creating bridges for understanding and peace.

Although not much progress has been achieved, it demonstrates the importance of parliaments in domestic and global conflict resolution. Indeed, it is not the only one, we have seen how Parliamentary delegations in various part of the world have facilitated dialogue and reconciliation through diplomatic missions, fact-finding trips and mediation efforts.

President of the Assembly

Members of Parliament,

In conclusion, parliamentary diplomacy could serve as an effective strategy for fostering understanding and peace in a global, interconnected world. Without Parliaments we cannot foster democratic governance, resolve conflict and encourage international cooperation, peace and understanding.

It is our wish that deliberations of this magnitude translate into tangible outcomes, better understanding and open new avenues for peaceful conflict resolution.

I thank you.