

Madame chair, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, fellow parliamentarians,

“Peace is more than the absence of armed conflicts. It encompasses security, the rule of law, and the conditions necessary for individuals, families, and communities to lead fulfilling lives and realize their socioeconomic potential.”

This is the first sentence of our concept note for this debate, and I think it is a really wise sentence. Actually: By the way, it is just another description of SDG16, our topic in Luanda. And Today’s debate is more or less a continuation of our discussions in Angola.

Prosperity can only develop in a safe and stable environment. Therefore, we have to tackle conflicts and terror and provide security. Otherwise, no one can plant crops or conduct trades.

Prosperity can only develop with reliability and trust. Otherwise, economic perspectives will not develop and to fight poverty will not be possible.

In the committee on sustainable development yesterday we consented a preambular paragraph 18 and I quote:

“Every nation is responsible for creating an attractive investment climate that can draw in both domestic and international capital to speed up change.”

And yes, huge investments are necessary, for jobs, for the environment, to replace fossil fuels, by wind, solar or hydrogen. Huge investments are necessary and that will happen only if there is a legal framework which is reliable and regarded as stable and permanent for years to come.

No one should advise others how exactly such a framework should be developed. But it must be reliable. And by talking about experience, sharing experiences, this is already a contribution to parliamentary diplomacy and we should make use of it.

But of course, the most important precondition for a better life is the absence of armed conflicts.

Instead: that exactly is what people had to experience in 56 countries in 2023, experienced and suffered those armed conflicts.

There are conflicts which are in the international news: Russia’s war against the Ukraine brought enormous suffering to people in the Ukraine and to thousands of families in Russia, too. Putin could stop this war within one day.

In Gaza we effectively had a stable cease fire until October 7th last year. Thousands of Palestinians had jobs in Israel. But this stable cease fire was terminated by Hamas terror. Terror against civilians in Israel. And we did hear impressive reports on this just a couple of minutes ago. The ongoing destruction of Hamas terror-infrastructure again causes huge suffering. And we cannot accept this. This war must end. We desperately need sustainable peace in Gaza, Israel and beyond.

I think there are many more conflicts which are under the radar. But it doesn’t matter for people whether they are in the news or not. Being victim of such events occurs to many people on grassroots level in many conflicts.

And we as Parliamentarians are in a unique position: We know the grassroots level, we are part of it. And at the same time we are part of an international network.

IPU is a strong pillar of this and we have a lot of bilateral friendship groups in our parliaments.

So it is up to us to bridge gaps, find compromises and to work on sustainable peace and to fill the word parliamentarian democracy with life. Let’s do it! Thank you!