

149TH ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

13-17 OCTOBER 2024 - GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

SPEECH BY

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ON

**HARNESSING SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION FOR A MORE
PEACEFUL AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

Honorable President of the IPU,
Honorable Secretary General of the IPU,
Honorable Speakers of Parliaments, and Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Assalaam Alaikum, Good morning.

It is my honor to address this assembly on the theme "Harnessing Science, Technology, and Innovation for a More Peaceful and Sustainable Future."

Madam President,

Today's discussion is timely and crucial. As technology advances rapidly, we face both promising opportunities and serious challenges, and our responsibility is clear. It is to use STI to create a world that is peaceful, sustainable, and just.

The UN's Pact for the Future, adopted last month, emphasizes the critical role of science, technology, and innovation in addressing global challenges and shaping a sustainable future. SDG 9 on Innovation and Infrastructure, and SDG 17 on Partnerships, provide a clear roadmap for our efforts. These goals, along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, remind us of our duty to ensure that scientific progress benefits everyone.

Madam President,

As you know, the Maldives is a small island nation vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We recognize that science, technology, and innovation are essential for driving development and addressing our most pressing challenges.

At COP28, President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu announced two significant initiatives: the Maldivian government's commitment to providing 33% of the nation's electricity from renewable energy, within the next five years, and the launch of a national campaign aimed at planting five million trees.

These efforts reinforce our vision to become a nation centered on sustainable energy with a green and clean atmosphere.

For us, leveraging STI to build resilient infrastructure, develop sustainable energy, and protect our precious marine ecosystems is not merely about progress; it is about our survival.

Madam President and distinguished delegates,

Parliaments have a vital role in closing digital gaps between countries. Significant gaps continue to exist in digital access and infrastructure.

In the Maldives, we take pride in noting that our People's Majlis was the first Parliament to fully transition online during the pandemic. To further strengthen our focus on technology, the People's Majlis has established a Standing Committee on ICT.

This committee evaluates the performance of national organizations such as the National Center for Information Technology and the Maldives Communication Authority.

The Maldives is also expanding the use of AI to enhance public services in critical sectors like healthcare, education, and social welfare. We are also employing AI-driven technologies for environmental monitoring and erosion detection to safeguard our vulnerable ecosystems.

As President Dr. Muizzu also underscored during the Plenary of the Summit of the Future at UNGA79, the Maldives is making significant investments in advanced digital infrastructure to empower young people, with access to cutting-edge technologies.

He further emphasized, that his government is working towards creating a fully digitized economy, driven by artificial intelligence, which is projected to contribute up to 15% of the nation's GDP by 2030.

Madam President and delegates,

As artificial intelligence evolves, parliaments must balance innovation with regulation. Parliamentarians must also play a key role in protecting democracy.

As we all know, disinformation and misinformation threaten democracy. We must stay informed about AI developments, and by working with experts and the community, we can ensure AI benefits humanity.

In addition, parliaments must play a crucial role in developing ethical frameworks for STI in alignment with the IPU's Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology.

We must also ensure that research and innovation are conducted with integrity and respect for human rights.

In closing, as we harness STI for a more peaceful and sustainable future, let us remain guided by our shared commitment to justice, equity, and human dignity.

Madam President and delegates,

As we are gathered here, let us also empathize with the struggles faced by the Palestinian people, and I call for an immediate and lasting ceasefire in Palestine.

Similarly, I urge the international community to support stability in Lebanon, where a humanitarian crisis is unfolding. I call on all parties to end the conflict and halt strikes to prevent further civilian suffering.

Conflicts of this nature have profound and far-reaching consequences.

Together, let's build a future that is more peaceful, sustainable, and just for everyone.

Thank you.
