

Distinguished

colleagues,

It is an honour to address today the IPU and speak of the need to enhance cooperation and dialogue between parliamentarians and representatives of faith.

In our current multipolar system, we often see religious communities, especially religious minorities being persecuted for their beliefs by extremist forces, in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere.

Interfaith dialogue is a practical tool for peace-building and an invaluable ally in our fight against extremism.

The Greek Left has played a fundamental role in this course. During the SYRIZA government of Alexis Tsipras we implemented many democratic reforms to assist the Muslim Minority of Thrace, and facilitate the equality all Greek citizens irrespective of their religious beliefs.

Meanwhile, we also organized the Conference for Religious and Cultural Pluralism and Peaceful Coexistence in the Middle East with the active participation of high-level representatives from Christian, Muslim and Jewish religious figures.

In today's world that is marked by endless conflict and wars, such as the tragedy in Gaza and the Israel - Iran conflict, we have a crucial role to play towards peace and peaceful coexistence of all people.

We need to undertake more initiatives to combat religious hatred, such as antisemitism and Islamophobia.

And of course, I am proud to note that SYRIZA has called both on a national as well as a European level for the protection of the Christian communities of Middle East and especially the Christians of Gaza and Syria.

This of course includes the need of all parliamentarians to stand up for international law and be vocal for the illegal conversion of Hagia Sophia and the Chora Monastery into mosques, in violation of UNESCO's resolutions.

Furthermore, today, we need to protect the status of St. Catherine's Sinai Monastery, from any effort to undermine its property and standing.

We must embed this cooperation into our democratic frameworks.

That means guaranteeing freedom of religion and belief for all, protecting minorities, and ensuring that no one is persecuted or excluded for their faith—or for having none.

Let us move forward with humility, hope, and a shared commitment to justice.

From Athens to Addis Ababa, from Jerusalem to Jakarta—our common future depends on it.