

Intervenção

de

**S. Exa. o Vice-Presidente da Assembleia da República,
Rodrigo Saraiva**

**6.ª Conferência de Presidentes de Parlamentos da União
Interparlamentar**

Debate Geral

*A world in turmoil: Parliamentary cooperation and
multilateralism for peace, justice and prosperity for all*

Genebra

31 de julho de 2025

Madam President,
Esteemed Speakers,
Dear Colleagues,

Before the League of Nations, before the United Nations, parliamentarians came together to create the Inter-Parliamentary Union — laying the groundwork for a rules-based international order rooted in dialogue, cooperation, and mutual accountability. Multilateralism, in its most enduring form, has always been parliamentary.

And yet, the very foundations laid by Cremer and Passy are now eroding. We are witnessing a slow and steady crumbling of the multilateral order. Not through a single act of rejection, but through quiet neglect, the weakening of norms, and the steady retreat into national interest. What was once the basis of international cooperation is being chipped away — principle by principle, commitment by commitment.

Institutions that upheld dialogue now find themselves questioned, bypassed, or hollowed out. The tenets that guided decades of stability are eroding — not with shock, but with attrition.

As parliamentarians, we are deeply familiar with the daily challenge of reconciling differences. We represent competing visions, diverging priorities, and conflicting interests — yet we are called to find common ground and to deliver outcomes that serve the whole.

No single state, however powerful, can solve the challenges of our time alone - not on climate, not pandemics, **not hunger**, not artificial intelligence, not misinformation, **not wars of aggression**. Durable solutions are never imposed - they are forged through dialogue, built on trust, and sustained through cooperation.

International organizations, at their best, provide the space and structure for that cooperation to flourish and provide answers to the complex challenges before us.

But the peace we enjoy here, in Geneva, is in stark contrast with the daily death toll in Kyiv and Gaza.

The Portuguese Parliament has repeatedly and massively condemned Russia's illegal aggression against Ukraine: **a clear violation of international law** that undermines the UN Charter and the fundamental principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Likewise, lasting peace in the Middle East require courage and clarity. Yesterday, in New York, Portugal has once again underlined the need for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza, as well as its unwavering commitment to a two-State solution, with the people of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace.

But let us be clear: rebuilding trust in multilateralism also requires that we make it more inclusive. Parliaments have long been the spaces where change first takes root - where voices previously excluded begin to be heard, and where political will is formed before it is ratified by governments. We cannot speak of democracy, freedom or justice if half of society is excluded.

Portugal has long understood that the defense of dialogue, the rule of law, and democratic institutions cannot be confined within national borders. Parliamentary Assemblies are beacons. They offer the clarity that comes from mutual understanding and shared responsibility. The Portuguese Parliament has consistently placed multilateralism at the heart of its external engagement, convinced that elected institutions can illuminate a path forward... even when diplomacy between states trembles.

From the previous presidency of the IPU to the current leadership of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Portuguese Parliament has continued to work towards establishing interparliamentary dialogue as a core pillar of democratic resilience.

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY - CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

These efforts reflect a sustained commitment to building coalitions across regions and ideologies, and to using parliamentary diplomacy to defend democratic values, promote cooperation, and uphold the rule of law. Whether through structured bilateral ties or active participation in multilateral forums, we remain firmly convinced that dialogue among parliaments is essential to reinforce the democratic foundations of the international order and to address the complex, transnational challenges of our time.

Dear Colleagues,

What began 136 years ago with two parliamentarians brought today delegations from over 100 parliaments at a critical moment for the multilateral system. That legacy calls us to action.

The last century taught us that when the international order strains and falters, it is not the shouts of the few but the silence of the many that echoes through history.

As before, it is our collective responsibility as parliamentarians to raise our voices and defend the core democratic principles that underpin a rules-based international order.

Through dialogue and actions that are not abstract but deliberate
not passive, but principled
not competitive, but collaborative.

Thank you.