

**Statement by H.E. Sangay Dorji, Hon'ble Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan
at the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland
(9–23 October 2025)**

**Honourable President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen —
Kuzuzangpo la!**

It is a **distinct honour** to address this 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

At the outset, I bring to you the warm greetings and best wishes of His Majesty The King, people, and the Parliament of Bhutan, to this distinguished gathering.

It is a privilege to stand among colleagues **united by our shared commitment** to peace, justice, and sustainable development through parliamentary action.

Allow me also to express our **deep appreciation** to the IPU for convening this vital forum, a space that continues to serve as a **beacon of dialogue, cooperation, and solidarity** among parliaments worldwide.

Excellencies,

The theme of this year's Assembly; "*Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis*", is both **timely and profound**.

Our world faces mounting challenges, conflict, displacement, climate shocks, and humanitarian emergencies that test the resilience of nations and the compassion of humanity itself.

This theme calls on us, as legislators, to move beyond **reactive responses**, and to embed humanitarian values into the very **laws, policies, and institutions** that safeguard human dignity.

In Bhutan, this principle is deeply enshrined in our **Constitution** and in our unique development philosophy of **Gross National Happiness (GNH)**.

Our Constitution guarantees the **protection of human dignity**, equitable development, and the right to a safe and healthy environment, while mandating the State to conserve natural resources for future generations.

GNH complements this by placing **well-being, compassion, and equity** at the heart of national policy, ensuring that humanitarian principles are not merely aspirations, but **integral to governance**.

Guided by these values, and under the **enlightened leadership of His Majesty The King**, Bhutan has sought to translate principle into practice through **transformative national initiatives**.

Foremost among them is the **Desuung Volunteer Programme**, or “Guardians of Peace”, a noble initiative of His Majesty that has become the **backbone of Bhutan’s humanitarian response**.

Desuung volunteers embody courage, discipline, and service, standing on the frontlines of **forest fires, floods, and community development efforts** across the nation. Their selfless spirit reflects Bhutan’s deep **culture of solidarity and civic responsibility**.

Building upon this spirit, the **Gyalsung National Service**, launched in 2024, prepares Bhutanese youth for **civic duty and humanitarian engagement**.

More than a national service programme, Gyalsung is a **visionary investment in our youth**, equipping them with the discipline, skills, and values to serve their communities in times of crisis, and to lead with unity and compassion.

Most recently, His Majesty launched **Pelsung - the Guardians of Prosperity**, a historic initiative to enhance Bhutan’s **long-term security, resilience, and preparedness** for emerging global challenges.

Together, these initiatives nurture a **culture of service and humanitarian action**, anchored in moral strength and collective responsibility.

Bhutan’s humanitarian commitment is also reflected in our **visionary development projects**.

Foremost among them the **Gelephu Mindfulness City**; a Nobel initiative of His Majesty The King.

This transformative project seeks to harmonize **ecology, economy, and spirituality**, demonstrating that modern development can flourish in balance with **nature and human well-being**.

Gelephu aspires to serve as a **global model of mindful, sustainable urban living**.

In parallel, Bhutan continues to strengthen **community-based disaster and climate resilience** programmes.

As one of the few carbon-neutral nations in the world, Bhutan has long prioritized **forest conservation, watershed management, and disaster risk reduction**.

These initiatives not only preserve ecological balance but also **empower vulnerable communities** to adapt to the changing climate.

Our humanitarian priorities extend to **social protection, health, and education**.

Bhutan guarantees **free basic education and universal healthcare** for all citizens, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Targeted programmes for **women, children, and rural communities** have enhanced equity and opportunity.

Our national institutions integrate these humanitarian objectives into every layer of development planning, guided by compassion and accountability.

Excellencies,

For Bhutan, **peace and humanitarianism are inseparable.**

Next month, from **4th to 19th November**, Bhutan will host the **Global Peace Prayer Festival**, bringing together faith leaders and citizens from around the world in a collective call for **reconciliation, understanding, and compassion.**

For us, peace is not merely the absence of conflict, it is the **presence of harmony, trust, and cooperation.**

Without peace, humanitarian action cannot take root, for societies need stability and dignity to protect their most vulnerable.

We warmly welcome all of you to join us in this noble journey, a shared aspiration for **peace, compassion, and mutual respect among all peoples**

Honourable Delegates,

Parliaments everywhere carry a **profound responsibility**, to uphold humanitarian norms through **legislation, policy, and oversight.**

This responsibility goes beyond enacting laws, it calls upon us to **protect the vulnerable**, to strengthen **preparedness and response systems**, to mobilize resources for relief, and to foster **civic participation**, so that communities themselves become agents of resilience.

In today's interconnected world, **crises know no borders.**

Our collective capacity to respond depends on how well we **collaborate, share experiences, and act with empathy and courage.**

Bhutan stands ready to work closely with the **IPU and international partners** to strengthen humanitarian frameworks and to advance **decisive, compassionate action** in times of crisis

Finally, let us remember, **parliamentary action is not only about enacting laws.**

It is about ensuring that those laws **uplift, protect, and empower** the people we serve.

It is about **fostering trust** in our institutions, **amplifying the voices** of the vulnerable, and upholding the timeless principles of **justice, dignity, and solidarity.**

May this 151st IPU Assembly renew our shared commitment to building a world where **every individual**, regardless of circumstance, can live in **peace, security, and hope**.

And may the **light of our common humanity** continue to shine, even in the darkest of times.

Thank you for your kind attention — and Tashi Delek!