

**Speech of Ms. Mónika Bartos, Leader of the Hungarian delegation (HUNGARY)**

*General debate during the 151<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly*

*‘Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action  
in times of crisis’*

*(Geneva, 18-23 October 2025)*

Honourable Madam President, Dear Colleagues,

The Honourable Assembly is discussing a very important topic. We must find and implement ways to overcome the obstacles and hindrances that get in the way of national and international assistance. At the same time, it is important to clarify what we mean by the concept of ‘crisis’.

According to a definition found in an academic essay, a crisis is an escalating, tense relationship between states or groups of states that stays below the level of armed conflict. It is primarily fought for political, economic, social and military gains. A crisis can also be deliberately provoked in order to deepen conflicts of interest. A crisis is a chain of diverse events that have emerged in society as a whole or in various areas of society, and pose a threat to society and state security, which can no longer be addressed through conventional legal means. ‘Crisis: a situation or risk of a situation where, at national or international level, customary government procedures are insufficient to ensure the effective management of the situation – a situation which endangers human life, property, the environment or international stability’.

These definitions offer important learning points for legislators and political actors:

- Crises are created by increasing tensions through various means and can be deliberately triggered. This statement reminds us of our political responsibility!
- The emergence and deepening of a crisis requires the combined presence of a number of different factors. This characteristic tells us that effective

help can only be provided at systemic level, with a good understanding of the factors at play and the underlying reasons!

- A deep crisis usually evolves when there is an unresolvable contradiction between two or more actors regarding the subject of the dispute, and the dispute involves interests that are existential or perceived to be such. This fact points to the importance of preventive diplomacy and the importance of the thorough and effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

- When a crisis emerges, the parties do not have sufficient time to resolve the conflict, and efforts to manage/prevent the crisis fail. Thus, we must bear in mind that time is of essence in preventing and managing crises. The saying is indeed true: 'He who gains time gains life!' We, as Members of Parliament, who are involved in exercising one of the key forms of soft power, parliamentary diplomacy, have a key role to play in this.

I consider it important to note that, in view of the above, humanitarian aid cannot be provided according to pre-set templates or under rigid frameworks. Just as every community in need is different, so too are the countries providing assistance with different capabilities and opportunities. Accepting this, combined with the harmonisation of needs and capabilities ensures the effectiveness of the assistance provided.

Please, allow me to mention a few Hungarian best practices, which emphasise that supporting women, children and other vulnerable groups is not merely a humanitarian responsibility, but also a **peace-making task**. Unconditional respect for humanitarian norms is not only an ethical obligation, but also a strategic **security policy interest** and a key prerequisite for lasting peace and regional stability. The operational effectiveness and efficiency of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations is boosted by education in international humanitarian law, which is **the core ethical value of the military profession** and reinforces the commitment of professional staff members to **humanitarian principles**.

In addition to participating in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations and international aid programmes, the Hungarian Government has elected a unique focus for its international humanitarian and development assistance through the Hungary Helps Programme. Recognising that many Christian communities around the world suffer discrimination and even persecution,

we focus our attention and resources on these communities. **We do this not in an exclusionary or exclusive manner, but rather by focusing our limited resources to where they are needed most.** In addition to our focus area, our international humanitarian and development co-operation also extends to other religious and non-religious groups. Christian educational and social institutions also accept a significant proportion of non-Christians.

The essence of the Hungarian approach is that, **first and foremost, we show solidarity and give attention** to the community in need, and secondly, we ask about **what the local community considers important and necessary**, and we help accordingly, instead of imposing our own ideas on them.

Since its launch in 2017, the Hungary Helps Programme **has supported more than 450 humanitarian and rehabilitation projects in 64 countries.**

Practical experience has confirmed the correctness of our approach: **direct support for Christian communities and institutions** is not only the most effective way to provide assistance, but also contributes to the promotion of **peaceful coexistence among religions**, the importance of which was also highlighted earlier on Tuesday, at the *Interfaith Dialogue* workshop.

Thank you for your kind attention!