

**ADDRESS OF H. E. PROF. NUMAN KURTULMUŞ,**  
**SPEAKER OF THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TÜRKİYE ON THE OCCASION OF THE**  
**INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE 152ND ASSEMBLY OF IPU**

**(15 APRIL 2026, İSTANBUL)**

**Esteemed President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Ms. Tulia Ackson,  
Honourable Secretary-General of the IPU, Mr. Martin Chungong,  
Distinguished Speakers of Parliament,  
Esteemed Heads and Members of Delegations,  
Distinguished Representatives of International Organizations,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to Istanbul—described by Martin as the most beautiful city in the world—where civilizations meet, where two seas converge, and where the past and the future come together. You are most warmly welcomed.

As has just been noted, we are hosting the IPU Assembly in Türkiye for the fourth time, following the sessions held in 1934, 1951, and 1996. It is a great honour for us to host such an important gathering at such a critical time. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues who contributed to the preparation of this meeting, and likewise to the governing bodies and the Secretariat of the IPU for their valuable support.

**Dear friends,**

This meeting is, to my knowledge, one of the most highly attended gatherings in the recent history of the IPU. Nearly 155 countries are represented here, with around 80 Speakers of Parliament, close to 800 parliamentarians, and a total of approximately 2,420 registered participants. We are hosting an exceptionally significant international assembly.

I sincerely hope that our discussions, centered around the main theme of this Assembly, *“Nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations”*, will be fruitful, productive, and provide guidance for the future of humanity.

**Distinguished colleagues,**

We are living through a profoundly challenging period. Throughout history, humanity has endured major upheavals, disruptions, and transformations. However, what we are experiencing today is not merely a temporary turbulence or a series of isolated crises. Rather, we are going through an extraordinarily difficult period whose depth and impact are being felt across the entire world.

There is a saying attributed to the Chinese: “May you live in interesting times.” Indeed, we are living in one of the most “interesting” periods in human history. In international politics, almost none of the principles we once knew and relied upon seem to hold. We are entering an era where the “law of the jungle” is increasingly prevailing.

Let me state this clearly: the old era is behind us. A new era is emerging, and it is up to humanity to determine its nature. Will this new era be built upon fairness, justice, equity, and moral conscience? Or will it be shaped by the powerful imposing their will upon the weak? The answer lies in the hands of humankind.

This is precisely why the theme of this meeting—securing peace, nurturing hope, and ensuring justice—does not merely express a set of ordinary views. It brings to the forefront three critical issues that humanity urgently needs, particularly for future generations, and it is around these issues that our discussions will be conducted. I hope that these deliberations will contribute to the realization of world peace, and that this gathering will witness not only strong expressions of goodwill for peace, but also the emergence of concrete and substantive proposals to achieve it.

**Distinguished participants,**

**Distinguished Speakers of Parliament,**

**Distinguished Parliamentarians,**

Today, we are collectively witnessing profound global ruptures and upheavals. We are living through a period marked by conflicts and tensions, blatant violations of the sovereign rights of states, and acts against human communities that, at times, reach the level of genocide—acts that are becoming disturbingly normalized. At the same time, we are witnessing an era in which migration, the climate crisis, and, in particular, advanced technologies and artificial intelligence are fundamentally transforming all prevailing perceptions across the world.

It is evident that we cannot solve today's problems with yesterday's frameworks. The former unipolar and bipolar world orders have collapsed, yet the nature of the emerging system remains uncertain. For this purpose, we must collectively share perspectives that serve the common good of humanity and seriously work towards building a common ground around them.

From this very perspective, parliamentary democracy stands as one of the most important instruments for addressing the challenges of humanity. We have here with us esteemed parliamentary friends from almost every geographical region of the world, serving in very different parliaments.

Here, we will bring our ideas closer together. We will engage in open-hearted discussions. We will use all the means at our disposal to persuade one another. And together, we will strive to build a better future for humanity.

**Honourable Parliamentarians,**

**Esteemed Speakers of Parliament,**

One of the most pressing problems in today's world is this: we are living in a time in which all the institutions that humanity needs exist in form, yet almost none of them function effectively.

To put it plainly, what is the United Nations—one of the most common and shared institutions of humanity—actually for? In the recent period we are witnessing, which conflict has it been able to bring to an end? Which war has it been able to stop?

Unfortunately, the United Nations has become an international institution shaped and directed according to the will of those who hold power. And sadly, the double standards in the world continue to be imposed on all of us through the human tragedies we are witnessing with our own eyes.

Let me give an example. Since immediately after 7 October, the attacks in Gaza—ongoing to this day and reaching the level of genocide—have continued. How, and through which international mechanism, can such aggression by Israel be stopped?

Despite reactions from people all around the world, in the course of these three years more than 75,000 people have been massacred, 70 percent of whom are women and children. Who can, and through which institution, put an end to this genocide committed by Israel?

In the same way, who will stop this war that began with attacks by American and Israeli forces against Iran, and which has then expanded as Iran extended its response across the countries of the region? Through which international institution will the necessary authority be exercised to achieve the outcome we all desire?

What I want to say is this: institutions exist in the world, but they no longer perform any function. These institutions have collapsed.

Yes, rules also exist in the world. In particular, the rules that constitute the founding philosophy of the United Nations are rules that we would all still sign today. However, those rules exist only on paper.

With the collapse of institutions, rules have also collapsed. And thirdly, it is not only rules; the entire terminology of international relations has also been almost completely destroyed, collapsed, and rendered meaningless.

In short, the global system is in a state of complete decay.

It is evident that extraordinary efforts and extraordinary determination are required to rescue this system from this state of decay.

In this regard, if you allow me, I would like to give two examples of how the international system has been able to respond to negative developments in the world.

The first is this: in 1974, the membership of South Africa in the United Nations was suspended due to its apartheid regime. Today, the same apartheid practices are being applied against Palestinians by Israel.

It is not only a matter of violence against people. With a decision taken in March by the Israeli parliament, the death penalty has also been introduced for Palestinians in the West Bank. How can decisions of military courts—96 percent of which are based on military rulings—be considered legitimate?

Does this not amount to apartheid, when two different legal systems are applied within the same territory—one for Palestinians and another for Israelis?

Just as the apartheid regime in South Africa led to the suspension of its United Nations membership, Israel's United Nations membership must also be suspended, and the apartheid regime must be prevented. This shows that, if there is will, even a bloodstained regime can be stopped. I gave South Africa as an example for this reason.

The second example: as you will recall, in 2000, the far-right leader Haider won the elections in Austria. With his victory, the European Union reacted strongly. They declared that such a fascist could not be a prime minister in Europe, and they raised their voices across Europe. As a result, Haider eventually resigned from the party leadership, and his party did not become part of the government.

This shows that, when there is determination, even the rise of a fascist party to power can be prevented by Western and European powers.

I have given these two examples in order to illustrate how solutions can be found to the problems of our time. The coming period will become even more difficult. We must come together on the common ground of humanity and want for all people what we want for ourselves.

**Dear friends,**

At the core of all universal documents and declarations, there are two fundamental principles: states are equal in sovereignty—aren't they?—and human beings are equal in creation. We are all the children of Adam; we all belong to the same lineage.

Yet today, the most fundamental problem in the world is that some human beings are considered to be above others, and some below others. The equal rights granted by creation are not being afforded to everyone.

Similarly, while the sovereignty of some states is regarded as strong and unquestionable, the sovereignty of many others is not even mentioned.

Let me give an example. If we were to list the countries in the Middle East whose sovereign rights have been violated over the past three years, we would be speaking about many countries in the region—Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Yemen, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and others—all of which fall within an unacceptable pattern of violations of sovereignty.

Every state has equal sovereign rights. Ensuring this is the common duty of the human family. If we are speaking of an international community, then this must be our primary obligation.

Therefore, we will work to nurture hope, secure peace, and ensure justice. I hope that this international meeting will host such important ideas and will help pave the way for the construction of a new global system through the discussion of these ideas.

Our fundamental duty is this: we will come together, we will speak, we will share our ideas and views, and we will try to persuade one another. But we must never forget that our main objective is to build a new, just, and equitable global system.

On the one hand, we will strive to strengthen the institutional capacity of our organisations and ensure that they function more effectively. On the other hand, we will struggle for the establishment of a new and equitable world order.

Finally, I would like to say this: the future of humanity will be shaped by our collective resolve to build a new system. . It is our shared responsibility to create a new global political order founded on justice, and an economic order that ensures justice in the global economy.

This responsibility does not belong only to governments. It belongs to parliaments that act on behalf of peoples and represent them—that is, to us, to all of us in this hall.

With these sentiments, I extend my heartfelt greetings to you all. Welcome to Istanbul, welcome to Türkiye. I wish the IPU Assembly every success. I wish you all a bright future.