

Speech for the IPU General Debate 152 IPU Assembly (5 min)

By Claudia Roth MP

Madam President,

dear colleagues,

what is our task today — as parliamentarians of the world?

I believe it is this:

to defend what holds us together.

To defend the rules-based international order.

To defend international law —

which is being attacked,

which is being broken,

again and again.

And we must be clear:

international law must apply at all times.

Also in war.

Especially in war.

Because what we are witnessing today —

in Ukraine,

in Lebanon,

in Sudan, and many other places,

is not only crisis.

It is devastation.

It is hunger, it is displacement, it is unthinkable violence. It is lives destroyed, families torn apart, futures stolen.

And this is the test we face.

A test of whether we still truly believe

in the rules we have given ourselves.

And whether we are ready to uphold and strengthen the one place where these rules find

their common home —
the great house, the global house of the United
Nations —
a house that belongs to all of us,
that we must strengthen, not weaken,
that we must protect, not undermine,
because without it, there is no common ground,
no shared voice, no global responsibility.

Dear colleagues,
after the Second World War,
after the crimes of German National Socialism,
the world made a promise.

A promise that begins with the most powerful
sentence:

Human dignity is inviolable.
And this dignity belongs to every human being —
not only to men,
not only to Christians,
not only to white people,
but to all people, everywhere —
regardless of gender, origin, belief, identity or who
they love.

Human dignity is universal, or it is nothing.

This is our foundation.

This is what unites us.

But today,
human dignity is being violated.

It is being trampled.

Civilians are targeted. Suffering is ignored or even
tolerated.

And so the question is:

are we willing to defend this promise?

Because this is our responsibility.

Not tomorrow.

Now.

And the challenges we face are immense.

War.

Conflict.

A growing divide between rich and poor.

Deepening inequality.

Multiple crises.

And above all, the climate crisis.

In places like Tuvalu, Kiribati and Fidji

the climate crisis is no longer a distant threat.

It has already become a question of survival.

And it is especially local communities

and Indigenous peoples from the islands of the

Pacific to the heart of the Amazon rainforest

— who are already losing their homes, their land

and their livelihoods — who are most affected,

while having contributed the least to the climate

crisis.

Today, we are already speaking of around 49

million climate displaced people worldwide —

49 million people forced to leave their homes not

because they want to, but because they have to.

The climate crisis fuels conflict.

Conflict deepens injustice.

And injustice destroys hope.

So if we speak about nurturing hope,

about securing peace,

about ensuring justice for future generations —

then we must act together.

We must strengthen international law.

We must defend human rights.

We must take responsibility —
for our people, for humanity,
and for our planet.

Because there is no Planet B.

And we must also protect what holds our societies
together:

a free civil society,

a vibrant culture — which depends on freedom of
expression, artistic freedom, and a free press —

and spaces where people can meet each other as
human beings, regardless of background or belief
or gender, where empathy and solidarity can grow.

Dear colleagues,

That is why everything depends on us.

So let us stand together — and defend what binds
us.

So that this world does not break apart,
but moves forward — with a commitment to
fundamental rights, to peace, to justice.

Thank you.