

## **Nurturing hope, securing peace and ensuring justice for future generations**

Your Excellencies,

Fellow Parliamentarians,

It is a distinct honor to address this Assembly in Istanbul, a city that for centuries has stood as a bridge between continents, cultures, and civilizations. It is therefore a fitting place to reflect on our shared responsibility at a time when the foundations of global stability are being profoundly jeopardised.

The theme before us—nurturing hope, securing peace, and ensuring justice for future generations—is not an abstract aspiration. It is a call to action, especially for us, as parliamentarians.

Today, more than ever, peace can exist only on the basis of credibility, justice, as well as of a steadfast commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

In an environment like the one we are witnessing today, our core role is to safeguard the principles that give legitimacy to our systems of governance. The rule of law must prevail over the rule of force. The democratic institutions must be resilient, inclusive, and accountable.

Especially in the region of Eastern Mediterranean the challenges we face reflect, in many ways, broader global trends: geopolitical competition, shifting alliances, huge migration flows, tensions over maritime zones, differing

interpretations of international law, with the dialogue being replaced by unilateral actions.

Respect to international law—and in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is not optional; it is essential for safeguarding peace and stability in the region.

At the same time, we must look beyond the management of tensions and invest in the creation of opportunities.

The Eastern Mediterranean holds significant potential for energy exploitation. The development of natural resources should not become a source of division, but rather a catalyst for actual growth and prosperity for our people.

Also, the environmental cooperation must become a central pillar of our regional and global efforts. “Green diplomacy” is not a slogan—it is a necessity. By working together on climate resilience, we can build trust, create common ground, and demonstrate that cooperation is beneficial.

In all these efforts, parliamentary diplomacy plays a vital role towards maintaining dialogue and building bridges across states and nations.

We must ensure that our external positions align with our internal commitments—to democracy, to transparency, to respect to the rule of law and to the protection of fundamental rights.

The history of our regions may be complex, even turbulent. But it does not define our future—unless we allow it to.

Let us therefore reaffirm our commitment to the values that unite us: peace, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Let us work together—through dialogue, through cooperation, and through shared responsibility—to build a more just and peaceful world.

The future is not something that will simply unfold before us. It is something we must actively shape on the basis of the above principles and our firm commitment to pursue them consciously.

Thank you.

