



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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**IPU 152**

**ISTANBUL, TURKEY**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY - THEME:  
NURTURING HOPE, SECURING PEACE AND ENSURING  
JUSTICE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**BY**

**HON. THOKO DIDIZA, MP**

**SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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***The Honourable President of the Assembly,  
Honourable President of the IPU, Dr Tulia Ackson  
Honourable Presiding Officers,  
Honourable Members, and  
Distinguished guests,***

At the outset, I express sincere appreciation to the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements in hosting this 152nd Assembly.

**President**, this Assembly takes place at a moment when contemporary global conflicts and polarisation are taking place. This reminds us that peace is an essential pillar to sustain democratic stability. In the same vein, there is a need to ensure that we continuously safeguard instruments that sustain and nature peace.

In every region of the world, unresolved grievances, widening social divides, and deepening political tensions continue to erode trust and weaken institutions. It is in this context that the role of parliaments becomes more vital than ever.

Parliaments are not only legislative institutions. They are constitutional spaces where differing views are addressed through debate rather than confrontation, and where the collective will of a nation is shaped through engagement. When parliaments function well, they absorb tension that might otherwise spill into instability.

Across the world, trust in public institutions has become increasingly fragile. Citizens question whether democratic institutions truly serve their interests and whether those entrusted with authority are held to account. South Africa faces these questions, and our Parliament has taken deliberate and concrete steps to rebuild public confidence and strengthen democratic legitimacy.



**Mr President**, delegates, our theme directs us in finding ways in which we can nurture hope, secure peace, and ensure justice for future generations. How do we nurture hope if today's global systems and institutions are weaker than they were before? How do we nurture hope when instruments for securing peace are disregarded, and the majority of us are losing hope by the day?

Honourable members, the Declaration for Human Rights, which most of us seated in this room subscribe to, including its instruments, remain relevant, and yet we as members are disrespecting the very essence of what these instruments demand of us. Our Africa Safety and Security Architecture, which lays the foundation of how we can secure peace for our citizens, remains fragile, hence conflict and wars continue unabated.

Today, as this assembly of parliaments, we are here to share views on how we can nurture hope and secure peace for the next generations.

**President**, let me share what South Africa did at the birth of democracy in 1994 in dealing with historical conflict. We resolved to enter into negotiations with those who were our adversaries, not because it was easy, but because we understood that we had to face the issues that had pulled us apart. We chose the platform called the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which allowed us to tell each other what happened and encouraged us to account for the lives lost. Subsequently, we established a Constitutional Framework that ensured we addressed the injustices of the past.

Specifically, in our case, land dispossession and racial discrimination ensured that the majority of citizens were rendered landless at the stroke of a pen by the enactment of the 1913 Native Land Act. Cognizant of this reality, our 1996 Constitution ensured that land reform would be undertaken to address land inequality in our country. Our constitution was also live to gender inequality, which was addressed through the equality clause that



focuses on tackling the systematic exclusion of women in politics, business and other aspects of society.

**President**, nurturing peace must remain part of the national and global agenda. Our own experience tells us that the journey of building a nation remains fragile if the democratic dividends remain elusive to many. Equally, if resolutions at multinational levels do not translate to tangible action, trust in them diminishes. Parliaments need to ensure that programmatic interventions are put in place to address the impact of injustices and resolve the increasing wave of conflicts.

**President**, securing peace and ensuring justice requires strengthening and upholding the independence of the Judiciary. Equitable access to judicial services is equally paramount to a functioning democracy.

**Excellencies**, parliamentary processes must ensure that citizens are part and parcel of decision-making processes, be it law-making, statutory appointments and/ or critical questions that affect our society. This is one way in which citizens can have a sense of what issues their public representatives are dealing with.

Central to this effort is a strong and evolving oversight architecture. Parliaments should put in place mechanisms to ensure that parliamentarians can hold to account those in government without fear or favour. Protecting the independence of Parliament and safeguarding robust debate are key elements for meaningful oversight.

**Honourable President**, the challenges of trust erosion in institutions, armed conflicts and inequalities are common across our societies, and they require strong, responsive, and accountable parliaments that are willing to act and to earn the confidence of those they represent.



Therefore, we do believe that the IPU should continue its good work towards the resolution of conflicts between states through peaceful and diplomatic means. On Russia and Ukraine, the IPU took concrete steps to intervene. We must note with appreciation the current ceasefire on the war involving Iran, the United States and Israel. Should the situation warrant, the IPU may wish to consider an intervention similar to the one done in the Russia-Ukraine matter.

The Parliament of South Africa reaffirms its commitment, working with fellow parliaments, to building a just, peaceful, and resilient global community.

Thank you.

**...END...**