

**IN-PERSON SEGMENT OF THE 5<sup>th</sup> WORLD CONFERENCE OF  
SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT**

**Vienna, Austria, 7 and 8 September 2021**

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**Motion 1: Achieving sustainable development requires more attention on human well-being and environmental preservation than on economic growth**

by H.E. Ms Annita Demetriou  
President of the House of Representatives  
of the Republic of Cyprus

Mr. President,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While pursuing efforts to address the impacts of the dire effects of COVID-19 pandemic, we must remain focused on achieving a sustainable future. It has never been more urgent to preserve the environment than now. Ecosystems support all life on earth and are key to our health, well-being and prosperity. The healthier our ecosystems are, the healthier the planet, its people and our economies. Preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems can help to end poverty, combat climate change and reshape our economic models.

Environmental protection, people's well-being and economic growth constitute all three essential components of sustainable development.

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our times. Stepping up efforts to address this emergency, presents us, at the same time, with a great opportunity that we must grab to (re)build a more sustainable and resilient economy and more solid foundations for human well-being. A fundamental transformation of our socioeconomic systems is equally important in this respect.

As legislators and as parliamentary leaders, we must undertake a joint commitment to support global efforts towards a sustainable and resilient post-COVID recovery and to develop a new narrative of economic growth. Recovery and resilience plans constitute unique opportunities, not only to jump-start our economies, but also to take

bold actions to make them more equal, consistent and environmentally sound, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

A truly transformative post-COVID development agenda cannot be realized without the full enjoyment of human rights, adherence to the rule of law and good governance. These fundamental principles constitute essential preconditions, in order for peace and stability to prevail within and among States and to achieve sustainable development and well-being.

Regrettably, the international community has failed only too often to uphold international law and human rights. My country, Cyprus, constitutes yet another eloquent example. 47 years after the Turkish military invasion, the people of Cyprus are still suffering the consequences of gross violations by Turkey of their basic human rights. Despite numerous UN Resolutions on Cyprus and relevant decisions of the European Union and other international organizations, Turkey has not been held responsible to this date for its crimes and its continuing occupation of over a third of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

Following up to the Paris Agreement on Climate will be a litmus test of our collective determination to save our planet and to ensure a sustainable future for next generations.

Dear fellow Speakers of Parliament,

A robust environment is connected to a strong economy and to people's welfare. We need healthy economies to lift people out of poverty and achieve the SDGs. And this is where we must all come together in solidarity with our diverse roles and capabilities.

Thank you for your attention!