



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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IPU President's Speech to the Annual meeting of Presidents of the Arab Parliament

Cairo, 10 February 2018

Salam Alaikum

Dr. Mishal Fahm Al Sulami,
Hon. Ahmed Abdul Gheit,
Your Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the authorities that invited me here. I am proud and honored to address this very important group. First, because it is a great opportunity to be at one of the most important and vibrant communities around the world. Second, because now these days you are addressing one of the most important challenges for all world: terrorism.

Terrorism has no religion. Terrorism has no other language than hate. Terrorism has no borders or nationalities. Terrorism is threatening every day our freedom, our lives. Attaching terrorism to Islam is wrong. It is unacceptable. The Qur'an is clear: Islam is a religion of peace. The humanistic message from Islam is the same humanistic message that should guide our political decisions. We need to understand that what happens to one person, happens to all the community, happens to all humankind.

Let us be honest: terrorism is a global threat, so the global community must work hard to change the reality that is pushing our youth to look for dangerous ideas. We have the responsibility as Parliamentarians, of course, to make important resolutions, to have political agreements, but now our biggest challenge is how to change the world starting from our own communities.

Latin America as a former Spanish colony, shares a lot in common with the Arab world. We share history, culture, understanding. They say that around five thousand words are similar in Spanish and Arabic. I would love to know those words and to learn Arabic very soon. We have the same values in terms of peace, friendship, hospitality; we are closer than sometimes we believe. I am a Mexican, and proud to be Mexican. We share the same frustration and we will never accept that someone tries to blame or to label our people as criminals or terrorists. We know how it is to live with families divided by walls. We know how it is to hear an important voice around the world speaking against our people. No one should be judged by the color of their skin or by their nationality.

For IPU, our most important goal, as I mentioned, is to change the world and it should start from our own communities. One of the goals that we already achieved is to establish the Counter-Terrorism Group just this week. It was opened on Monday and now I have this wonderful news to share and it is shared by the Arab Group. So now, the Arab Group at IPU has a very important responsibility heading the Advisory Group to this very important issue, as is counter-terrorism. We need to understand that it is our time, yes for resolutions, but also for results. We need to understand that it is our duty, our mandate, to address better legislation about money laundering, human trafficking, exchanges, information and intelligence.

Our next Assembly, the next IPU Assembly, is going to be in March. I also want to share with you some very important news. We are going to have as the General Debate's main issue the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees. This particular region has a lot to say about migration and about refugees. You are setting every day very good standards about how to understand humankind as the same community regardless of nationality and of ethnic groups. We are going to have the presence at our Assembly of four High Commissioners. It is going to be a very important message that we are going to send because we are going to work really close with both Global Compacts all this year. You are going to receive some surveys, invitations for workshops. The idea is that we can have the opportunity to know our members' proposals. What do you expect from IPU? What do you believe should be considered in our resolutions? How can we be closer to our members? How, as Parliamentarians, can we have more cooperation, more exchanges, and of course better results for our constituencies?

I will always be thankful with the Arab Group. I had your trust, I had your support to become IPU President. I am the first woman President elected of IPU, the youngest one, so I am going to ask for your wisdom, for your experience, but also for your support. The world is changing and it is going really fast. We have a 128-year-old organization. This is the time to have a stronger IPU, to have also a more powerful voice for the Parliamentarians, to dedicate our time to reach the solutions that our communities need, and that the world is expecting from us.

Thank you very much for this important honor. I will be always really helpful as I committed yesterday with H.E. President of the Arab Parliament to be closer. I want to have a really close and positive exchange with this group.

Thank you very much.

Shukran.