



**Address by H.E. Mr. Mir Rahman Rahmani
Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga (House of People)
National Assembly of Afghanistan
On Strengthening International Law: Parliamentary Roles and Mechanisms, and
the Contribution of Regional Cooperation
At 141st IPU Assembly
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In the Name of Allah, the God of Freedom and Justice

H.E Mrs. President of Assembly,

Excellency Secretary General of IPU, Excellencies Speakers of world parliaments, Hon. Parliamentarians, and all the dignitaries of the assembly, at the outset, allow me please to convey the warm greetings and best wishes on behalf of Afghan delegation and members of Wolesi Jirga (**House of People**) to all distinguished participants.

Excellencies!

Today, I am very pleased attending the 141st Inter-Parliamentary Union assembly and I do believe that today's gathering is a great achievement for all IPU member states, as the parliamentary dialogues opens new avenues for developing of relations and convergence between nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Parliaments are symbol and representation of people's will. Democracy flourishes in the strengthening of parliaments, and makes the role of citizens more prominent in shaping and creating accountable and law-driven governments. The experience of developing countries has shown that parliaments have been instrumental in generalizing the values of nations and in the development of successful governments. Thus parliamentary relations, inter-parliamentary dialogues and the exchange of experiences of members of parliament are in fact development of relations and closeness of nations.

Honorable Parliamentarians!

Governments can work and understand each other better; when their nations are closer together. Therefore, we all are gathered here to hear our nations' demands and to understand that our nation wants a world free of war, poverty, reduction of violence, social justice, development of government, dynamic economy and progressive and a civilized world. Accordingly, the common desires of our nations are raised here, and it obliges our respective governments to make joint efforts in the process of globalizing

values, because our world is a world of interactions, understandings, and interdependencies that place nations on the basis of their national interests to embody universal values in their governance strategy.

Honorable Participants!

The extension of regional and global relations lies in the appreciation of international and humanitarian laws; because respecting international law is also one of the components of development of regional relations that enables countries to engage and interact with their countries of interest and shared global values such as ensuring peace and lasting stability, institutionalization of human rights, promotion of freedom of expression and other values of democracy should be set as a model of modern governance to benchmark a stable and sustainable region.

Respected Colleagues,

Adoption of international treaties of humanitarian law, supporting war captives and civilians, banning or restricting on the use of nuclear weapons can play an important role in expanding regional and global relations, inter-parliamentary understanding requires that parliaments recognize and respect international humanitarian law as a universal value in the context of their national laws so that the laws and legislative documents of respected countries are accepted globally. The Afghan Parliament is committed to human rights values and always adhered to and committed to humanitarian laws and regulations, because democracy and human rights as universally accepted principle holds a special place for our people, and we are actually giving sacrifices in this regard and we hope to get rid of the deadlock through our shared plans and solutions and achieve a democratic Afghanistan that will never bleed again.

Honorable Parliamentarians and Respected Participants!

You know well that the countries of the world, especially at the regional level, are in a shared chain of links. Therefore, instability in one country necessarily challenges the neighboring country as well, and you realize that creating a challenge and threat will stifle mutual cooperation and creates a deadlock that will inevitably lead to strain the relations. Certainly, it can be said that peace and stability in the region means peace and stability in the world.

Dear Friends!

Terrorism and extremism are common global and regional threat. A joint regional framework is needed to combat terrorism, which the Afghan government in coordination with member states has succeeded in developing a draft (regional counterterrorism

strategy) in Istanbul Process .This draft was also welcomed in the declaration of the “Sixth Heart of Asia Conference”. Its demarcation was emphasized so that this common framework formally created by the countries of the region became the legal obligation to jointly fight terrorism in the region.

Respected Colleagues!

The next issue which is very important and is going to be discussed at this conference is the Climate Change .Deforestation, fires, greenhouse gases and flammable materials are a serious challenge to the climate, and to prevent environmental pollution, it is imperative that the conference participants commit to respective countries to stricter laws in this area so that international treaties and covenants are taken more seriously for climate protection and climate change.

Respected Parliamentarians!

Adherence to international trade law is one of the most important components of developing countries' relations .The Afghan parliament plays an important role in adopting these laws and other treaties in the field of international business law and they are committed to international co-operation in the field of banking and development of commercial relations, and in this regard the 17th term of Afghan Parliament will take necessary steps to legislate and make recommendations.

Money laundering and money related crimes are further challenges and the Afghan parliament is trying to impose strict rules and regulations to prevent the economic and money laundering mafia that is a common regional and global threat.

Respected Colleagues!

Health, gender participation, population and youth empowerment are further priorities of governance and development of human relations. That the Afghan Parliament, by examining the laws of the country, strives to promote laws and regulations in order to enhance the level of participation of women and youth in a healthy and population-controlled society that is commensurate with the standard of living of the regional and global countries of the world.

Honorable participants!

I have briefly outlined the common components and challenges, and now, I would like to specifically touch on the geopolitical and geo-economic status of Afghanistan and once again express the commitments of Afghan Parliament.

Excellencies!

As you know, on the transboundary level, Afghanistan is a landlocked country; therefore, its business plans are subject to the behavior of peripheral countries. It also had to align itself with economic plans and projects of other countries. On the other hand, the environment of economic cooperation and convergence of the countries around Afghanistan is affected by the political-security interaction of the regional powers with each other and the interaction of the regional powers with the United States of America and NATO. However, Afghanistan's capacity for regional cooperation in the area of economic growth and the elimination of threats of terrorism, drug trafficking and extremism and achievements are far greater than the sufferings of the most countries in the region. Two key factors have affected Afghanistan's economic and security cooperation with regional organizations where Afghanistan holds membership. Existing tensions in the relations of member states of regional organizations and dragging those conflicts into the Afghanistan territory and also looking at the Afghanistan cases from the security-military point of view is contrary to the principles and commitments of countries in regional cooperation. Therefore, resolving these problems requires joint cooperation so that regional countries look at the Afghanistan from an interdependence perspective.

Respected Colleagues!

Afghanistan has an important geo-economic position in one of the most important regions of the world. The importance of this position is well reflected in Afghanistan's regional cooperation strategy: Afghanistan is at the crossroads of the world's four most populous and richest regions: Southern Asia, Central and Northern Asia, the Middle East and the Far East. Afghanistan is the central linkage point of these four regions. More broadly, the region around Afghanistan can be divided into two sub regions: the inner region comprising all six neighbors bordering with Afghanistan, and the outer region comprising most of Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and Far East countries. Beyond that, Afghanistan has a pivotal role in the Asia-Europe Continental Business Network. Central Asia and South Asia, on the other hand, are among the regions with the least intra-regional convergence. The low level of intra-regional trade is the characteristic aspect of both regions while other Asian regions, such as East and Southeast Asia, have experienced relatively high levels of intra-regional trade over the past few years.

Honorable Parliamentarians!

Afghanistan, as the shortest and cheapest transit route between Central Asia and South Asia, plays a key role in unlocking the complementary trade potential between the two regions and thus creating new trade across the region. Compared to alternative routes,

Afghanistan can provide the shortest and most economical roads, railways, gas and electricity transmission lines between Central and South Asia. Therefore, the construction of transboundary transport infrastructures in the areas of transport and energy should be addressed by developing the software infrastructure needed for regional convergence, including the improvement of regulatory regimes and border procedures and also convergence and coordination of policies that further reduces the cost of trade. The Afghan government and Afghan Parliament are committed to regional integration and cooperation, and we hope that IPU member states and regional countries plays a positive role in fostering regional cooperation, as parliaments can be the driving force and facilitator of communication across sectors because cooperation on regional issues contributes to international security and stability.

Thank you for your attention!