

Republic of Tunisia
People Representatives' Assembly
Unity of Exterior Relations

Bardo, 17th of July 2020

**Speech by Hon. Rached Kheriji Ghannouchi, Speaker of the People's
Representatives Assembly**
At the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments
Via virtual communication: 19 and 20 August 2020

Subject: which role to parliaments after Covid-19.

Honorable Mrs. Gabriela CUEVAS BARRON,
President of the Inter-parliamentary Union,
Honorable Presidents of parliament,

I have the honor, at the beginning of my speech, to express to all organizers and planners of IPU World Meeting of presidents of parliament 2020 my warm thanks and on top of them Mrs. Gabriela CUEVAS BARRON, IPU President and her respectable assistants.

Our world meeting in its 5th session is held in exceptional circumstances due to the world Health Crisis caused by coronavirus pandemic in almost all countries of the world. It is also an exceptional session as our meeting works with its plenary session just as its reunions are held thanks to electronic broadcast technologies and digital platforms which demonstrates IPU success to carry on playing its role of support to parliaments aiming to overcome challenges and obstacles of post-

covid-19 step compelling us to ask ourselves about fundamental roles of parliaments to rebuilt a better edifice of cooperation.

Honorable presidents of parliament,

Primacy of law and human rights' respect are founding principles which guarantee security and stability of states and constitute combined the international community and the pandemic has imposed economic pressures and new social burdens on peoples, that is why we are in urgent need today to provide international health regulations and laws and to find a unified legal framework to confront disasters and epidemics. We have a great responsibility as parliaments to facilitate efforts of our governments to implement UNO international resolutions, agreements and treaties in accord. We should also give priority to follow-up and control of exceptional measures taken by our governments like borders' closing, compulsory health quarantine and adjournment of domestic and foreign economic transactions as they affect rights and freedoms of individuals and groups. All parliamentary functions including legislation, oversight and representation are extremely important due to their interdependence and correlation.

Tunisia has adopted a comprehensive plan to fight against this stubborn epidemic and has taken painful political health economic and social measures but targeted and effective in which People Representatives' Assembly has played a pivotal role with the rest of the State's organs, and among the most important decisions

taken by our Assembly ensuring the continuation of legislative and administrative work as holding plenary sessions just as office and committees' meetings by means of remote communication technology including voting via electronic applications, as well as amendments added to deadlines which enable quick examination of legislative initiatives in plenary sessions and at the level of committees, whenever it comes to an initiative in relation with the epidemiological situation. A crisis cell was also created within our parliament in charge of conducting dialogue sessions with the government.

Honorable Presidents of parliament,

We praise at this level the work and efforts made by the Inter-parliamentary Union in order to coordinate and facilitate cooperation between parliamentarians through the use of modern technologies to communicate and provide alternative frameworks for cooperation and exchange of experiences and models on how parliaments can carry on working, passing laws, monitoring government action and checking procedures in emergency situations and lockdown periods.

From this standpoint, we call for more international cooperation and solidarity among components of the global parliamentary scene in a framework of effective pluralism not only to overcome this crisis, but also to achieve peace and sustainable development for peoples which remain the ideal objective that we all aspire to.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all those who worked on the success of this conference in order to come up with practical recommendations and proposals.