



**The Speech of His Excellency, Dr. Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf,
(Speaker of the Islamic Parliament of Iran)**

5th World Conference of Speakers, August 2020

Them: Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet.

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Her Excellency, Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, Honorable President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

His Excellency Wolfgang Sobotka, Honorable President of the Austrian National Council

At the outset, I would like to express my delight at having participated in the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments. Also, I should like to express my gratitude to the IPU, the Austrian parliament and the UN for arranging this meeting. The results of this meeting would hopefully prove effective in initiating further co-thinking and enhanced inter-parliamentary cooperation to serve the ultimate goal of realizing “**multilateralism**”, “**sustainable peace & development**” and “**global solidarity**” for every nation.

Holding the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments at a time when the entire world is struggling with COVID-19 pandemic re-stresses the strong determination of parliaments as the echo of the vox populi to establish multilateral cooperation. Indubitably,

COVID-19 and its pandemic have universal and inclusive consequences, as is the case with issues such as terrorism, migration, narcotics and poverty.

On the other hand, global developments indicate that human is undergoing a transition period that for its conclusion no specific date could be predicted. It seems that the conventional mechanisms governing the international system as well as preservation and strengthening of multilateral and organized mechanisms with emphasis on principles of equity, justice and observing the rights of all people are crucial to today's human.

Honorable Speakers of Parliaments

Today, achieving effective and veritable multilateralism faces numerous challenges and pressures including nationalist ideologies, unilateralist policies, economic terrorism, systematic violation of human rights and ethnic cleansing in certain regions of the world, in particular in the occupied territory of Palestine, tackling of which requires fashioning novel and appropriate methodologies.

A major part of these challenges stems from expansionist and unilateralist measures implemented by the US statesmen over various time periods. Instead of subscribing to the global campaign for presenting a united front against the dangerous COVID-19, the US rulers have vehemently launched a blame-passing bid. Furthermore, with abuse of the circumstances induced by COVID-19 pandemic and brazen expression of disregard for the deaths and sufferings of millions of people, they are just seeking their immediate interests. All these seriously jeopardize the nature of multilateralism and all-inclusive development.

The global confrontation with the COVID-19 pandemic has showed again that humanity is facing a paradox: while COVID-19 has created a global challenge, the responses shown have been scattered and non-concentrated. Moreover, a number of countries refuse to abide by the agreements and rules they signed or played instrumental roles in their inception. They do not honor the foundation of multilateralism whose excellent goal is the rule of law, even under current special circumstances. Today, the US stands on the top of the law-breaking political systems.

Esteemed colleagues;

I believe that re-definition and reconstruction of the past defective multilateralism and its revision constitutes a global challenge for the today's world. The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated social and economic consequences have aggravated such a challenge.

Therefore, it is due that we as the speakers of parliaments and the true echoes of the voice of our people:

1. Make genuine multilateralism a true public demand at the global level; so long as this has not been realized, it is futile to talk about democracy and development for the planet
2. In parallel with redefining multilateralism, we should develop operational definitions for multilateral measures and display them in practice. Having said that addressing multilateralism is an important step under current sensitive circumstances. However, getting entangled within the frame work of speech therapy on multilateralism and its challenges has triggered further inequality in terms of development and consequent disappointment of many people around the world. It is thus necessary to practically prove that ideas, policies and plans are created in line with strengthening genuine and productive multilateralism to resolve the problems of every nation.
3. Currently, this belief has been further reinforced that either the international organizations such as the UN have failed to fulfill their inherent duties of establishing peace, security and sustainable development or their *raison d'être* and functional philosophy have been affected by the hegemonic and unilateral measures of a certain number of countries. It is within such joint international meetings that IPU and the UN should exercise efforts to restore the lost trust. The concrete results of multilateralism and the UN structural reforms for better and more effective performance should be seriously addressed at a joint IPU-UN committee. The results of this committee's meetings should also be shared with heads of states and speakers of parliaments.
4. Any unilateral and illegal policy, measure and proposal should be opposed at every level. Acts should also be passed in our parliaments in opposition to the said measures. We should demand our governments to seriously consider this issue at their international ties and arrangements.
5. The experience gained from managing and confronting the COVID-19 highlighted the need, at both the national and international level, for fruitful, true and inclusive multilateralism to help the nations across the globe. This requires presentation of a broad-based concept of multilateralism with active contributions from academia, media, non-governmental institutes, noble cultural centers, business and economic sectors, local communities, numerous non-state actors as well as state actors. Here, national and state-national parliaments play essential roles.

Honorable Speakers of Parliaments

To conclude, I would like to state that in today's world, multilateralism and global solidarity are not just an option; rather, they are the most important way out of global challenges and attaining sustainable and fair development, peace and security for future generations of humanity.

Entertaining a strong belief in the positive results of genuine and effective multilateralism and global solidarity for tackling the challenges, Iran's Islamic Parliament is committed to having potent and effective parliamentary cooperation with other parliaments of the world.

Thanks for your attention