

STATEMENT FOR FINAL REPORT OF 5th WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT

Distinguished Dignitaries and Colleagues,

- I cannot fathom a graver crisis than the present COVID-19 pandemic, which this world has faced since the Spanish flu pandemic a century ago. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has caused tragic deaths of more than 7.5 hundred thousand people, severe economic challenges and overall disruption of normal lifestyles. As Speaker of the Parliament of the world's largest functional Democracy, I express my deepest condolences to those who have lost their dear one's to the pandemic COVID-19 and also pray for quick recovery of those affected by its various manifestations.
- I would like to sincerely thank all the Medical and health care workers across the globe and also the providers of essential services. If anything has brought immense relief to us and reminded us of humanity in these troubled times then it is the sincerity, hard work and sacrifice that they have displayed to help and save numerous lives. I do not have enough words to express the deep appreciation and gratitude that we all feel towards the selfless efforts of these CORONA WARRIORS.
- As we are all aware this pandemic has not only created a health crisis of unprecedented scale but also caused tremendous economic destruction in its wake. To deal with this extraordinary crisis, in India we have declared a huge economic stimulus package of USD 260 Billion focusing on revival of agriculture, agri-business, MSMEs and other industries. Our schemes like "Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan" (Self-Reliant India Mission) will go a long way in empowering the poor, farmers, working class and middle class.
- During the initial months of the Pandemic we successfully made cash transfers to millions of targeted beneficiaries based on the trinity of a Unique Identification Number, a Bank account and a mobile connection.
- In the wake of restriction imposed by the COVID-19, we were quick in evacuating the stranded Indian nationals abroad through massive

missions such as Operation 'Vande Bharat' and Operation 'Samudra Setu'. Thousand of foreign nationals in India were also facilitated to return to their countries.

- I am also glad to share with you that even during the period of nationwide lockdown in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, our Parliament remained beside the people throughout. A COVID-19 Control Room was established in our Parliament and a grid was created with similar Control Rooms in all State Legislatures. This Control Room ensured uninterrupted contact between parliamentarians, legislators and the people and facilitated immediate relief to thousands of stranded migrant workers, patients and students within India and abroad with the help of local administration and our diplomatic Missions.
- Further, all the national and local representatives are taking effective steps in their constituencies to spread awareness about the pandemic and the ways to curb it.
- For the welfare and empowerment of returnee domestic migrant labourers from cities to far villages, we have recently launched a Garib Kalyan Rozgar Yojana (GKRA), a comprehensive employment generation and rural development scheme which would provide employment to migrant workers and labourers near their native place and ensure all-round development of the rural and backward areas. The Scheme is envisaged to be implemented with local initiatives and active participation of our grass-root level democratic institutions.
- Also, our "One Nation, One Ration Card" scheme is aiding in providing free food to the hungry and needy.
- Indian scientists are working tirelessly in tandem with their global brethren to find a vaccine against COVID-19 in order to find a permanent cure to the coronavirus disease.
- However, as we all know no nation big or small can tackle this pandemic alone. I, therefore, call for greater International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to encounter the challenge of COVID-19. In India we firmly believe in

the adage 'वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्' i.e. the entire world is one family. Accordingly, in this time of crisis, India has done its humble bit by providing medicines (including HCQ), equipment, ventilators, masks and sanitisers to 150 sister countries.

- My esteemed Friends, the present COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted to all of us that despite differences in our religions, customs, traditions, languages, geography, we are all part of one large global family and therefore, our wellbeing and prosperity is interdependent on each other. If ever there was any greater need for democratic leadership, international unity and cooperation, and effective multilateralism then it is now.
- Further, in order to tackle the destructive economic effects of pandemic COVID-19 and rebuild our economies, we need better multilateral cooperation among all nations. The crying need of the hour is that all countries whether developed or developing must come together to overcome this global crisis and work towards formation of a more inclusive and more prosperous society for all. As such, '**Planet and People**' must be the central theme around which multilateral actions revolve for realising a sustainable and inclusive world free of hunger and poverty, leading to an egalitarian society.
- There is no doubt that multilateralism has helped us to catch on with the global development perspectives and challenges, enabling mankind to grapple with issues like Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals. The globalization of the past few decades has enabled billions to rise from acute poverty and improved the quality of life, in terms of health, life expectancy, literacy, etc. With growth and development across the world, the aspirations of people are constantly changing to achieve better quality of life and enhanced opportunities. There are numerous best practices, which, if replicated across the globe, suiting the local needs and circumstances, can lead to a more developed and sustainable world.
- My peers, the theme of the 5th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament echoes the greater role for parliamentary leadership for establishing effective multilateralism. It inspires the Parliaments across the globe to forge multilateral partnerships in successfully fighting the pandemic COVID-19, achievement of the SDG's and

addressing other global developmental issues. Parliaments through Parliamentary diplomacy and Inter-Parliamentary dialogue can strengthen and provide a new dimension to multilateralism that is more inclusive, mindful and caring.

- In this context, the role of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) becomes all the more significant. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, over the past 130 years, has evolved as an important platform for promoting multilateralism and international cooperation in matters of global concern.
- The Parliamentarians as representatives of the diverse voices of the people across the earth have the mandate to secure peace and sustainable development for all people. The Parliamentarians know the ground reality and effectively reflect people's views and aspirations on global platforms so as to create synergies at these forums for common good. Therefore, as parliamentarians we must join hands to safeguard democracy and work in complete synergy to confront the challenges before the world and convert them into opportunities, to facilitate peace and prosperity in our respective countries, as well as the world.
- Friends, India has always believed in peaceful cooperation and shared prosperity between and among the countries. Our association with multilateral institutions focuses on an equitable world. For instance, India played a prominent role in the formulation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* adopted by the UN member countries in 2015, and much of our country's National Development Agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We have also taken the lead in various initiatives like the *International Solar Alliance and Coalition for Disaster Resilience Infrastructure*. Recently, India has also pledged to provide USD100 Million over the next decade for the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to promote South-South Cooperation and support developing countries in implementation of SDGs.
- I must share with you all that, in India, our Parliamentarians have been very pro-active in ensuring that the global development agenda is successfully implemented in the country. Through the devices of Parliamentary Questions and our robust Parliamentary Committee System, we have established a strong oversight mechanism to

regularly monitor the performance of the Government with regard to achievement of Agenda 2030. We have not only undertaken discussions on the floor of the House, but also have organised various symposiums, conferences and seminars from time to time for our Parliamentarians and Legislators from States for their capacity building in these domains. In 2017, in collaboration with IPU, our Parliament organized the 2nd South Asian Speakers Summit on Achieving SDGs. In March 2018, a National Legislators Conference on “We for Development” was organised in our Parliament for capacity building of our national and state legislators.

- My friends, these desperate times ask each one of us to join hands in providing effective multilateral leadership. Together we can build better and inclusive societies, strengthen democratic institutions, buttress the foundations of health and education, achieve the SDGs, fight against terrorism and hatred, ensure sustainable development and increase international cooperation and thereby create a better tomorrow for our future generations.
- I am sure, that our deliberations during the 5th WCSP will go a long way in promoting parliamentary leadership and strengthening multilateralism to achieve peace and sustainable development for all in these testing times and beyond.
- In the end, I wish all my fellow world citizens strength, resilience, courage and good health. Let us all hope and pray for the well being of the entire Planet.

.....*OM SHANTI*.....
(*May Peace Prevail*)

Thank you!

Jai Hind!