

**H.E. TIJJANI MUHAMMAD-BANDE,**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments**  
**(August 20, 2020)**

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Excellencies  
Speakers of Parliaments  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be here at the conclusion of a successful Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments which discussed *parliamentary responses to the pandemic as well as themes including global governance, sustainable economies and the climate emergency.*

I am grateful to Ms Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and members of the preparatory committee for their leadership. I also thank the speakers of parliaments that participated in this event for their constructive engagement in the process.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has facilitated dialogue among parliamentarians and offers practical support to its member parliaments since 1889. This support is crucial to promoting peace, democracy, human rights, gender equality, youth empowerment and sustainable development through political dialogue, cooperation and parliamentary action.

In these trying times brought about by the emergence of COVID-19, the support of parliaments around the world is important, as they facilitate government's effort to effectively tackle the consequence of the pandemic.

It is gratifying that today, you successfully adopted a declaration on "parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet", and reaffirmed the principles of the Universal Declaration on Democracy, promotion of fundamental rights of the individual, etcetera.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A lot of ground was covered across the various work streams during the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. I am grateful for the candid exchange of views on Climate change (and the Paris Agreement), issue of Migration and Refugees, Counter Terrorism and so on.

Effective parliaments around the globe make a difference in our lives, as they are at the heart of inclusive decision-making, shaping policies and making laws which respond to the needs of citizens.

Your tireless efforts amidst the pandemic have carried forward the vision of a parliamentary dimension to the work of the United Nations where ideas are shared, and optimism is nurtured.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2020 was supposed to kickstart the Decade of Action and Delivery for the Sustainable Development Goals. The emergence of COVID-19 earlier in the year is capable of disrupting this. However, if we continue to support each other, we can reduce the effect of the pandemic on the livelihood of billions of people around the world.

I therefore encourage parliaments around the world to continue to be involved in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, by strengthening their governments to cooperate more substantively with the international community. Also, I call upon the international community to stand up for and protect gender equality in all its forms and manifestations as stated in the declaration adopted today.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

For 75 years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations have worked side by side and created a lasting impact along the way. May the great spirit of cooperation continue to grow stronger.

Thank you.