



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Baku Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Parliamentary
Network

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Your Excellency, Madam Speaker of the Parliament of Azerbaijan,
Distinguished Speakers of Parliament,
Honorable Parliamentarians,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my distinct pleasure to address this first Conference of the newly established Parliamentary Network of the Non-Aligned Movement. The IPU was honoured to contribute to the inception of the parliamentary dimension to the work of NAM, and to be part of the official launch of the Network on the occasion of the 143rd IPU Assembly in Madrid in November of last year. Madam Speaker, we commend you for your leadership and wish you and your colleagues full success in all of your efforts.

I deeply believe that now, more than ever before, parliamentary diplomacy is called upon to play a critical role in addressing the daunting challenges facing our global community: the weakening of the rules-based international system with the United Nations at its core, the climate emergency, the delayed post-pandemic recovery and the looming food and energy crises, to name just a few. As parliamentarians and representatives of the people, you can help build bridges of dialogue, understanding and cooperation with a view to shaping and implementing solutions for a better future.

Last year, when we came together at the highest level at the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Vienna, we pledged to exercise parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and the planet. Earlier this year in March, when our parliaments met in Nusa Dua for the 144th IPU Assembly, we adopted highly topical resolutions on rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace, as well as on the peaceful resolution of conflict in keeping with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. We have the tools at our disposal - the time has come to turn words into action.

Throughout its long and distinguished history, the Non-Aligned Movement has demonstrated its ability to build bridges and help overcome division and confrontation. The IPU looks forward to developing close cooperation with the NAM Parliamentary Network, as we are driven by the same values and ideals. As noted in our new Strategy for 2022-2026, these include equality, inclusiveness, respect, integrity and solidarity – fostering a sense of togetherness and unity of interests for the world parliamentary community.

Needless to say, there is also much that we can do at the national level, learning from the good practices from around the world, to render our own parliaments stronger and more effective, more inclusive and representative of the diversity within society, more resilient and innovative. In everything that we do, we should aim to show that accountability at all levels can indeed deliver results, help gain the trust of our citizens, and build more peaceful and prosperous societies.

Clearly, we need all hands on deck to secure the well-being of our citizens. Which is why we must work to empower women, whose contribution is vital to the sustainable development of all of our countries. We must work together to promote the empowerment of women, to tackle all forms of discrimination against them, and to involve women in all stages of decision-making. At the IPU we have adapted our rules and procedures to make sure we are a truly gender-sensitive institution, and we look forward to sharing this experience with you.

We also know that young people must be given the opportunity to play a robust role in shaping the society of tomorrow. Their prospects for a better future are sorely lacking, especially during this time of hardship and uncertainty. Directionless, they are easy prey for those peddling demagoguery based on exclusion, discrimination and xenophobia - whereas in fact they can and should contribute to the vitality and richness of society. We should help young people from all walks of life be more involved in political life and in decision-making processes. I would therefore call upon you all to join us in our campaign I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament.

There is much work ahead, but we believe that through solidarity, joint action and unity of purpose we can better meet the needs and expectations of our citizens.

Again, I would like to congratulate you on the establishment of the Parliamentary Network of the Non-Aligned Movement, to wish you full success in your deliberations and actions, and to assure you of the IPU's commitment to work together with you in meeting our shared objectives of world peace, cooperation among peoples and the solid establishment of strong and representative institutions.

Thank you.