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Speech by

**His Excellency Councilor Ahmed bin Ibrahim Rashid Al Mulla
Speaker of the Council of Representatives - Kingdom of
Bahrain
Chairman of the IPU Executive Committee**

Addressed to the

**139th Assembly of the IPU
(Geneva, Switzerland, 14-18 October 2018)**

In the name of Allah the Most Merciful

*H.E. Ms. Gabriela Barron, IPU President
Your Excellency's- Heads of Parliaments and Delegations
H.E. Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General*

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

We are glad to participate with you in this valuable meeting, which addresses an important theme, "Parliamentary leadership in promoting peace and development in the age of innovation and technological change". Nevertheless, leadership in any institution or organization, especially in parliaments, will suffer any failure in its work, and at the same time this leadership will be behind any significant development or progress reached by one or another institution.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The reform project of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain urged to achieve peace, comprehensive development and equality among citizens. The National Action Charter and the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain have laid down the basic principles of justice, freedom, democracy and promoted the culture of human rights, dialogue, peaceful coexistence, tolerance and encouraged the acceptance of others; from different religions and ideologies.

In various spheres, comprehensive development is of paramount importance in any country or society. Without science and education, our societies cannot grow and develop, nor can we achieve peace or reach to comprehensive and sustainable development goals except with science

and education. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us as parliamentary leaders to place the issues of development and peace at the top of our priorities by urging ourselves and calling on our parliaments and governments to give more attention to the issues of sustainable development in various fields; social, economic, cultural and humanitarian through the enactment of legislation and laws, that addresses this issue.

I note in here that the contribution of our legislative institutions, parliaments and parliamentary leaders in solving unresolved problems through dialogue, understanding and by peaceful means promotes peace and stability, and this prompts sustainable development.

In the same vein, I would like to assure you that my country, the Kingdom of Bahrain has over the past decades, ensured having distinct, equitable and comprehensive education for all people, and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all its citizens and also its residents, in accordance with the Constitution, whereas my country provides basic education for all and its free of charge.

In addition to the concern of His Majesty the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain and his numerous initiatives in the field of science and education and the most important is the UNESCO Prize, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa award for the use of information technology and communication in education, as well as the launch of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince the government innovation competition (idea) for the employees of the government sector in order to promote a culture of creativity and innovation as a key driver for the development and crystallization of creative ideas that raise the level of work and achievement and to promote trends and initiatives.

It is well known that this approach achieves the fourth objective of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, which has made the Kingdom of Bahrain a distinguished place in this respect, by winning numerous awards from international and regional organizations working in this field.

Moreover, at the level of the Council of Representatives in our country, we have several initiatives in this regard, we have used parliamentary

technology in our various fields of work, and this has contributed clearly in increasing the level of achievement, in the way and mechanisms of using this technology, which has reflected positively on the level of performance in the parliamentary work.

As we are discussing parliamentary leadership in promoting peace and development in the age of innovation and technological change, we must devise new ways to directly assess the scientific and technological work of parliamentarians, especially the exchange of scientific and technological expertise between our institutions and parliaments, as well as to recognize each other's efforts. Some of this might be in the empowerment of science and technology, and the role of our parliaments in this regard, whether by enacting legislation or approving conventions that raise the value of science, encourage innovation and urges creativity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If sustainable development requires the establishment of peace, stability and security to achieve its objectives, we must have, as representatives of peoples, a firm stance against the violations and abuses towards peoples that are still under occupation, such as the brotherly Palestinian people, in light of the tendency of some to reduce the international aid provided to UNRWA, which threatens the educational, health and living future of Palestinian people who are depending mainly on the Agency's assistance.

The Kingdom of Bahrain deplors that the reduction of aid to UNRWA has begun to adversely affect the work of the two libraries established by Bahrain in Gaza Strip, which threatens the scientific and cultural future of thousands of researchers and intellectuals in Palestine. In this sense we support the proposal which was coincided by the Arab and Islamic parliamentary group on the inclusion of an item concerned in tackling the serious deficit problem in the UNRWA agency budget. It is a humanitarian blockade and a violation to the international law. In order to ensure the continuity of its services to Palestinian refugees, discuss the implications of the US decision to stop aid to UNRWA, and assess the impact of this resolution on the Palestinian issue as a whole; we thank and appreciate the

State of Kuwait and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for submitting this proposal.

We would also like to commend the position of the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on its pivotal role in supporting humanitarian causes throughout the world. In this context, the Inter-Parliamentary Group of the Kingdom of Bahrain affirms its full solidarity with Saudi Arabia against all those who attempt to undermine it. We reject the attempts that undermine its policy, position and sovereignty.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We, as parliamentary leaders, carry a great responsibility and a huge trust at this historic moment to unite efforts for the establishment of peace and development in an innovative and unconventional way, in accordance with the principles and developments of the era through its methods and technological means. In order for our future generations to enjoy a glorious future, let us unite our work in word and deed to achieve the goals of sustainable development for our world.

Thank you for listening.

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.