

Mr. Zatulin's address to the IPU

Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy

Mme President of the IPU,

Secretary General of the IPU,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Participants,

Representing the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy under the Observer status at one more General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), I have the great pleasure to convey to you the greetings of the IAO Secretary General, Mr. Andreas Michailidis, and the President of the IAO General Assembly, Mr. Sergei Gavrilov.

The Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO) is a political organization that has been operating since 1993, seated in the Hellenic Parliament, Athens. This initiative stemmed from the Parliaments of Russia and Greece, and currently the I.A.O. consists of official Parliamentary delegations from twenty-five countries, as well as five groups of MPs from other Parliaments. The goal of the Organization is to develop multi-level political and cultural activity towards encouraging contacts and broadening relations of trust, understanding current political phenomena and social movements and highlighting the elements of Christianity, Orthodoxy, that have a positive impact on mutual understanding among cultures.

Concerning the topic of the Central Discussion on *«Parliamentary leadership in promoting peace and growth in the era of innovation and technological changes»*, I am particularly pleased recalling the views that the IAO has been expressing for many years, which have been captured in several of its documents and have influenced many documents of other Organizations.

The Declaration adopted in the context of the 25th anniversary General Assembly this year in Athens, reminds that the IAO: *«Follows with particular interest the advance of modern technology and welcomes its positive effects on the facilitation of people's lives. In parallel, it expresses its concern over the uncontrollable spread of artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as the general negative consequences they may have on the environment and the freedom of expression and personality, especially of young people»*.

Furthermore, in older declarations and resolutions, we conclude that *«The world of our era stands in apprehension and uncertainty before the almighty technical inventions, the new technological achievements and globalisation. These new data have altered the political and social "status" that was created after the October revolution in Russia and World War Two. They have in fact completely reversed the financial and production relations in many western countries»*. That *«...the 'government' and the natural power agents are awkwardly running behind developments, incapable even now*

to establish managing rules for economic development and for the use of the new technological means».

At the same time, though, our Organization is concerned over the risks involved in the use of new technologies without any rules, and we express our concern *«on the way countries, societies, groups of individuals and individuals may choose to take advantage of these immense possibilities. Man should be protected as a value, and social balance and traditions should be respected and remain intact».* We, thus, conclude that *«when scientific discovery is not combined with reverence towards man but is coupled with arrogance and prompted only by financial interests, the effect of science may be proved harmful upon humankind».*

Moreover, we promoted institutional proposals, stressing that *«New technologies, which are useful means for direct democracy and citizens' involvement in sociopolitical developments, in the hands of cunning "economic operators" turn real economy into a game of chance with stock-market speculation, without any reference whatsoever to the real economic and social indicators».*

To conclude, new technologies should not be demonized; on the contrary, solutions need to be found to display and standardize their proper use. I am convinced that the discussion to follow will take us one step closer to this goal.

Thank you very much and I wish every success to your works!