

139th IPU ASSEMBLY

‘Parliamentary leadership in promoting peace and development in the age of innovation and technological change’

Geneva, 15 October 2018

Honourable Chair,

Distinguished colleagues,

We are witnessing fast technological changes. They affect the basis of the usual social and economic conditions all over the world. We are now deep into the fourth industrial revolution, with no turning back. Therefore, our parliaments need to be prepared for the digital age. We need to be prepared for the new relations between a man and society, the means of fast and massive communication, clean technologies, robotics, artificial intelligence, nano- and bio-technology. In the interest of development of society and every individual, it is our obligation to embrace these changes. We must enable modernisation, openness and more efficient parliaments. This will prepare them to answer the requirements and challenges imposed by the future.

Besides the development of society, the basic value we need to preserve and cherish is peace. Every well-ordered society and a political community strives for peace and prosperity. Without peace and stability there can be no development, and vice versa. Lack of development, or stagnation, leads to conflicts. This is where we have a special responsibility, as representatives of people and societies. This is why I would like to commend the IPU's initiative "Science for Peace" together with CERN (*European Organisation for Nuclear Research*). It brings scientists and MPs to the same table, to jointly address future challenges.

Distinguished colleagues,

Information and digital revolution are a new stage in the development of human kind. We witness positive and negative sides of the technological development daily. On the one hand, there are improved work processes, higher productivity, cleaner technologies, and longer life expectancy. On the other hand, there are lack of empathy and solidarity, greater social differences, and so on. A person of the 21st century needs to be digitally trained and to understand new technologies. In this regard, parliaments play an important role. They need to help create new

educational systems. These systems must be used for training an individual to understand and manage new technologies, in a knowledge-based digital economy. Like some other countries, Serbia has recognised this challenge. We see it as a unique opportunity for development as well. Therefore, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has included the education of people for the new digital age into its priority goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As defined in the Goal 9 of the UN Agenda 2030, it is our duty to promote scientific researches, to improve technological possibilities of the industrial sectors, foster innovation, to increase the number of employees in the field of research and development, as well as to increase public and private spending for research and development. The goals are well set, and now it is their implementation that is important.

Serbia has developed parliamentary mechanisms for monitoring SDG implementation. Our Focus Group for the implementation is closely following the work of the Government, and it is involved in defining the priorities. A member of our delegation is a rapporteur for the Committee on Sustainable Development,

Finance and Trade on the issue: 'The role of fair and free trade and investment in achieving the SDGs, especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialization and innovation'.

The National Assembly has the Committee for Education, Science and Technological Development. Its competences include the issues of scientific and technological development and innovation policies, as well as the development of information society and information structure. The role of this Committee is to monitor the implementation of Goal 9, Agenda 2030 and relevant targets. The Republic of Serbia is focused on the implementation of new technologies and aims, to adapt to digital changes. E-Parliament portal has been working at the National Assembly for several years now. The e-Government and e-Administration applications are fully operational, and their capacities and possibilities are enhanced daily.

We are trying to modernise our Parliament more, by building up electronic and digital systems. Through the cooperation with scientific institutions, such as the Law School, Institute of Comparative Law, Faculty of Political Sciences and Institute of International Politics and Economics, we are trying to strengthen scientific

capacities and improve procedures. Thereby, we would like to make a Parliament which is a strong, effective, responsible and transparent institution.

Distinguished colleagues,

In the conclusion, I would like to stress that we should be prepared for the present changes, and those yet to come. Turned towards the future, the Republic of Serbia is decided to keep fully contributing to joint development and keeping of regional stability. We will continue with this agenda, regardless of the difficulties and obstacles from the past periods of crises. Such a goal cannot be reached without a modern and open Parliament, a key institution of each democratic political system. Only such Parliament can lead a society forward.

Thank you for your attention!