



Asian Parliamentary Assembly
Secretariat

**PROVISIONAL DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION
for
PROTECTING AND RESPECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ASIA**

July 2007

COGNIZANT of the fact that Asia has been the cradle of the great religions, ancient civilizations and cultures;

INSPIRED by the Charter of Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) and based on the decision of Tehran Declaration;

EMPHASIZING that cultural diversity, as an inevitable reality, is conducive to better appreciation of different communities and individuals and binds them together, relating past human experiences to the future;

EMPHASIZING that humanity enjoys a unified and essential nature, cultural diversity help to bring about creativity, innovation and sustainable development;

BEING AWARE that cultural diversity as well as lingual plurality while reflect different aspects of human life in Asia, it facilitates the enrichment of each culture and provide the ground for constructive interactions among them;

CONSIDERING that long-lasting peace depends on respect for cultural and value systems of different communities and each human being grows within a specific culture;

AFFIRMING that cultural rights is an integral part of citizenship as well as human rights, with due consideration to national, historical and cultural characteristics of each Asian nations;

ENCOURAGING dialogue and understanding among cultures and religions to fostering Asian values and enhancing cooperation, aimed at promotion of peace and friendship as well as the prevention of war and violence;

CONSCIOUS OF the fact that globalization has brought challenges in regard to cultural identities and has undermined the capacities of cultural diversity;

REAFFIRMING that in the new world situation cultural diversity illustrates the strength of Asia;

To formulate policies and strategies to protect and respect cultural diversity at both regional and continental levels, we, the members of Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), approve the establishment of a “Body” with the following mandates:

To introduce Asia as the ancient cultural continent with great spiritual and material capacities in order to enhance cooperation and integration among Asian nations,

To facilitate exchange and interaction in art and cultural fields such as music, literature, sport and film industry for promotion of cooperation and understanding,

To invite countries to formulate their school curriculum in such a way that while promoting national and cultural identity, it encourages students to respect cultural diversity and to learn other cultures and languages,

To promote educational and cultural exchanges such as scholarship, comparative studies, establishment of cultural “chairs” in universities, in order to remove misperceptions and enhance solidarity among cultures,

To encourage departments of higher education in Asian countries to provide objective and accurate information in regard to different religions to promote constructive and respectful interactions among them,

To formulate common cultural policies for production of documentaries such as movies and books regarding cultural diversity of each other,

To provide grounds for promoting knowledge and understanding among cultures in Asia and fostering Dialogue among cultures and civilizations in order to consolidate peace and friendship,

To facilitate an Asian cross cultural program through easy and rapid access to internet for general public in such a way that exchange of ideas and views can easily be achieved,

To assist holding conferences, seminars and workshops, virtual and non virtual, with participation of intellectuals and scholars to enhance dialogue and understanding,

To encourage media, research and educational institutions as well as non governmental organizations (NGO) to support dialogue among cultures and protect different cultural identities,

To build up a joint action to utilize information technology to protect and promote cultural, national and ethnic identities of Asian nations in order to confront negative impact of globalization,

To develop necessary mechanism for utilizing variety of cultural capacities in economic development,

To help the expansion of tourism in Asia in order to attain objective knowledge of different life styles and constructive interaction among Asian countries,

To formulate cultural policies for protecting and introducing Asian cultural heritage and increase cooperation to combat smuggling and illicit traffic of cultural items,

To encourage big economic institutions to respect cultural diversity and allocate a percentage of their income for promotion of cultural identities,

To prepare a program for utilizing the capacities of specialized international organizations such as UNESCO, ISESCO, to introduce Asian culture in World community,

To help countries to prepare annual report concerning the implementation of this plan of action and to review current challenges and possible opportunities.