

Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)



SG/Rep/2008/02
30 April 2008

Report of APA Secretary-General

On

Enhancing Cooperation Between

APA Member Parliaments and their

Governments

For

Implementation of APA Decisions



SG/Rep/2008/02
30 April 2008

- 1- The Second Session of the APA Plenary decided in paragraph 24 of Tehran Declaration (2007) contained in ... to

Further discuss the modalities of efficient cooperation and coordination between the APA and respective governments. In this respect, we ask the Secretary-General of the APA to pursue the formation of an ad hoc Committee and prepare all documents required for its work. The ad hoc Committee shall hold at least one meeting before the next session of the Plenary and submit its final report to it.

- 2- The Secretary-General presents this report to the ad hoc committee for its consideration. The Secretariat will provide to the ad hoc committee views and proposals which may be received from Member Parliaments on the subjects. On the basis of the deliberations in the ad hoc committee, a report with draft recommendation will be submitted to the Plenary for a decision.
- 3- APA is uniquely placed to adopt important decisions to enhance political, economic and cultural cooperation to serve the interests of all Asian countries with a view to achieving the ultimate objective of greater integration in Asia. The fact that APA is composed of parliaments is an asset and not a challenge for implementation of its decisions. Each national parliament has the power to enact, if it so chooses, domestic legislations along the lines of the decisions adopted by the APA. In most cases when a national parliament decides to pass a law that corresponds to an APA decision, then the respective government will enforce that law in accordance with its national constitution and procedures. Therefore, the more the APA decisions are timely, relevant and responsive to the real needs and interests of its members, and are seen as such, the more likely it is to secure the interest and engagement of governments. APA decisions may be implemented either through domestic legislation of national parliaments or administrative decisions of governments, both of which could only be done on a voluntary basis. The more the government officials are involved in the deliberations and decisions of the APA, the more likely it is that the APA decisions are to be implemented.
- 4- There are some instances of close cooperation between parliaments and governments at a continent level, like that in Europe. European integration has its own history and particularities. It was founded on many social and cultural common grounds and it charted its way through structural adjustments on the basis of several treaties. Asia is unique and it needs to develop closer cooperation and greater integration that suits its diverse culture and way of life. Asia is yet to develop the ground for treaty-based adjustment and change. Asia needs to adopt a forward-looking and realistic approach to promoting



cooperation between governments and parliaments to achieve greater integration in Asia. This approach must embody the fact that despite the diversity of culture, political and economic experiences that are the hallmark of Asia, greater Asian cooperation and integration is both achievable and beneficial to all peoples in Asia. It would, moreover, help promote global peace and security. Therefore, APA needs to sow the seed for such forward-looking approach to grow naturally. The key is to promote the culture of cooperation and to enhance the awareness that integration helps all Asians and serves the cause of humanity at large. This can be done through closer cooperation and partnership of governments and parliaments in Asia to give greater voice to the decisions of the APA as called for by Rule 46 (2) of the APA Rules of Procedure.

- 5- To this end, APA may wish to consider adopting some modest steps that are geared to drawing interest from, and enhance cooperation of, governments to the work of the APA, while observing the principle of separation of powers:
 - 5.1 Concerned representative(s) of governments of APA Member and Observer Parliaments are to be invited to participate in APA meetings, including the Plenary and those of the Standing and Sub-Committees. They may share their expert views with their respective APA Delegates so as to further enrich the APA deliberations. Such participation allows for greater interaction between the government representatives concerned and the APA delegates, leading to a more informed and implement-able decision by the APA.
 - 5.2 The governments of APA Member and Observer Parliaments are invited to appoint representatives at the level of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to pursue all APA meetings and deliberations and convey related information to their governments. They also reflect their governments' viewpoints to their respective APA delegates to be considered in its future planning and decisions.
 - 5.3 The APA Secretary-General may be mandated by APA to communicate, on a regular basis, with a liaison bureau in the office of the Foreign Minister of APA Member and Observer Parliaments about APA decisions, status of their implementation, and programs. APA Member and Observer Parliaments may wish to coordinate with their Minister of Foreign Affairs to identify such liaison bureau and convey that to the Secretariat.
 - 5.4 APA may urge Member Parliaments to consider passing, as domestic legislation, those decisions of APA which expressly make such request, and is designed as model legislation.



SG/Rep/2008/02
30 April 2008

- 5.5 (Some) APA (Member Parliaments may wish to adopt common legislations on issues of particular interest to both APA Parliaments and their governments. To start with, such issues may include improving and promoting sports, combating narcotic drugs, relief work at the times of natural disasters.
 - 5.6 Ministers of Foreign Affairs (or their deputies) of APA Member and Observer Parliaments are urged to participate in the plenary session of the APA and to exchange views on the most significant and urgent issues in Asia and on the APA agenda.
 - 5.7 Member Parliaments are urged to propose agenda items in consultation and coordination with their respective governments. It is preferable to make Proposals that have the support of the respective governments and have the most number of co-sponsors.
- 6- The ad hoc committee may consider this item as a cross cutting issue that needs to be under constant review and adjustment. It may wish to recommend to the Plenary to establish a Sub-Committee under the Political Standing Committee to review annually the progress on the proposals concerning the procedure and structure of "Enhancing Cooperation between APA Member Parliaments and their Governments for Implementation of APA Decisions." The ad hoc Committee may recommend that government representatives be invited to participate and advise, where appropriate, their APA delegates during the deliberation of the Sub-Committee.