



Report of the 7th APA Plenary Lahore, Pakistan

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Report by H.E. Dr. Masoud Islami Acting Secretary-General of Asian Parliamentary Assembly Before the 7th APA Plenary Session

Lahore, Pakistan
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**Mr. President,
Distinguished Speakers,
Honorable Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Allow me, at the outset, to express my sincere gratitude to the Senate of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for its generous hospitality and for the leadership of its Chairman, honorable Honorable Mr. Syed Nayyer Hussain Bokhari in organizing the 7th APA Plenary Session here in Lahore, the cultural capital of the great Nation of Pakistan. I would also like to thank Honorable Senator Mushahid Hossein Seyyed, Chairman of the Organizing Committee for his outstanding chairmanship. I should also extend my sincere appreciation to all members of the local secretariat of the plenary session for the excellent job they have done to bring us together here today.

This is inspiring an occasion indeed for all of us to hold our Plenary gathering in the city of Lahore, the townhome of Allama Iqbal, the great philosopher, prominent thinker, and excellent poet, whose ideas and ideals influenced millions of people in Asia and beyond calling for transcending borders of division and resurrection to our very selves and rebuilding our identity on the solid foundations of human dignity. The Asian Parliamentary Assembly will only be achieving its goals if it appreciates and cherishes the Asian heritage that nobles like Allama Iqbal have offered.

**Mr. President,
Honorable delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Our organization has been established to give a new boost to parliamentary diplomacy in Asia and reap the benefits of it in the interest of all people living in this great continent. The ultimate objective of this great inter-parliamentary organization is to pave the way for an Asian Parliament which would reflect our common aspiration for regional integration and would also serve our collective interests at the world level.

In this context, I wish to reiterate the need for APA to avail itself of the views and visions of all parliamentarians in Asia, in general, and parliamentarians of its member parliaments, in particular, in order to expand the network of its parliamentary diplomacy and to undertake a more active role in decision-making processes at national and regional levels.





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The APA agenda of work in social-cultural, economic and political areas is relevant and potent. It addresses the most pressing challenges before Asia. From promotion of friendship and cooperation in Asia, to synergizing parliamentary and governmental decision-makings, from combating corruption to working together to promote inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue, from collective efforts to eradicate poverty to measures required for health equity; and from fighting terrorism and calling for a world without violence and extremism to curbing corruption and organized crimes.

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,**

I have the pleasure of reporting to you that since the 6th Plenary Session in 2013, we have been quite successful in organizing the all the events which had been planned. Before us today, there are 19 important draft resolutions on political; economic; environmental; social and cultural issues, which have been tabled and discussed in details in the respective APA Standing Committees and have been subsequently considered by the Executive Council meetings both in Geneva in October this year and in Lahore just yesterday. The draft resolutions include some old and some new subject matters and are to be considered for final adoption by this Plenary Session. I have outlined the topics of draft resolutions according to their respective Standing Committee in the following manner:

The APA Standing Committee on Political Affairs held its meeting on 15 May 2014 in Ankara. The Committee considered and deliberated a range of important issues and adopted the following four draft resolutions on:

- ✓ Measures and Methods of Materialization of Principles of Friendship and Cooperation in Asia
- ✓ Engaging APA with Asian Governments and Inter-Governmental Organizations
- ✓ Denunciation of Terrorism and Violent Extremism
- ✓ Important Political Developments in Asia

The APA Standing Committee on Economic and Environmental Affairs held its meeting on 2-5 June 2014 in Jakarta. The Committee considered and deliberated a range of important issues and adopted the following five draft resolutions on:





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- ✓ Integrated Energy Market in Asia
- ✓ Financial Affairs for the Countries of APA Member Parliaments
- ✓ Environmental Issues, Global Warming, Climate Change, and Planting Billions of Trees Throughout Asia
- ✓ Alleviating Poverty in Asia

The APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs was supposed to be held in Bahrain. However, since the Parliament of Bahrain indicated its inability to host the meeting, it was held in Tehran on 12 August 2014. The Committee considered and deliberated a range of important issues and adopted the following ten draft resolutions on:

- ✓ Measures to Promote Cultural Diversity and Protect Cultural Heritage in Asia
- ✓ Coping with Globalization in Asia
- ✓ Collaboration on Health Equity in Asia
- ✓ Information and Communication Technology “ICT”
- ✓ Coordinating Meeting of APA Women Parliamentarians
- ✓ Asian Parliamentarians against Corruption
- ✓ Legal and Legislative Cooperation in Combating the Smuggling of Cultural Items in Asia
- ✓ Effective Cooperation in Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking in Asia
- ✓ Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in Asia

The APA Ad Hoc Committee on Financial and Staff Regulations held its meeting on 25 June 2014 in Cambodia. The Committee considered and deliberated a range of important issues and adopted the following draft resolution on:

- ✓ APA Financial and Staff Regulations





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Mr. President; Distinguished Delegates

Another significant initiative which was taken by the APA President this year was the organization of a special meeting of the APA Troika Plus in Islamabad. The meeting was very successful in attracting participation of high-level delegations from many APA Member parliaments. Upon the request by the APA President, the Secretariat had prepared a special and substantive report on the idea of moving towards an Asian Parliament entitled: *The Foundations of an Asian Parliament*. The report was most welcomed by the participants and many aspects of the idea were deliberated upon. It was decided that the report should be given further consideration by all APA Member Parliaments and certain measures should be taken for taking the initiative steps further. A special meeting has been organized within the program of the 7th Plenary in order to give the issue more focused attention.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates

Despite all its great potentials and accomplishments, the remarkable role of the APA, as the Parliamentary voice of Asia, in influencing the turn of events in Asia is yet to be attained. The APA is in need of mechanisms to pursue the realization of its thoughtful resolutions. The Organization also needs to strengthen its relevance to current developments throughout Asia and beyond so it could further contribute to the prosperity, development, peace, and improvement of living conditions in the region.

The APA 7th Plenary, inspired by its meaningful theme: *Quest for Asian Parliament in the Asian Century*, has a great deal of important subject matters on its agenda. Besides the speeches and remarks by dignitaries and parliamentary leaders of both the host and the guest countries during the general debate, we expect to have constructive discussions on various topics in our three standing committees meetings. I am confident that by the end of this Plenary Session and as the result of thoughtful and vigorous debates and deliberations, we will have achieved yet another successful event and shall move forward in our right direction which is the direction of peace, prosperity, cooperation, and harmony among all Asian nations.

Thank you Mr. President.

