



- ***Honourable visiting Deputy Speakers and Delegates.***
- ***Raja Zafarul Haq sb Leader of House and Leader of Pakistan Parliamentary Delegation***
- ***Dr. Masud Eslami, Assistant Secretary-General  
APA***
- ***Excellencies, Dignitaries.***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen!***

**Assalam-o-Alaikum and a very Good Morning!**

It is indeed a privilege and pleasure to have among us our distinguished colleagues, friends and partners from across the APA spectrum at this first Troika-Plus meeting.

Your presence here is indicative of your strong commitment and resolve towards pursuing the APA objectives, as also agreed upon in the 6<sup>th</sup> Plenary held here in Islamabad, and duly manifested in the Islamabad declaration.

While I welcome you with sincerest sentiments of goodwill and bonhomie, I am optimistic that this Troika-plus meeting and other initiatives afterwards would help us to sort out the intricacies of regional

integration, and inch closer to establishing a truly representative and all-inclusive Asian Parliament, a shared dream.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen!*

For Asian nations, establishment of Asian Parliament, which promises prized dividends such as Economic, Trade and Energy integration, liberal visa and travel regime, inter-cultural and inter-faith harmony, amicable dispute and conflict resolution, and a joint front against the rising specter of terrorism, is a dream worth chasing after.

However, achievement of the dream of Asian Century and Asian Parliament are not without certain challenges that APA must persevere against.

- The greatest challenge that now lies before us is to make the Asian economic and cultural supremacy sustain for the mutual good and betterment of all Asian states.
- The challenge also lies in moving forward and beyond creating oases of success and progress amidst a desert of deprivation, and lack of access to a better brighter and dignified life.
- The challenge lies in turning the whole desert into an oasis where our peoples can live a life of equality and justice, and whereby the very nectar of progress and prosperity trickles down to the grassroots and nourishes the very socio-

economic foundations of the nations across Asian sub-regions.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen!*

Under the charter and rules of APA, the mechanism of Troika-plus meetings is very important and significant as it helps connect the past, present and future of the forum in order to maintain continuity.

The present Troika-plus meeting ponders over historic and critical issues such as establishment of Asian Parliament and APA's connectivity with other regional multi-lateral forums, and ways and means to curb violence, promote dialogue and peace in Asian sub-regions.

I am optimistic that this Troika meeting will help arrive at concrete decisions and solutions to all items placed on its agenda.

As for establishment of Asian Parliament, while a detailed plan of action and modalities may be fine tuned as this consultative process continues, I personally visualize a mega parliamentary forum, encompassing regional sub unions and multilateral forums such as South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Such a model will ensure that integration of the Asian Continent takes place in a sustainable and mutually beneficial manner.

***Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen!***

This Troika-plus meeting will also deliberate the way and means to curb violence and promote dialogue and peace in Asian sub-region at a time when global terrorism happens to weigh down heavily on regional economies, especially fragile ones. We are confronted with formidable challenges in the form of militancy and extremist mindset.

In this scenario, dialogue among religions and cultures in Asia is the very appropriate solution, the most effective device to ensure human co-existence in peace, comprehensive and sustainable development in our present time.

It is the people, and the people alone, who can decide about the future of South Asia, and APA, being the institutional voice of Asian Parliaments, must take the lead from front in creating viable mechanism geared towards promoting harmony and dialogue.

However, it's time for dialogue to go beyond the political and scholastic fora and permeate into the core of exchanges and joint actions of all social sectors.

***Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen!***

Pakistan is a peace-loving nation and we are willing to go an extra mile to resolve all issues through dialogue. We sincerely hope that the solutions we achieve are just, principled and long lasting.

We have rendered innumerable services for world peace. Our peacekeepers have laid down their lives in promoting global peace in various UN Missions across the world. Even today, the valiant personnel of our armed and paramilitary forces and law-enforcement agencies are rendering precious sacrifices of their lives as we fight head on the global war on terror.

Our future generations have great expectations from us for a better and brighter future. Only an environment of peace and stability can guarantee that their rightful aspirations can be fulfilled.

***Excellencies,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen!***

Together, we must strengthen the forum of APA as a platform where political, ethnic and cultural divergences can be converted into peaceful convergences through dialogue, mutual understanding, respect tolerance and co-existence.

We have no dearth of resources or quality human capital and determination. By intensifying cooperation on the bilateral and regional levels, we can use these valued assets to our advantage in tiding over our extraordinary challenges and realizing the vast opportunities before us.

***Excellencies,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen!***

While we will deliberate in the following Sessions about the strategy to establish Asian Parliament, I would like to share with you my

idea and plan of action to take a decisive step in the matter through a Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the APA member parliaments.

While the time and modalities of this proposed conference may be finalized later on, I avidly look forward to hearing your valuable suggestions and proposals in this regard.

While deliberating up on or laying the foundations of an Asian Parliament, we must keep in mind that it is a long and challenging process that will take sustained efforts spread over many years and many areas and fields required for trans-national regional or continental integration.

With these words, I hope that deliberations during this Troika-plus meeting will lead to the achievement of our common aspirations towards the prosperity, peace and well-being of Asian people and nations.

**Thank You!**

**Pakistan Paindabad.**

**Welcome Address by  
Hon'ble Syed Nayyer Hussain Bokhari,  
APA President and Chairman Senate of Pakistan  
First Troika- Plus meeting of APA  
27<sup>th</sup> May, 2014**