

**Report of**

**APA Coordinating Meeting**

**On the Sideline of the 141st IPU Assembly**

**October 13, 2019**

**Belgrade (Serbia)**

Asian Parliamentary Assembly

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APA Coordination Meeting was held on October 13 2019 alongside the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade- Serbia with Professor *Mustafa Şentop,* Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey in chair. Delegates from 21 member parliaments attended the meeting as follows:

*Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Iran, Iraq Jordan, Kuwait, Mongolia, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka , Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirate, Arab Parliament,*

*\* Qatar attended as observer*

Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi, APA Secretary General, started the meeting with a short welcome remark, followed by presentation of the draft Agenda of the meeting, which was unanimously adopted by the participants.

Then, the Chairperson of the Meeting, Professor *Mustafa Şentop*, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, in his capacity as President of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly delivered his opening remarks.

1. **Opening Address by Professor Mustafa *Şentop*,**

In his opening remarks, Prof. *Şentop* welcomed the audience for their participation at this meeting as an extremely important platform for parliamentary diplomacy.

He touched on APA’s main objective which seeks to enhance inter parliamentary cooperation for peace, prosperity, economic and social relations in the Asian region.

He continued, “Grand National Assembly of Turkey and its Speaker has contributed to the institutional development of APA, during the past two year term of APA Presidency in order to strengthen our inter-parliamentary relations.

In this context, he added, “we are going to hold the 1st Executive Council Meeting late this month as part of our active presence both in the field and at the table and also as part of our duty to develop our relations with all countries regardless of their distance. It is also an important part of our foreign policy to develop ties not only with the Asia-Pacific and ASEAN member countries in the region, but also with all parts of the world.”

“We intend to increase our political ties and consultations with our

Asian friends who share the same vision with us in this process and to take advantage of cooperation opportunities that can be extended to a wide range of medium and long term, including in such fields as security, trade, investments, new technologies, environment, development, energy, transportation, humanitarian and defense industry,” he underscored.

In another part of his address Prof. ***Şentop*** touched on the grave situation of Rohingya people, who had been forced to leave their land and seek asylum.

He continued “It is not possible to reach a permanent solution and peace in Arakan without ensuring that Rohingya people return to Myanmar safely, voluntarily, with dignity and permanently. “Turkey together with the international community, expects more from Myanmar without delay to tackle the issues in good faith in the face of the crisis and show the necessary political will towards a permanent solution. We are ready to support Myanmar to take steps in this direction.”

Referring to the important role of parliaments and the legislators, he stated: “As we, members of parliaments, are directly elected by our people, it is our primary duty to help our people live their life in peace and prosperity. It is a priority and duty on our shoulder to do our best in the context of our foreign policy for realization of this objective.”

In conclusion he wished success and fruitful outcome for the for the meeting.

1. **Report of the Secretary General:**

Following the opening remarks by the Meeting Chairperson, the APA Secretary General started his report with a short welcome note to the participants and appreciated all the IPU delegates of APA member parliaments who responded to the invitation of APA Secretariat and participated at this Meeting. He also thanked the APA President, His Excellency Professor Mustafa Şentop, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, who has honored us with his presence and inspiring address at this important event.

The APA Secretary General, then, listed the various activities of the Secretariat since the past coordinating meeting held in Doha, Qatar as follows:

During the past six months since the previous Coordinating Meeting on the sideline of the 140th IPU Assembly in Doha, APA Secretariat has been able to actively contribute to the successful organization of three APA Standing Committee Meetings at the generous invitation of the following three host member parliaments:

1. **The State Duma of the Russian Parliament**; Standing Committee Meeting on Economic and Sustainable Development,
2. **Islamic Parliament of Iran**; Standing Committee Meeting on Political Affairs,
3. **Iraqi Council of Representatives**; Standing Committee Meeting on Budget and Planning,

The Meeting of Standing on Social and Cultural Affairs held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2019 should be also added to the above three meetings.

Therefore, the four Standing Committees have held their meetings and prepared the draft resolutions for submission to the forthcoming Executive Council which will take place in Turkey late this month.

1. ***Meeting of Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development,***

***18-21 April 2019,***

***Naryan-Mar (Russian Federation)***

At the invitation of the State Duma, the APA Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development held its meeting on April 18-21, 2019 in Narayan-Mar, Russian Federation. Delegations from the following 19 APA Member Parliaments participated at the meeting.

The Meeting had before it eight draft resolutions for deliberation and adoption on the following issues:

1. A*sian Integrated Energy Market,*

*2. Environmental Issues,*

*3. Financial Affairs Ensuring Efforts for Economic Growth,*

*4. Poverty Eradication,*

*5. Role of APA Parliaments in Supporting Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals,*

*6. Water and Sanitation in Asia for All,*

*7. Adopting a Road Map Providing for Measures to Stimulate Green Finance,*

*8. Establishment of an Asian energy Market*,

Following the opening session and election of the Bureau, the meeting went into session and adopted its agenda.

1. Three Working Groups were held to discuss issues on Green Finance, Energy Market and Water Crisis as mandated under the relevant resolutions.
2. As regards the draft resolutions, the Standing Committee agreed to postpone deliberations concerning the drafts on *Asian Integrated Energy Market* and *Establishment of an Asian Energy Market*. The Chairmen of Working Group on Energy was tasked to merge these two resolutions for discussion at the next Executive Council Meeting scheduled for this year in Turkey.
3. Deliberations on the Draft Resolution on *Water and sanitation* in Asia for all was also deferred until next Standing Committee Meeting due to abundance of amendments and different views.
4. The other five Draft Resolutions were discussed and finally adopted with certain amendments.

The meeting was also followed by the 5th session of the Advisory Group on Energy. The Chair of the Meeting from Kuwait proposed two Resolutions of the APA Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development entitled” *Integrated Energy Market in Asia*” and the draft resolution submitted by the National Assembly of Kuwait entitled” *Establishment of the Asian Energy Market*”. This proposal was approved by the participants. Several delegates, including Iraq, Cambodia and Syria raised their views on clean energy, development of electric power in Asia. The Chairman of the Meeting pledged to submit a new draft resolution on energy for discussion at the upcoming Executive Council.

1. ***Meeting of Standing Committee on Political Affairs,***

***25-28 June 2019***

***Isfahan(Islamic Republic of Iran)***

The Standing Committee on Political Affairs was held on 25-28 June 2019 in Isfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran. Delegates of the following 16 APA Member Parliaments attended this event.

Following the opening session, and unanimous adoption of the draft agenda, the participants started deliberation on the items of the agenda.

Before going over the agenda items, the meeting expressed its deep sorrow and anguish in memory of the late APA representative of Palestine *H.E ZUHEIR, SANDUQA*. The attending delegations each took the floor to express their condolences for the demise of a very active member of the APA Family.

***The meeting had before it nine draft resolutions on the following issues:***

* Good governance,
* The Rule of Law and Judicial Empowerment,
* Good Parliamentary Practices,
* Building Prosperity in Asia through Friendship and Cooperation,
* Asian Parliaments and Governments together for prosperity in Asia,
* Asian Parliaments unwavering Support for the Palestinian people,
* Harmonious Development through democracy,
* Enhancing cooperation among the members of Asian Parliamentary Assembly to protect and promote Multilateralism,
* *Consideration of the Draft Resolutions*:

1. Deliberations on the draft resolutions concerning Palestine was deferred to a future session of the Committee due to demise of Palatine Representative and absence of any member to represent Palestine,

2. Consideration of the draft resolution entitled“ Towards *an Asian Parliament”* which received a good support by the participants in principal, but deferred to a future meeting due to abundance of the amendments.

3. Participants welcomed the draft resolution, proposed by delegation of Iran on *Multilateralism* and it was decided to postpone deliberations on this draft until next meeting.

4. Other draft resolutions were adopted by consensus.

On the afternoon of June 25, the Working Group on Asian Parliament held its meeting with H.E. Mr. Koohkan, the MP from the Islamic Parliament of Iran in Chair.

There was divergent procedural views on the part of Member Parliaments on the formulation for creation of Asian Parliament, while the participants agreed with the principal idea, as a pivotal issue which help to reach peace and social welfare for Asian People.

* The WG-AP is under auspices of Standing Committee on Political Affairs with APA Secretariat functioning as its Secretariat.

1. ***Meeting of the Standing Committee on Budget and Planning***

***September 03-05, 2019***

***Baghdad (Republic of Iraq)***

The APA Standing Committee on Budget and Planning was held on 3-5 September 2019 in Baghdad, Republic of Iraq at the invitation of Iraqi Council of Representatives. Parliamentary delegations from 17 member countries participated at the meeting.

The Meeting had before it one draft resolution entitled “APA Budget and Planning”.

This draft, which encapsulates one of the most important issues of the APA for realization of its objectives, was adopted by consensus after hectic deliberations in a lively atmosphere of cooperation.

* **Some important items of the Resolution**:
* Measures needed to be taken by all the Member Parliaments with due respect to their internal budget planning to secure budgetary resources for payment of their contributions,
* Sharing with any voluntary payment possible for the Member Parliaments in addition to the agreed contribution,
* Members’ appreciation of the Islamic Parliament of Iran for its generous funding of the Secretariat Budget since 2007 and request for continuation of its generosity until such time when regular payments of the assessed contribution are met by all members,
* Requesting the APA Secretary General to provide all the budgetary plans and expenses for submission to the upcoming Executive Council Meeting to be held in Turkey,
* Exemption of Palestine from the assessed contribution until such time when it can regain its status as fully independent state,

**APA Programs in the following months:**

1. First Executive Council will be held at Rize- Turkey on 25-28 October 2019 at the invitation of Grand National Assembly of Turkey,
2. The 12th Plenary Session and 2nd Executive Council Meetings to be followed by transfer of APA Presidency.

**As regards the latter program, I would like to draw your kind attention as follows:**

APA Secretariat was getting prepared to make necessary arrangements for holding the 12th Plenary Session and the 2nd Executive Council Meeting late this year and to take action for transfer of APA presidency from Turkey to Pakistan as scheduled, when the Chairman Senate of Pakistan informed us as per an official letter that they have decided to withdraw from the APA presidency for 2020-201.

Immediately upon receipt of Pakistan’s letter, I, in my capacity as APA Secretary General circulated a letter among all APA Member Parliaments, informing them of the situation. I also urged all the members to submit their candidature for the two-year term of APA Presidency (2020-21) at their earliest possible convenience.

In reply to our letter, the Iraqi Council of Representatives, as per the communication with the APA Secretariat, has expressed its readiness for accepting APA Presidency during the term of office for 2020-2021. The case of Iraqi candidature will be considered during the next Executive Council in Turkey

1. **Consideration of Emergency Items:**

According to the related list of requests for submission of emergency items, the meeting had before it two items on climate change, but from a different perspectives.

India had proposed “*Resolution on Climate Change*”. The Netherlands supported by some other European countries, including Turkey had proposed“The *Youth and Climate Change*”.

The president called on the delegates to express their comments on this item of the agenda.

Delegate from India was first to take the floor in support of the proposal submitted by the parliament of his subject country on climate change.

Before he goes over the issue of climate change, he warmly thanked the report given on the activities of APA Secretariat during the past six months since the previous consultation meeting, held on the occasion of 141st since the IPU Assembly in Doha, Qatar.

He, then, commented in support of the item proposed by his delegation on climate change and criticized parliaments for leaving this vital issue unnoticed. He then brought up certain concrete reasons for proposing this item to the IPU. Finally he called on all the participants to take due notice of this issue and support it in the IPU voting session.

He also referred to the proposal submitted by the Netherland on this issue with the support of certain other countries, including Turkey and agreed to merge the two items into one single proposal.

Delegate from the Parliament of Iraq also took the floor to thank the Chairperson and APA Secretary General for organizing this meeting. She also expressed readiness of the Iraqi Council of Representatives for taking the next two year term of APA Presidency following Pakistan’s decision to withdraw from its former decision to assume the office of Presidency for the same period.

Delegate from Cambodia also asked for the floor in support of the Proposal by India. He stated that we should do our best to protect environment for the next generations and called on the big powers to strongly work in this respect. However, he criticized the big power for not complying with their global obligations and recommended that big powers should be put under pressure in order to compel them to comply with their obligations under the provisions of Paris Protocol.

Delegate from Mongolia also expressed his deep concern over the challenges in North Asia which have jeopardized peace in this region. He stated that disarmament in this region should be pursued strongly, if peace is to be maintained in this region.

He added Mongolia is extremely affected by adverse effect of climate change due to the geopolitical situation of his country as a landlocked country, located between China and Russia. He concluded his remarks by urging all governments to adhere to Paris Protocol.

Delegate from Turkey was the last to take the floor. He said Turkey is located in a geographical location as part of +12 Member Countries. He said the issue of climate change proposed by some European countries together with Turkey is a response to the call of the youth who marched throughout the world demanding to make their voices heard on climate change. He concluded by hoping that the two items of similar contents would be merged into one single proposal.

1. **Other Matters:**

As regards item 4 of the Agenda, the Chairperson gave the floor to delegates who were interested to raised their comments.

Delegate from India expressed discontent over Pakistan’s letter conveying Pakistan’s Senate to withdraw from its former decision accepting APA Presidency for the two year term of 2020-21.

As there was no other comment, the Chairperson appreciated all the delegates for their participation at this meeting. He also thanked the activities of APA Secretariat and the Secretary General for holding the meeting.