



Statement by H.E Dr. M. Reza Majidi
Secretary General of Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)
At the Opening Session of the
Samarkand Human Rights Web-Forum on Youth 2020: Global Solidarity,
Sustainable Development and Human Rights
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Mr. /Madam President

It is a great pleasure for me to have the privilege of attending this august Meeting in my capacity as Secretary General of Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA); a regional parliamentary body with widespread spectrum of member parliaments in the vast continent of Asia. I also would like to sincerely thank the organizers of this important event, most particularly H.E **Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev**, the Honorable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Prof. *Akmal Saidov*, Director of the National Center for Human Rights of Uzbekistan. This Forum is being held at such a critical juncture when the health and economy of cities and people around the world are severely threatened as the aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

At the same time, I am greatly delighted that this important Forum is being held at Samarkand, one of the oldest historical cities in Uzbekistan; an active member of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly. Meanwhile, I express my profound sorrow for the recent horrific explosion in Beirut, the capital city of Lebanon, a member of our organization. On behalf of the APA members I deem it necessary to extend my deepest sympathy with the people, Parliament and government of Lebanon, particularly with the bereaved family of the victims of this deadly incident.

Mr. /Madam President
Distinguished attendees
Ladies and Gentlemen

The core issue of our today's agenda meeting centers on human rights with special focus on the rights of youth. As you may be well aware, young people between 15 to 25 years

of age constitute nearly 50 percent of the world's population. Young people are the future of any democracy. Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders and that can already bring new ideas to solving the world's problems

Allow me here to express my deepest gratitude to **H.E Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoev**, the honorable President of the Republic of Uzbekistan who raised the idea of developing and adopting an International Convention on the Rights of Youth at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, where the need to develop international standards for protection of youth rights was revealed.

No doubt, this is a welcome initiative in that adoption of a unified international convention on the rights of youth is felt more than ever. This causes to set up a robust standard on the core definition of youth and avoid diversity of approaches in respect of the youth.

As referred in the Preamble of the Draft Convention the youth are considered as one of the basic human resources necessary for development goals, and is the main vehicle for social transformation, economic development and technological progress. In fact, a genuinely inclusive society should create the necessary conditions for youth participation in social, economic and political development. Otherwise, the adverse impact of digital age will show its malicious face as a result of the fast growing modern technologies, which will rapidly transform lives, jobs, education, expectation and opportunities while at the same time global youth unemployment is increasing.

Having said that, it is vital to channel the youth energies into activities that would lead to tangible benefits and contribute to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and other strategies. Therefore, future success would depend on engagement of young generation at national, regional and global level. As the late Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General had indicated,

“Societies that cut themselves off from their young people were condemned to bleed to death”.

Therefore, as the main source of energy, innovation and optimism, it is imperative to channel that energy and engage the youth in nation-building efforts in order to benefit from the demographic dividend and promote the economic, social and environmental development of nations. To this end, young generation, as a social subject, needs comprehensive support from the state and society, the allocation of significant resources aimed at the development of youth and creation of a modern infrastructure of state youth policy related to human rights.

Choice of the theme for discussion in our today Forum is commendable in that the sense of frustration felt by unemployed and disillusioned young people lay at the heart of many current global problems. Not to mention, a large proportion of refugees are young

people and children. To enable them to find the better life they seek, it is essential to generate hope and to review current economic and migration policies.

In other words, a new front must be opened to fight for equality as an appropriate means of safeguarding a stronger democratic future in which young people, this rapidly growing population, can gain the opportunity to play their roles in politics. Certainly, their engagement is of crucial importance to social stability and prosperity in order to ensure that they assume their role as 21st century leaders with a vision for changing the world.

In this respect, I take this occasion to hail IPU initiative as the first international organization to introduce incentive to encourage more young parliamentarians to attend its meetings. According to the Resolution adopted at 122 IPU Assembly in Bangkok parliaments were called to create the necessary platform for youth participation in the democratic process by providing a basic level of education that is equal for everyone, with the same opportunities for boys and girls.

In addition, the Asian Parliamentary Assembly has also addressed this issue of crucial importance and the challenges facing the young generation as the driving force for mobility of human society. To this end, the APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs has adopted the Draft Resolution entitled”

Promotion of Quality Child and Youth Development for Sustainable Society in Asia”

Under this resolution, the role of parliaments in promoting the human rights and empowerment of children and youth in Asia has been recognized.

This resolution encourages APA member parliaments to take every necessary appropriate measures to enhance cooperation in order to promote quality child and youth development, care and assistance, as well as to protect children and youth from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

In conclusion, I would like to register my remarks as a final note that APA stressing on the important role of youth in present and future development of societies, has called on all its member parliaments to enact or amend legislations to ensure that all youth are protected against all forms of violence with special emphasis on the youth development schemes.

Once again, I wish to thank Uzbekistan as an APA’s pro-active member for hosting this important event.

Thank you for your attention