**“APA Lahore Declaration”**

Chapeau: We, the Members of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), elected representatives of the people of Asia in 42 Member and 16 Observer countries, gathered in Lahore on December 1-3, 2014, for the APA Seventh Plenary Conference:
PP1. Mindful of the fact that this is the Asian Century, and having deliberated intensely on the theme of the 7th Plenary; ‘Quest of Asian Parliament in Asian Century’ parliamentarians from Member States must help evolve a formal road map with definite timelines for creation of the ‘Asian Parliament’ as also envisaged in ‘Islamabad Declaration’ (2013) and ‘Islamabad Communiqué’ (2014);
Hereby,
1. Express APA’s resolve to promote principles of friendship and cooperation in line with the Charter of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), and to explore ways to expand and strengthen cooperation under the framework of APA to work towards a prosperous and peaceful future for Asia and the whole world.

2. (a) Express APA’s concern at the acts of terrorism, violent extremism, intolerance, xenophobia and religious or racial profiling;

(b) Reiterate our strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes; reaffirm that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group; and recognize that international cooperation and any measures taken by Member States to prevent and combat terrorism must fully comply with obligations under international law, including principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) Underscore the need for strengthening cooperation to deal with the menace of terrorism including addressing its root causes especially by addressing prolonged, unresolved conflicts and unending situations of occupations; further emphasize the need for promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, as an effective step towards combating terrorism and in countering violent extremism, xenophobia and religious or racial profiling; and welcome all initiatives in this regard, including the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly’s resolutions entitled “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace” and “A world against violence and extremism”;

(d) Further reaffirm our support for the right to self-determination of the peoples which remain under colonial domination and foreign occupation;

3. Encourage and promote dialogue between Member Parliaments to ensure the security and rights of all people, and to uphold international law and justice for all;

4. Express the resolve to establish “Asian Integrated Energy Market” by utilizing the strength of West Asia in the energy sector to help propel East and South Asia to effectively improve their energy sector;

5. Underscore the need for streamlining the financial architecture of the region in order to prioritize economic cooperation, generating the need for trade, commerce, and investment to counter economic instabilities;

6. Highlight and realize the importance and urgency of a ‘greener’ Asia, with improvements in air quality, warranting the reduction of harmful emissions, while discouraging deforestation, undertaking the billion trees reforestation initiative and encouraging clean resources to minimize climate change and environmental degradation;

7. Reiterate their resolve to pursue internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goals post 2015 and strive for collective strategies to eradicate poverty, which has interwoven and complex causes throughout the region;

8. Call for streamlining the financial structure of the APA according to the individual economic standings of the Member Countries for effective budgeting, optimized functioning and smooth running of the APA, enabling it to perform its responsibilities and duties to its full ability and potential;

9. Recognize the importance of parliaments in protection of human rights and cultural diversity in Asia, and urge member parliaments to promote inter-faith harmony and harmonize their efforts for respect of all religions;

10. Call upon APA member parliaments to promote and share the technological advances of globalization in Asia and create an environment for free flow of information to bridge the digital and technology divide across Asia;

11. Urge Member Parliaments to engage in effective networking to improve health systems, by acknowledging the social determinants of health (SDH) as major elements to devise a comprehensive strategy for health equity in Asia.

12. Support the establishment of APA “Virtual Parliament” as an interactive platform for achieving and strengthening the objectives of the APA;

13. Urge member parliaments to protect the rights of migrant workers, especially women, by devising, where possible and as appropriate, legally binding tools and adopting internationally agreed covenants;

14. Express the resolve to materialize the establishment of Asian Parliaments against Corruption (APAC) to curb corruption and enhance parliamentary collaboration to create anti-corruption frameworks;

15. Recognize the importance of addressing the issue of under-representation of women in various economic and political spheres including parliaments, the need for promotion and protection of their rights including increasing their contribution towards economic development of the entire region; and reaffirm support to establish an Annual Coordinating Meeting of APA Women Parliamentarians at APA Plenaries, as a preparatory meeting ahead of the plenary;

16. Urge Member Parliaments to formulate strategies to combat the growing menace of smuggling of cultural items in Asia through effective legislation;

17. Realize the implications of illicit drug production, trafficking and consumption in Asia, and urge APA members to further strengthen ongoing efforts and existing structures for effective coordination and cooperation in this regard;

18. Underline the need for developing better understanding and awareness among the people of Asian nations through various means including establishment of APA Media Forum so as to encourage media interaction and journalistic exchanges, and to disseminate more widely and effectively the activities of the APA, in the context of the road map towards an Asian Parliament;

19. Recognize that the Parliament of Pakistan having played a pivotal role in the transformation of the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace (AAPP) into Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) and during the current Presidency; the Senate of Pakistan is effectively contributing in laying the foundations of the Asian Parliament;

20. To promote dialogue to find peaceful solution of conflicts in Asia as well as recognize the right of countries to develop peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with IAEA safeguards and all relevant UN resolutions;

21. Denounce Israel’s repeated violations of the International Law and UN Resolutions as well as its blatant aggression that has claimed thousands of civilian lives in Palestine;

22. As Asians, the APA is committed to promotion and protection of core human values that strengthen society as a whole while seeking alleviation of poverty through policies that share prosperity through their respective populace;

23. Established the ‘Special Committee on Creation of the Asian Parliament’ (SCCAP) with its office based in Islamabad, to work on a single agenda of developing consensus within Member Parliaments to formulate a road map to achieve this significant objective.

Signed in Lahore on the Third Day of December in the Year Two Thousand and Fourteen.