

**Statement by Honorable Mrs. Dr. Syedeh Fatemeh Zoolghadr  
Head of Parliamentary Delegation  
Of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**At the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of Asian Parliamentary Assembly**

(27 November- 2 December 2016, Siem Reap)

**In the Name of the God, the Compassionate, the Merciful**

Your Excellency Mr. Heng Samrin,  
Honorable President of the National Assembly of Kingdom of Cambodia,  
Honorable Parliament Speakers,  
Distinguished Colleagues  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

A good greeting to all of you.

At the outset, I would like to express my pleasure for being here among my colleagues from various Asian Parliaments.

I want to sincerely thank the good people, the government and the parliament of Cambodia for hosting the session and their warm hospitality.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to His Excellency Heng Samrin, the Honorable President of Cambodian Parliament for his noble chairmanship over APA and also excellent arrangement and chairing this session.

I am equally grateful to His Excellency Nejhad Hoseinian, former Secretary General of APA and I am confident that His Excellency Dr. Mohammad Reza

Majidi, the new Secretary General will be successful in accomplishing his tasks, due to his shining academic and diplomatic experiences and background.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Our session is held at a time that the ancient Asian continent is facing political and security challenges as well as various other difficulties regarding sustainable development.

Therefore, 'Promoting Peace and Sustainable Development in Asia' is a very suitable theme for this session and our discussion on such a subject, will be beneficial for all of us.

It goes without saying that peace and sustainable development are interrelated to each other and if one is missing, the other one will be negatively affected.

There won't be a favorable ground for sustainable development, if there is no peace and stability. And lack of development and progress will lead to instability and insecurity in many aspects of life and society.

Currently, Asia and the entire parts of the world are facing a lot of political, security and economic challenges and problems. Palestinian crisis is going on for more than 7 decades, and still Palestinians are deprived from their most basic and legitimate rights.

At the same time, crisis and tension is going on in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and some other parts of Asia. As the result of this crisis, heavy material and human casualties have inflicted on nations.

Thousands of innocent people were killed or injured and several millions of people become homeless.

Social and economic infrastructure of crisis afflicted areas is also destroyed. In fact the condition is so bad that the people who live in these areas are in dire need of humanitarian assistances.

Continuation of current situation will pose a more serious danger to peace and security, and as a result all chances for reaching a sustainable development will be destroyed.

Negative consequences of tension, insecurity, lack of development and progress, may not be limited to political borders of afflicted countries and the destructive consequences of such a situation will overflow to neighboring countries and nearby regions and eventually to the whole world,

Mr. Chairman,

In order to address the situation, we need to have a correct understanding of the nature and the roots of the crisis and also have a clear image about the dimensions of the problem and its consequences.

Interference of foreign powers in domestic affairs of other countries may be the most important factor and reason for creation and continuation of such crisis.

Political and military interference of big powers, namely the United States in different regions and countries, are clear examples that show real roots and causes for a lot of challenges in the sensitive region of the Middle East.

Emergence and expansion of extremist and terrorist groups such as ISIS is only one of the results of policy of interference.

It is very clear that the United States or other powers resort to lame excuses of fighting against terrorism, prevention of weapons of mass destruction or promoting democracy in order to justify their military and non-military interferences.

In fact we see their peaceful gestures are in complete contradiction with their actions and they fully dis-respect and violate the most basic international laws, such as national sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries.

There is no need to tell you about United States silence over crimes committed by the Zionist regime against innocent Palestinians and its policy of double standard in combating terrorism.

In addition to foreign intervention and the unfair system in the international relations, there are other factors that create instability and insecurity. As some of examples, I can refer to:

- Weak political and economic infrastructure,
- Lack of constructive interaction and constant dialogue among conflicting sides,
- Lack of various common and collective mechanisms in different political, economic and security areas between regional countries in hot spots and
- Expansionist policies of certain countries.

Foreign powers try to abuse any differences or misunderstandings among countries and use provocative claims, in order to maintain their political influences and at the same time pave the way for their massive military presence and also continued interference in the foreign relations of other countries.

Dear Colleagues,

So far, a lot of efforts have been done at the global level, all aimed at materialization of sustainable developments and many ideas and plans such as millennium development goals and Agenda 2030 have been approved by the United Nations. Despite all of these efforts, there is still a long way to go.

Materialization of sustainable development requires peace and stability. And peace and stability requires correction of wrong policies and practices,

promotion of constructive dialogue among all countries and resorting to peaceful ways in order to settle the disputes.

In reality materialization of peace, security and stability are necessary requirements but they are not enough. Therefore, it is necessary for all countries to take effective measures at national and international level.

At national level, countries must have a practical, comprehensive plan and strategy for economic, social and political development based on their own national needs and objectives. At the foreign level, bilateral and multi-lateral relations and cooperation among countries should increase.

As far as political and economic matters are concerned, Asia, as a continent has got great potentialities and if such capacities are used through good political will and an enhanced cooperation among nations, not only it is possible for Asian countries to settle their differences and overcome challenges by themselves, but also Asia, will have a position globally and as the result, international peace, security and development will be increased.

It is necessary for Asian countries to take extensive measures at national and foreign level and in this regard, Asian parliaments can play a key role in approving national plans and regulations as well as promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

We think that based on 5 objectives that are enshrined in our charter; APA is a good basis for promotion of cooperation and constructive interaction among member countries.

In Article 2 and 3 of APA charter, there is an emphasis on increased cooperation among member countries in various areas, including the use of available huge

natural and human resources, with the aim to bring about further progress for Asian countries.

In addition to strengthening of the existing political, economic and security mechanisms in Asia, we can think about new ideas, such as creation of a common economic and trade market among Asian countries. This is another area that our parliaments can play an important role by unifying the relevant rules and regulations for the smooth implementation of our common plans,

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished colleagues,

On behalf of the parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I am here to announce our full readiness to have an active and constructive cooperation with our colleagues in other parliaments in Asia in collective effort to find solution for problems and overcome the existing challenges and realization of the goals and objectives of the APA Charter.

I would like to make this point very clear that APA is a good framework for having such cooperation.

I am confident that H.E. Dr. Majidi, the new Secretary General of APA, and his good colleagues at the secretariat will fulfill their duties based on the given guidelines and regulations, and also by consultation with all member countries.

They can play an important role in achieving the objectives of APA by making necessary coordination among member countries and come up with new ideas for an enhanced cooperation.

I would like to conclude by expressing my hope that the deliberation and discussion of this session will be effective step in promotion of cooperation and further interaction among Asian countries in various political, economic and social eras.

Thank you and God bless you all.