

Final Report

APA Bureau Meeting

14-16 December 2020 Ankara -Turkey

> Rep-Bureau/2020/02 19 December 2020

The First Session of the Bureau of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) was held on December 15, 2020 in Ankara, Turkey.

The Meeting was hosted by Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) and parliamentary delegations from following members of the Bureau, participated:

Turkey: President (H.E. Mrs. A. ERDOGAN, head of delegation, MP.)

Bahrain: Vice-President and Chair of the Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development (H.E. Mr. A. ALSALLOOM, head of delegation, MP.)

Iran: Vice-President and Chair of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs (H.E. Mrs. M. PASHAEI, head of delegation, MP.)

Iraq: Vice-President and Chair of the Standing Committee on Political Affairs (H.E. Mr. A. ALSUKAINI, head of delegation, MP.)

Russia: Vice-President and Chair of Standing Committee on Budget and Planning (H.E. Mr. A. LYASHCHENKO, head of delegation, MP.)

Indonesia: Rapporteur of 12th APA Plenary (H.E. Mr. Fadli ZON, head of delegation, MP.).

(List of participants, <u>Attachment I</u>).

1. Adoption of the Agenda:

The Members of the APA Bureau adopted the Draft Agenda of the First Session of the Bureau of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

Agenda and Program of Work are attached (Attachment II).

2. Opening statement by Chairperson:

Mrs. Asuman ERDOGAN, head of Turkish APA Group and Chairperson of the meeting presented her opening remarks which was welcomed by participants. (<u>Attachment III</u>).

3. Report of the Secretary General on the work of the Organization:

APA Secretary General presented his report on major issues of the organization. (<u>Attachment IV</u>).

4. Nomination and Re-confirmation of the APA Vice Presidents for the Year 2021:

Vice-Presidency of Bahrain for the year 2021 was confirmed.

Vice-Presidency of Iran for the year 2020 and 2021 was confirmed.

Vice-Presidency of Iraq for the year 2021 was confirmed.

Vice-Presidency of Russia for the year 2021 was confirmed.

Indonesia was confirmed as the Rapporteur for the year 2021.

5. Consideration and Adoption of the Decision on "Special Rules of Procedure to

Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions":

• There was a detailed discussion and exchange of views among Parliamentarians on the draft document, prepared and submitted earlier by APA Secretariat.

- Participants expressed their views on the item 1 of the draft document and agreed that the Agenda of the Virtual Meetings be prepared in consultations with the relevant Chair of Standing Committees and Executive Council.
- Items 2,3,4,5 and 7 of the draft document were approved.
- On item 6, it was proposed that the observer parliaments be invited to the Virtual meetings. The proposal was agreed by participants.
- On item 8, there was an amendment regarding the status of voting. The participants agreed that voting should follow the APA Rules of Procedure. (Delegations of Turkey and Russia expressed their reservations on the content of the last part of this paragraph). A view was expressed that the legitimate mechanism can only be accepted if it is transparent to all APA Members.

The Bureau considered the draft "Decision" document on holding virtual meetings and adopted the "Special Rules of Procedure to Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions". (Attachment V).

6. Consideration and adoption of the "Time-line of the Meeting of the Standing Committees in year 2021"

On this item, the Iranian Delegation expressed her readiness to host the virtual meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs in mid-April 2021 in Tehran. The other Chairperson of the Standing Committees were requested to announce a preferred timing to host their meetings as well.

The following issues were also raised during the Bureau meeting:

There were debates on the necessity of regular meetings of the Bureau. Some delegations stressed on this point, referring to the strategic issues which could be covered by the Bureau sessions. Some also believed that the Bureau should continue its function to give visions for

the future meetings. Others were of the opinion that the aim of the Bureau meetings should be clearly understood if we were to continue with its meetings. They called on the Secretariat to formulate the concrete aims for 2021.

On the topic of determining a platform for Virtual meetings, participants called on the Secretariat to propose it, considering best possible and feasible one, while communicating with the member parliaments. In general, participants agreed on the importance of holding Virtual meetings which would facilitate the work of the APA, where possible.

On the topic of Working Group on Statutory Documents, participants requested the APA Secretariat to call on Parliament of Kuwait, in order to verify their continued interest in hosting this working Group. Obviously, if there was no interest, the Secretariat should start communicating to find out replacement.

7. Adoption of the Final Report

The Members of the Bureau adopted the Final Report of the meeting unanimously.

8. Any other matter

No issue was raised.

Attachment I

LIST OF DELEGATION

1. APA SECRETARIA	AT Mohammad Reza MAJIDI	Secretary General of the APA
2. APA SECRETARIA	AT Kia TABATABAEE	Deputy Secretary General of the APA
3. APA SECRETARIA	AT Mehdi GHASHGHAVI	APA Secretariat
4. APA SECRETARIA	AT Mehdi MOLLAHOSSEINI	APA Secretariat
5. BAHREYN	Ahmed ALSALLOM	Head of the Delegation, MP
6. BAHREYN	Mohamed BİN DAİNA	Staff
7. INDONESIA	Fadli ZON	Head of the Delegation, MP
8. INDENOSIA	Putu Supadma RUDANA	MP
9. INDENOSIA	Mardani Ali SERA	MP
10. INDENOSIA	Endah RETNOASTUTI	Staff
11. INDENOSIA	Warsiti ALFIAH	Staff
12. INDENOSIA	Wiryawan NARENDROPUTRO	Staff
13. INDENOSIA	Iman NURIZQI	Press
14. INDONESIA	Raditya AJI	Indonesian Embassy in Ankara
15. INDONESIA	Tiko EKOSAPUTRO	Indonesian Embassy in Ankara
16. IRAQ	Rami ALSUKAİNİ	Head of the Delegation, MP
17. IRAQ	Mustafa ABBAS	Staff
18. IRAQ	Issam Mohammed KHUSHAİR	First Secretary of Iraq Embassy
19. IRAN	Masoumeh PASHAEI BAHRAM	Head of the Delegation, MP
20. IRAN	Mahmmad Mehdi ZAHEDI	MP
21. IRAN	Leyla TAATI	Staff
22. IRAN	Behnam KHORSIDI MEHR	Interpreter
23. RUSSIA	Alexey LYASHCHENKO	Head of the Delegation, MP
24. RUSIA	Anton RYBAK	Interpreter
25. RUSIA	Alexey KRASNOSHTANOV	Second Secretary of Russian Embassy
26. TURKEY	Asuman ERDOĞAN	Head of the Delegation, MP
27. TURKEY	Ramazan CAN	MP
28. TURKEY	Vecdi GÜNDOĞDU	MP

TURKEY	Mücahit ARSLAN	Head of Foreign Relation and Protocol Directorate	
TURKEY	Gökmen TOPLU	Deputy Head of Foreign Relations and Protocol D.	
TURKEY	Rezak TAVLI	APA Host Secretariat	
TURKEY	Murat HASTÜRK	APA Host Secretariat	
TURKEY	Fikriye Sirel DELİLOĞLU	APA Host Secretariat	

Attachment II



Asian Parliamentary Assembly The Bureau Session of the 12th Plenary



(11/30/2020 by APA Secretariat)

14 - 16 December 2020 Ankara, TURKEY Draft Agenda

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda
- 2. Opening remarks by the Chairperson
- 3. Secretary General Report on the work of the Organization
- 4. Nomination and Re-confirmation of the APA Vice Presidents for the year 2021
- 5. Consideration and adoption of the Decision on "Special Rules of Procedure to Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions"
- 6. Consideration and adoption of the "Time-line of the Standing Committee meetings in year 2021"
- 7. Adoption of the Final Report
- 8. Any other matters





(11/30/2020 by APA Secretariat)

14 - 16 December 2020 Ankara, TURKEY Annotated Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Under this item, participants are called to adopt the Draft Agenda. They are duly expected to submit any proposed changes at least three days prior to the opening of the meeting.

2. Opening remarks by the Chairperson

Under this item, participants will be invited to pay attention to the remarks by Chairperson of the meeting.

3. Secretary General 's report on the work of the Organization Under this item, APA Secretary General will present the latest developments on the activities of the Organization since the last virtual meeting.

4. Nomination and Re-confirmation of the APA Vice Presidents for the year 2021

Under this item, participants shall take note that during the 12th Plenary, Turkey was unanimously elected as APA President for 2020-1. However, Vice Presidency/Chairmanship of Standing Committees on Economic and Sustainable Development, Political Affairs, and Budget and Planning stand to be confirmed for 2021. The Bureau shall also consider and adopt candidacy of Iran for the post of Vice- Presidency/Chairperson of Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs during this period.

5. Consideration and adoption of the Decision on "Special Rules of Procedure to Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions".

Under this item, participants are expected to carefully examine the Draft Special Rules of Procedure prepared by APA Secretariat and contribute for its improvement. For preparation of this document the Secretariat has benefitted from the views expressed by the delegations of Kuwait, Thailand and UAE as well as the UN and IPU documents in this respect.

6. Consideration and adoption of the "*Time-line of the Standing* <u>Committee meetings in year 2021</u>"

Under this item, Vice-Presidents/Chairmen of the four Standing Committees are requested to commit themselves to a specific time-frame for holding their respective meetings per season.

7. Adoption of the Final Report

Under this item, the APA Secretariat will prepare Final Report of the meeting to be considered and approved by the participants.

8. Any other matters

Under this item, participants will have a chance to raise any matters of their interest which are relevant to the APA activities.





ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

BUREAU MEETING

Draft Programme of Work

15 December 2020

Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Ankara, TURKEY

Monday, 14 December 2020			
	Delegates arrive at Esenboğa International Airport -Ankara		
	> Transfer from Airport to Hilton Hotel		
	Delegates proceed to check in at Hilton Hotel		
20.00			
20.00	20.00 Upon arrival at the Hotel, all delegates and attendees will be required to take COVID-19 PCR test.		
	Tuesday, 15 December 2020		
08.00-09.00	Breakfast		
	Venue: Hilton Hotel		
09.30	BUREAU MEETING		
	 Adoption of the Agenda 		
	 Opening Remarks by the Chairperson 		
	 Secretary General's Report on the Work of the Organization 		
	 Nomination and Re-confirmation of the APA Vice Presidents for 		
	the Year 2021		
	- Consideration and Adoption of the Decision on "Special Rules of Procedure to		
	Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions"		
	 Consideration and Adoption of the "Time-line of the Standing Committees 		
	Meetings in the Year 2021"		
	 Adoption of the Final Report 		
	 Any Other Matter 		
13.00 - 14.30	Lunch Venue: Grand National Assembly of Turkey		
	The delegation will be received by H.E. Prof. Dr. Mustafa ŞENTOP, President of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (tbc).		
	A tour of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey		

Wednesday, 16 December 2020		
	Breakfast	
	Venue: Hilton Hotel	
+	Departure of Delegates	
End of the Program		

Attachment III



Asian Parliamentary Assembly Bureau Meeting



14-16 December 2020 Ankara

Opening Remarks by Ms. Asuman Erdoğan, Chairperson of the Bureau Meeting

Honourable Head of Delegations, Honourable Members and Representatives of Member Parliaments Honourable Secretary General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, Distinguished Guests,

As members of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, we strongly believe that there ought to be sustainable multilateral channels and networks forged amongst Asian Nations for cooperation and harmony on the Asian continent as well as the ultimate integration in Asia. There is no doubt that parliamentary diplomacy is one of the most promising multilateral mechanisms to be deployed by Asian Nations in their relations with each other so as to avoid or minimise the likelihood of the conflicts and frictions and uphold peaceful and cordial ties between countries in the region. The significance and necessity of such multilateral diplomatic instruments have increasingly become more vital as we, all Asian Nations, need breakthrough advancements in social, political, economic, cultural and technological developments vis-a-vis the changing existing world order.

However, as is well known, the rampant spread of the Covid-19 pandemic has created an unfortunate situation on every corner of the globe and sharply disrupted our daily businesses as well as the ordinary functioning of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly. Currently, the physical convening of the Assembly has no longer been possible. The restrictions and measures taken by member states, which are necessity and commonsense for the health and safety of the people, have rendered travel opportunities and in-person meetings essentially impossible.

Nevertheless, in order to maintain the activities of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly and to avoid any further adjournment of our meetings and inter-parliamentary dialogues, we need to take steps to introduce and forge some complementary working methods so that holding remote meetings under the Asian Parliamentary Assembly could be legally grounded and thus possible on a temporary basis, unless physical meetings are feasible. Because, such an alternative arrangement is the only way to guarantee and sustain the normal functioning of the Assembly in this exceptional circumstances the Covid-19 pandemic has caused.



Asian Parliamentary Assembly Bureau Meeting



Dear Colleagues

Dear Guests

All these recent impediments and havocs led by the Covid-19 pandemic have inherently urged us to put all our efforts in forging a new strategy whereby the Asian Parliamentary Assembly could continue its functions and keep organising its programmes. To that end, we have convened here today in order to address these repercusions of the disease by enacting the legal basis of holding virtual meetings and adopting the final procedure for the conduct of virtual meetings in the upcoming activities of the Organisation. Admittedly, all delegates here have generously contributed to the process of preparation of the relevant documents and enabled this Bureau Meeting to be held today. Therefore, once again, I would like to express my utmost gratitude and sincere appreciation to all participants for their invaluable efforts, cooperation, and presence. The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Thailand have also conduced to this process by proposing and sharing their fruitful views on the documents; I hereby should like to thank them for their considerations and contributions. Lastly, my sincere thanks also go to the Secretary-General, Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi, and all staff of the Secretariat as they have made this meeting possible.

Distinguished Guests,

It is my sincere hope that we will be able to hold the physical meetings of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly as soon as possible.

Thank you all for your attention!

Attachment IV



Asian Parliamentary Assembly

The Bureau Session

15 December 2020 Ankara, Turkey

Report of Secretary General on the Work of the Organization and Reflection on Post Corona era

H.E.Mrs. Asuman ERDOĞAN, Chairperson of the APA Bureau Honorable Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur, Distinguished Colleagues,

Allow me to begin my report with expression of some sincere words of thanks on this great occasion to *Hon. Professor Mustafa ŞENTOP*, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and President of APA and to your Excellency Madam Chairperson, for accepting to generously host this meeting.

I also deem it necessary to share my deepest sympathy with the family of the victims, people, the parliament and government of the Republic of Turkey for the recent earthquake in the Izmir Province.

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Colleagues,

As you are well aware the 12th Plenary was the last APA face to face meeting which took place on 13-18 December 2019, in Antalya, Turkey. Unfortunately, since then the world was encountered with an unexpected deadly health crisis which drastically impacted our lifestyle in every aspect, leading to the development of new strategies to adapt our daily activities.

To this end, my report consists of two parts as follows:

- A. Report of activities since the 12th Plenary in Turkey
- **B.** Role of the APA in Post Pandemic Era,

To cope with the new emerging situation and resume our tasks, the Secretariat has been in constant touch with the member parliaments to figure out the best practices which would serve our purpose.

In my phone talk of March 24 with Mrs. Erdogan, we made some fruitful exchange of views on the APA future activities consistent with the current condition the outcome was circulation of the APA President's letter among the Member Parliaments alarming them of the need for collective measures in the fight against this lethal threat. Also in my video message of 10th June, I did my best to delineate the APA strategy in the face of this dreadful situation and the steps to be taken accordingly.

Furthermore, I held a video conference meeting with heads of the Parliamentary Groups of Turkey and Kuwait. At this tripartite meeting, it was resolved that APA should continue its work unceasingly and hold its meetings on virtual basis as the best sharing policy option beset by the members to cope with the challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic. Grand National Assembly of Turkey as APA President welcomed the idea to host the first such meeting.

The First Virtual Meeting of Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) on COVID-19 Outbreak was held on July 09, 2020 in Ankara, Turkey. Participants in their statements on the agenda item related to Covid-19 briefed the meeting on their national experience in grappling with this deadly Virus and offered statistics as well as important lessons they learned on how to fight against it in the future.

On Agenda item concerning "Modality of APA Future Virtual Meetings", several delegations offered their thoughts. The outcome document of the meeting was a Declaration the Final text of which was later circulated by the Secretariat.

On 28 July 2020, I sent a letter to all APA members to inform them of the shift of policy intended to be pursued by the Secretariat to hold APA meetings virtually just like other regional and international organizations in an attempt to reactivate APA Agenda in 2020 until such time that global pandemic has been fully contained and normalcy prevailed. I also emphasized that the four APA Standing Committees are expected to hold their annual meetings to consider and adopt the respective resolutions, while, under the present circumstances, it seemed unlikely to be able to hold physical meeting in coming future.

Therefore, I ventured to propose to the Standing Committees to hold their meeting virtually (with limited scope) in the hope of getting prepared for the right time to have in-person sessions in future. The idea was to devise a plan to give enough opportunities to the member Parliaments to address relevant Documents/Resolutions related to each Standing Committees and present their remarks/amendments to such documents.Such a plan would help prepare all the documents needed to be addressed once the condition allows to the concerned Standing Committee to hold its in-person sessions.

The second important issue that I brought to the attention of APA members was the need for adoption of a "Model of Conduct for APA Virtual Meetings". Having benefitted from the views expressed by a number of Members, especially those of UAE and Kuwait delegations, APA Secretariat drafted the required "Model of Conduct of APA Virtual meetings" and I request all APA members to give their thoughts on this document. Shortly after, we were in touch with the distinguished Vice-Presidents in charge of hosting Standing Committees to coordinate our future Virtual meetings.

With the lapse of time and absence of any reaction to the Secretariat's proposal, I contacted H.E. Mrs. Asuman Erdogan on 14 October 2020 to seek her views on the APA programs scheduled within the few months left to the end of year 2020. Considering that the year 2020 is drawing to an end, we both agreed to take advantage of the time-constrained ahead of us and hold a special Bureau Session as the only opportunity helping to outline the roadmap for the coming year.

Thus, in coordination with the APA President this meeting was planned. The main purpose behind this idea and reason d'etre for holding the Bureau meeting is to consider and adopt a "Special Rules of Procedure for our future virtual meetings".

This Rules of Procedure is the outcome of a tailor-made initiative that carries with it valuable experiences of certain other parliamentary organizations, including the IPU.

In order to be able to prepare a robust and all-inclusive text which would respond to our needs from every perspective, we need your invaluable inputs. Your contribution to this effect is greatly appreciated.

May I call on your Excellences the Vice Presidents and Chairperson of the 4 Standing Committees to stand by your commitments to a time frame for holding your committee meetings in 2021 Perhaps we would be able to hold one Standing Committee meeting per season.

I also wish to draw your attention to the important nature of the working Group on Statuary Documents for our future activities. I request the Bureau Meeting to call on Kuwait parliament to offer a time frame to host this Working Group Meeting as soon as possible.

I now raise the second part of my report,

What would be the role of parliaments and parliamentary diplomacy in the face of the global pandemic and afterward? To what extent parliamentary diplomacy can play its share in post-pandemic global restructuring, while taking into account the pre-eminent status of international and regional parliamentary organizations?

In this vein, APA, just like every other regional and international organization, is not immune from the negative impacts of this global pandemic. Thus, it is imperative to develop our approaches in respect of the APA future agenda items concurrent with the unexpected situation ahead of us.

Noting the continued impact of the Pandemic, I venture to propose the following steps to be adopted by APA member Parliaments:

- 1. National Parliaments would include an item in their Agenda on Role and Responsibility of APA Parliaments during post Pandemic era and designate a Contact Point to be in touch with Secretariat in this regards.
- 2. To send the result of their national studies to Secretariat
- 3. Cooperate with the Secretariat on networking with national Scholars and Scientists
- 4. Secretariat is mandated to prepare periodical reports on the Role of Parliaments in this regard
- 5. The compilation of such findings would be presented on later stages as the APA Perspective of activities
- 6. Chairperson of all Standing Committees are called on to revisit the draft resolutions in light of the post-Pandemic era.

I request the endorsement of the above by the Bureau meeting so an action plan for their implementation can be devised, by Secretariat.

Kindly note the Concept Paper which is already distributed for your consideration.

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Colleagues

In conclusion, I also would like to inform you that at the invitation of the concerned Organizers, including IPU and Parliament of Uzbekistan, I participated in the following parliamentary Webinars.

1. Lessons from the COVID -19 pandemic to enhance the role of parliaments in disaster risk reduction, (June 9, 2020)

- 2. Parliamentarians Examine COVID-19's impacts on Women (July 7, 2020)
- 3. COVID-19 and Climate Change (August 4, 2020)
- 4. COVID-19 and Societies in General (September 03, 2020)
- 5. The UN Samarkand Human Rights WEB-Forum on Youth (12 August 2020)

Thank you for your attention

Attachment V



APA/Decision/2020/01 15 December 2020

The Bureau of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, comprising of Parliamentary representatives from:

- Turkey, APA President
- Bahrain, V.P./Chair of Standing Committee on Economic and Sustainable Development
- Iran, V.P./Chair of Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs
- Iraq, V.P./Chair of Standing Committee on Political Affairs
- Russia, V.P./Chair of Standing Committee on Budget and Planning
- Indonesia, Rapporteur of the 12th Plenary at its meeting of 15 December 2020 in Ankara, Turkey,

Considering

- A) that the world is currently faced with a critical health crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic,
- *B)* that APA, like other organizations, is committed to resume its activities virtually, under any circumstances and until the normalcy prevails,
- *C*) that convening official meetings both in physical (as a priority) and Virtual nature is of utmost importance,

Decides

- 1- that in-person meetings should be resumed as soon as the pandemic situation permits
- 2- that Virtual meetings should be given the same status as those of the physical meetings
- 3- that the Virtual meetings should be held, through reliable, easily accessible and secured platform
- 4- that the English would be the working language for Virtual meetings
- 5- that the "<u>Special Rules of Procedure to Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Sessions</u>", be adopted as attached. The Rules of Procedure of APA shall continue to apply in full, except to the extent that they are inconsistent with these Special Rules of Procedure.



Special Rules of Procedure to Regulate the Conduct of APA Virtual Meetings^{*}

1. Agenda:

The provisional agenda of virtual sessions shall be determined within the virtual limitations and in consultation with Chair of the relevant Standing Committee as well as Executive Council.

2. Attendance

The attendance by Members shall be through a secured access to video conference or other electronic means allowing representatives to hear other participants and to address the meeting remotely as appropriate.

3. Registration

Registration will take place through an online system in accordance with established practice. Each APA member participating in the session will communicate in writing, the name, gender and contact details of its representatives to the APA Secretariat.

4. Quorum

The number of registered members for the APA Virtual Sessions, as indicated in Rule 32 of the APA Rules of Procedure, shall be used to establish the quorum.

5. Addressing APA Sessions

Members, are invited to submit written or pre-recorded video statements in English (the working language of APA) with an indication of the agenda item to which they refer, in advance of the opening of the sessions. During the virtual session, statements by members shall be limited to two minutes. Any member wishing to take the floor should signal their wish to speak. A member wishing to raise a point of order in relation to a statement made during the session should signal their intention to do so. Delegates shall, as a general rule, speak in the order in which they have asked for the floor based on the Rule 26 of the APA Rules of Procedure.

6. Participation at Meetings

All virtual meetings of the APA shall be open to Member and Observer Parliaments of APA.

7. Submission of Proposals

Any delegation may submit amendment(s) to a draft resolution in writing in accordance with Rule 22 of the APA Rules of Procedure. Members should make every effort to arrive at an agreed proposal through informal consultations before the virtual sessions.

8. Decision Making

All decisions taken in a virtual session shall be, as far as possible, adopted by consensus. In view of the virtual nature of the session and of technical limitations, if a vote was required, the APA Rules of Procedure shall be followed.

^{*} Attachment of the decision number: APA/Decision/2020/01