



CONCEPT NOTE

Parliamentary Forum on Research and Library Cooperation.

In Commemoration of 15 Years of APA Parliamentary Achievements in Asia

1. Introduction:

It is widely admitted that a strong parliament is a vital sign of a healthy, living and well-functioning society. Parliament is after all the central institution within a democracy through which the will of the people is expressed, laws are passed and government is held to account. While the existence of a parliament may not in itself guarantee democracy, there can be no democracy without a parliament.

The emergence of the information society presents both opportunities and challenges for parliament as it seeks to affirm itself as a vital democratic institution of the 21st century. No doubt, parliaments have a long tradition in bilateral and multilateral cooperation on many levels and on a wide range of subjects. Therefore, there are as many as areas of cooperation and partnership among chambers and parliaments to carry out common activities to achieve shared goals. This has been accompanied by the establishment of new grounds for cooperation by creation of research clusters and networks of legislators. In this vein, parliaments should make the best possible use of regional inter-parliamentary organizations and through them seek to increase their efficiency and avoid duplication. They should also exchange experiences with a view to improving and simplifying national legislation.

2. Background:

Noting the global integrative trends in the world, parliaments are increasingly becoming more active players both in domestic and foreign affairs. It is against this backdrop that we are witnessing the largest Asian Parliamentary Assembly representing almost all of Asia.

With this leap forward, it is high time to take advantage of this valuable opportunity and huge parliamentary potentials to create and maintain a deeper relationship among the APA member countries with parliamentary research work within our region.

In light of the foregoing and the increasingly complex knowledge needs of parliamentarians and the fact that many national parliaments lack the capacity to access to available information due to technological advances which have led to profound changes in the information needs and expectations of parliamentary demands, APA Secretariat has come up with this initiative to formalize the relationship between the APA member parliaments through library and research programs to help build capacity for parliamentary library and research information services.

It is to be noted that the idea on "Synergy with Parliament Libraries" was for the first time raised by the APA Secretary General at the Meeting of APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs in Thimphu, Bhutan in 2017.

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The Forum offers a timely opportunity for a regional dialogue and peer learning to examine what has worked and what could have been done better to explore possible approaches to common objectives in partnership with Research and Library Centers of the APA Member States.

This event gives parliamentarians, senior staff, academia and research clusters from the APA member countries to discuss the latest developments in parliamentary library and research services and rethink their role in supporting national efforts to introduce a roadmap for partnership in providing a common ground in their legislative activities. In other word, the Forum will consider existing attempts to strengthen the legislative frameworks

ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS AND TIMELINE

The meeting, which will take place in virtual format on **May 17, 2022** under the auspices of the APA Secretariat, is intended to give a different vision to parliamentary approaches within the APA regular programs.

The great value of such meetings lies not only in the opportunity given to discuss pressing and vital issues in parliamentary approaches, but also in enabling delegates from across Asia to intermingle and learn more about each other. Therefore, in view of the ever-increasing interdependence of nations, this event focuses on the following working items as a prelude for strengthen parliamentary diplomacy in future.

ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

- 1. The Role and status of parliamentary diplomacy as a complementary diplomacy in international relations*
- 2. Potentials of parliamentary diplomacy in bilateral and multilateral aspects,*
- 3. Asian integration in light of parliamentary cooperation*
- 4. A background work on complementary political activities in Asia such as ICCAP, AAPP, which was later transformed into APA*
- 5. Practical execution of the Decisions adopted by the APA Standing Committee on Cultural and Social Affairs calling all the academic, research and library circles from Asian Countries to convene in the Forum on Parliamentary Research and Library Cooperation.*