



APA Coordinating Meeting on the sideline of the 146th IPU Assembly

EWB-EXHIBITION WORLD BAHRAIN- HALL 2

Saturday, 11 March 2023

Manama (Bahrain)

Report

At the invitation of the APA Secretary General, the Coordination Meeting of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) was held on the sideline of the 146th IPU Assembly on Saturday 11 March 2023 in Manama- the Kingdom of Bahrain.

This event was chaired by H.E Mrs. Ravza KAVAKCI KAN, Head of the Turkish Delegation to the IPU Assembly, who represented the APA President at this Meeting with participation of lawmakers from the following APA Member Parliaments:

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cambodia, India, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman (as observer), Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Before the meeting goes into session, the APA Secretary General invited the participants to observe one minute silence in commemoration and remembrance of the Palestinian martyrs as well as victims of the recent devastating earthquake in the south-east region of Turkiye and North-East of Syria which led to massive death toll, injury of thousands of others and destruction of dozens of buildings.

The Chair then read out the Meeting agenda which was unanimously adopted as follows:

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Opening remarks by the Chairperson, H.E. Mrs. Ravza KAVAKCI KAN, Head of the Delegation Turkiye to the 146th IPU Assembly in her capacity as representative of the APA President
3. Brief report by Dr. Mohamad Reza Majidi, the APA Secretary General on the Activities of the APA Secretariat since the last Meeting in Kigali (Rwanda), followed by a short briefing on the APA future programs,
4. Consideration of the emergency items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the 146th IPU Assembly,
5. Any other matters

Opening Remarks by the Chair of the APA Coordinating Meeting:

The Chair began her remarks with a few words of thanks to all the attendees for their participation at this event and made a very brief remarks due to shortage of time as she was also to chair the IPU Meeting of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarian immediately after our meeting.

She continued by quoting the wishes of H.E Mr. Mustafa SENTOP, the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkiye (GNAT) and that of H.E. Asuman Erdogan, Head of the APA Turkish Delegation who could not attend this meeting personally due to the recent tragic and devastating earthquake that hit south east of the Turkiye.

Mrs. Kavakci Khan, then referred to the successful outcome of the 13th APA Plenary hosted by the GNAT in Antalya during the early days of the new year which was participated with a good number of members who shared their perspectives with other members at the meeting .

The Chair also expressed her gratitude to the government and parliamentary authorities of the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting the 146th IPU Assembly and thanked Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi the APA Secretary General for organizing this Coordinating Meeting.

She continued to underline the vital importance of the APA Coordinating Meeting as another sign of being together and working jointly with greater power and solidarity.

Mrs. Kavakci Khan also appreciated the APA Secretary General for inviting the participants to observe one minute of silence in commemoration of the victims of the recent massive earthquake in Turkiye and Syria which faced the two countries with heavy death toll and injury of thousand others. She grieved for the loss of Turkish people of all walks of life, including a member of parliament in this devastating natural disaster.

Furthermore, she thanked the valuable international humanitarian aids and supports accompanied by sending rescue workers, equipment, and other aids to the affected areas in Turkiye and Syria. The Chair finally concluded her remarks expressing hope that reconstruction works would soon begin in her country and wished other countries not to experience occurrence of any such tragic natural disasters.

The Chair ended her remarks and gave the floor to Dr. Majidi to deliver his report under item 2 of the Agenda.

The APA Secretary General, Dr. Majidi thanked the Chair and delivered a summary report on the APA Secretariat activities since the last APA Coordinating Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda as well as the programs to be pursued in future as follows:

Report by the APA Secretary General on the Activities of the Organization

APA Secretary General began his report by welcoming the delegations for their participation and also offered his gratitude to the parliament and government of the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting the 146th IPU Assembly here in Manama.

He also underlined the need for taking full advantage of the semi-annual opportunities that has been provided by the IPU as a platform for sitting together to discuss matters of common interest.

He continued, as part of the new developments since our last coordinating meeting in Kigali, extending his wholehearted gratitude to the Grand National Assembly of Turkiye and its honorable Speaker, Prof. Mustafa Sentop as the incumbent APA President for the generous hospitality and excellent organization of the 13th APA Plenary at the resort city of Antalya, which received overwhelming welcome of the representatives of the APA member parliaments.

At the same time, he added, participation of 26 delegations, including 7 parliament speakers, 5 vice-speakers, two parliamentary organizations as observers as well as submission of four applications by four other parliamentary institutions(*Arab Parliament, International Parliamentarians Congress, Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network, The League of Parliamentarians for Al-Quds*) demanding to join the APA as observers was considered a major success for the APA in its endeavor to advance parliamentary vision to overcome the goals it has defined for realization of parliamentary diplomacy.

Dr. Majidi, further, stated that the 13th Plenary concluded its two-day session with the adoption of Antalya Declaration. The Antalya Declaration, in part, underscored the importance of the multi-lateral system in protecting the international law, international humanitarian law and the internationally-agreed rules, agreements and institutions, in addition to maintaining and advancing them. (Attachment I)

Consideration of the Emergency Items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of 146th IPU Assembly

As regards this item of Agenda, the Chair stated that we have so far received three items on emergency item proposed by Argentina, State of Qatar and the proposal jointly submitted by the delegations of Argentina, Chile, Germany, Netherlands and Ukraine with the support of GRULAC and 12+ Group as follows:

1. Argentina: “The urgent need to combat violence against women in politics, particularly in light of the proliferation of hate speech, fake news and violent incidents”
2. State of Qatar: “Criminalizing contempt for religious and the spreading of hatred, and promoting coexistence, tolerance, peace and international security”.
3. Delegations of Argentina, Chile, Germany, Netherlands and Ukraine, with the support of GRULAC and 12+ Group, “Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples”.

The Chair gave the floor to the participants to express their comments concerning the proposed items.

Speaker of the Shura Council of the State of Qatar was the first to take the floor. He initially expressed his thanks for the convening of the APA Coordinating Meeting here in Manama on the sideline of the 146th IPU Assembly.

As regards the proposal on emergency item submitted by the IPU Group of his country, the Speaker of Shura Council elaborated *raison d’etre* behind submission of the proposal and called on all the participants at the meeting to voice their full support for this item and cast their positive vote in favor of this proposal at the voting session of the IPU Assembly.

Other MPs, including representatives of Palestine, Kuwait, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Yemen, Bahrain, Qatar and India each took the floor respectively and expressed their comments in support of the proposal of Qatar.

Palestine: Crisis of Palestine should be considered as one of the highly important items in the agenda of the IPU. We are against participation of Israel at the IPU meetings because of their terrorist operation against resistance of the people of Palestine. We should impose every necessary restriction on the parliament of Israel and adopt any necessary measures needed to condemn normalization of relations with Israel.

Kuwait: Kuwait fully supported the proposal of Qatar as a highly important issue. For the sake of international peace and security any act of defamation of religions should be condemned.

Syria: The MPs present at the meeting on behalf of the delegation of Syria supported the item proposed by Qatar. They also expressed their support for the viewpoints of Palestine and condemned any act of violence and atrocity exerted against Palestine. In addition, he said, “Syria joins every efforts to create a world free of arms and threat. Israeli crimes contradict the international law and we call on the APA members to travel to Syria and closely visit the country.

United Arab Emirates: UAE delegation expressed its condolences for the earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria recently. The UAE also voiced full support for the proposal of Qatar in favor of spread of Peace, co-existence and tolerance.

Iran: The proposal submitted by Qatar is of vital importance. It is incumbent on all of us to close our ranks against some western countries and to guard against exercise of any act aimed at defaming the holy Quran and our religion. We should take pride in unifying our ranks against any threat in the face of our religious beliefs and practices.

Saudi Arabi: Saudi Arabia expressed its condolences for the recent tragic earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria and fully supported the proposal submitted by Qatar and the position expressed by the Speaker of the Shura Council in this respect.

Azerbaijan: Azerbaijan fully supported the emergency item proposed by Qatar. “Every day the world is witnessing attacks against religions and religious places which should be respected .We therefore, express our full support for the proposal submitted by Qatar because of our respect for religious issues”.

Yemen: “It is imperative on all of us to support the Palestinians and should continue to strengthen coexistence and show tolerance and oppose spreading of hatred. Proposal of Qatar should be fully supported. We hope that all members of APA are united and give full support to the Qatari proposal and avoid spread of any hatred moves and fully respect religions”.

Bahrain: “Delegation of Bahrain fully supports the proposal of Qatar. We, as Arab and Muslim countries, should close our ranks and keep our unified positions to give an end to any threat with the aim defamation of religions” .

India: “ Delegation of India supports the proposal of Qatar if words “all religions “is added to this proposal.

As there was no other comments on the last item of the Agenda, the Chair closed the meeting and thanked the participants for their attendance and fruitful contribution.