



Asian Parliamentary Assembly



Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs

24-27 September 2026
Dushanbe-Republic of Tajikistan

Final Report

The Meeting of the APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs was held in Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan from 24 to 27 September 2026 at the gracious invitation of Tajikistan Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli with participation from the following APA Member Parliaments:

Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Iran, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Oman, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, UAE, Uzbekistan,

[\(List of participants is accessible via the link\)](#)

Laying wreath of flowers:

Prior to the opening of the meeting, the heads and members of the participating parliamentary delegations paid tribute to the historical and cultural heritage of Tajikistan by a prominent symbol of the country's statehood and historical heritage.

Opening Session:

At the opening session on 25 October 2026, the following dignitaries presented their remarks:

- H.E. Mr. Faizali Idizoda, Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandegon Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan,
- H.E. Mr. Zarif Alizoda, Assistant to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan for Legal Affairs, Plenipotentiary representative of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan in the Majlisi Milli and Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan,

- H.E. Mr. Mahmadali Vatazoda, Chairman of the Committee of the Majlisi Milli Majlisi Oli on Ensuring Constitutional Foundations, Human and Civil Rights and Freedoms, and Legality,
- H.E. Mr. Ahmed Al-Saloum, Representative of the APA President,
- H.E. Mr. Mohammad Reza Majidi, APA Secretary General
([Attachment I](#))

Standing Committee Session:

1. Adoption of the Agenda:

The participating delegations unanimously adopted the Draft Agenda.

([Attachment II](#))

2. Election of Bureau:

The Committee approved the following parliamentarians as members of its Bureau:

- Chairperson: H.E. Ms. Mavsuma Muini, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Tajikistan,
- Vice-Chair: H.E. Mr. NGY CHAN PHAL, Senator, Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights of the Parliament of Cambodia,
- Rapporteur: H.E. Mr. C. CHRISTOPHIDES, MP from the Parliament of Cyprus

3. Opening Remarks by the Chairperson:

The Chairperson, H.E. Ms. Mavsuma Muini, presented her welcoming remarks.

([Attachment III](#))

4. Report by APA Secretary General:

In his report, the Secretary General reviewed the latest developments of APA activities ever since the convening of the 16th Plenary held in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, in January 2026.

([Attachment IV](#))

5. General Debate

The following delegations addressed the issues of interest, mostly related to the draft resolutions before the Committee:

China, Iran, UAE, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Palestine, Qatar, Russia, Bangladesh, Türkiye, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia,

([Attachment V](#))

6. Consideration of Draft Resolutions

Before commencing consideration of the Draft Resolutions by the Committee, several delegations raised a motion to the effect that a good number of the draft resolutions currently before the Committee for consideration, have been addressed repeatedly at previous meetings. After some exchanges of views, the Committee decided that *the draft resolutions will remain in the agenda of the Committee for three years, after which, they will be archived*. This decision, once approved by the EC and the Plenary shall be implemented

At this meeting, the Committee decided to address only the two new draft resolutions submitted by Tajikistan:

- ✓ Draft Resolution on Strengthening a Culture of Responsible and Sustainable Water Use as a Civilizational Value and a Foundation for Sustainable Development in Asia
- ✓ Draft Resolution on Strengthening the Culture of Peace, Tolerance and Respect for the Cultural Values of Nations in Light of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the “International Decade for Strengthening of Peace for Future Generations (2027–2036)”

Following extensive deliberations the amendment on the two draft resolutions were considered and adopted. *Pending the decision of the Executive Council, the remaining 14 draft resolutions will be considered.*

7. Situation of Women Parliamentarians in Asia

Her Excellency Ms. Mavsuma Muini Depuy Speaker of the Parliament of Tajikistan presented her report on the situation of women parliamentarians in the parliament of Tajikistan.

Following delegations also briefed the meeting and presented a short report on the situation of their women parliamentarians:

Iran, Indonesia, Iraq and Pakistan, Uzbekistan.
([Attachment VI](#))

In closing session, APA Secretary General delivered a brief remarks, expressing his sincere appreciation for the gracious hospitality of the host parliament, excellent organization of the meeting and the full operation and dedicated efforts of the Tajik staff, whose support contributed significantly to the success of the meeting.

The Chair H.E. Ms. Mavsuma Muini, on behalf of the Majlis Tajikistan and her colleagues also expressed appreciation for the participation of the honorable delegations and thank them for sharing their valuable contributions to the meeting.
(Attachment VII)

8. Any other Matters:

As there was no comments under this agenda item, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

Attachment I

H.E. Mr. Mahmadali Vatazoda

Chairman of the Committee of the Majlisi Milli Majlisi Oli

Honorable Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan,

Distinguished Secretary-General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to participate in this and to address the esteemed members of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

The convening of this meeting in Dushanbe the capital of the Republic of Tajikistan, represents an important step toward strengthening international cooperation and further advancing regional and international parliamentary dialogue.

From the very beginning, the Republic of Tajikistan, under the leadership of the Founder of Peace and National Unity - Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, has attached particular importance to strengthening intergovernmental and interparliamentary cooperation.

The foreign policy of the Republic of Tajikistan is based on the principle of an “open-door” policy, through which Tajikistan has established strong and lasting relations of friendship and cooperation with countries around the world. Tajikistan is recognized by 192 countries and maintains diplomatic relations with 186 countries.

It should be noted that the Parliament of Tajikistan has played a significant role in the establishment and strengthening of the country’s independence, the preservation of constitutional order, the achievement of national unity, and the creation of a solid foundation for the protection of human rights and freedoms, as well as for safeguarding the achievements of the period of independence. In this process, the Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan has played a historic role. Through the efforts of the Parliament, constitutional governance has been strengthened, and the foundations of Tajikistan as a democratic, law-based, secular, and social state have been further consolidated. The 35 years of independence have been a significant period in the history of Tajikistan, marked by numerous important political, social, economic, and historical developments.

The role of national parliaments, as well as regional and international parliamentary institutions, is of great importance in developing and strengthening relations among countries, promoting peace and stability, advancing social progress, protecting human rights and freedoms, and upholding the rule of law.

The timely adoption of effective and high-quality legislation serves as an important foundation for peace, stability, and the sustainable development of society. Through such legislative measures, societies can advance toward their development goals, citizens can freely exercise their rights and pursue their activities, and people can live in an environment of peace, security, and dignity.

Parliamentary representatives have a responsibility to ensure that, through the effective exercise of their powers, these objectives are translated into concrete action. Interparliamentary cooperation plays an important role in facilitating the practical implementation of these objectives.

Interparliamentary cooperation at the regional and international levels creates valuable opportunities for strengthening interstate cooperation and expanding relations among countries. At the same time, parliaments can share experiences, exchange best practices, and work together to develop initiatives and create new opportunities for achieving common goals.

On this occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Asian Parliamentary Assembly and the parliaments of its member states for their valuable cooperation and continued support.

I wish our distinguished guests a pleasant and memorable stay in the city of Dushanbe, and I wish you all continued success, prosperity, and well-being.

Thank you for your kind attention.



ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs

Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan
24–27 September 2026

Opening Remarks
by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi
APA Secretary General

H.E. Mr. Fayzali Idizoda,
Honorable Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan,
Honorable Heads of APA Parliamentary Delegations
Distinguished Delegates,
Excellencies,
Dear Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a profound honor and privilege for me to address you today in this magnificent building in Dushanbe, a city that stands as one of the cherished cultural capitals of Asia.

Let me, therefore, seize this remarkable occasion to extend my warmest congratulations to the Parliament, the Government, and the people of the Republic of Tajikistan on the memorable coincidence of this important cultural gathering with the 35th anniversary of Tajikistan's independence.

This convergence makes our gathering all the more meaningful, as we celebrate not only the rich cultural heritage of this ancient land, but also the remarkable journey of the Republic of Tajikistan as an independent nation.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of all the participating delegations , the staff of the APA Secretariat, and on my own behalf, I wish to express my most sincere gratitude to H.E. Mr. Fayzali Idizoda, Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, for his invaluable leadership and steadfast commitment to the APA noble objectives.

Let me also extend my heartfelt thanks to the other high-ranking officials of the Government and Majlisi Namoyandagon for the excellent organization of this meeting and their generous hospitality, demonstrating their dedication to the APA's principles and mission for the enhancement of parliamentary cooperation.

I would also like to express my particular appreciation to all distinguished APA delegation participating at this meeting as the first APA Standing Committee session in the current.

Dear Colleagues,

Asia is a Continent of great civilizations, ancient languages, diverse cultures, and historic pathways of dialogue among peoples.

Culture does not build borders; culture builds bridges.

From this perspective, culture is not merely a matter of heritage for the Asian Parliamentary Assembly. It can also serve as one of the foundations for dialogue, mutual understanding, and cooperation among the peoples of Asia.

Excellency Mr. Speaker,

Distinguished Colleagues,

During the recent APA Plenary meeting in Manama, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the proposal to mark a “Decade of Cultural Dialogue in Asia” was adopted, and the Secretariat was entrusted with undertaking , in close cooperation with the APA Member Parliaments necessary preparatory work for pursuing this initiative and present the resulting work to the next plenary.

Against this background, the convening of the Standing Committee on Cultural and Social Affairs here in Dushanbe comes at a particularly appropriate time. Today, alongside the rich cultural heritage of this country, we have before us two valuable proposals

Elaborating Culture of Peace, it is to underline that Peace is not merely the absence of war. Peace is a culture: a culture of dialogue, a culture of respect for others, a culture of listening before judging, and a culture of accepting differences and seeking solutions through cooperation.

Also , bringing the concept of “Culture of Water” to this meeting can take us beyond the management of a natural resource and towards a broader discussion

of a culture of responsibility, a culture of consumption, a culture of conservation, and a culture of cooperation. Water can be a source of competition; but it can and should also be a source of cooperation and confidence-building. And this is precisely where culture connects with sustainable development and cooperation among nations.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The Secretariat of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly considers itself at the service of all Member Parliaments and all Member The responsibility for following up on the Decade of Cultural Dialogue in Asia also rests with the Secretariat, which will pursue this mandate in cooperation and consultation with the Member Parliaments.

I am confident that, drawing upon your valuable views, recommendations, and contributions, the Secretariat will be in a position to prepare the necessary proposals and documentation for consideration by the competent organs of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, including at the forthcoming meeting of the APA Plenary.

In conclusion, allow me once again to convey my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan, its distinguished leadership, and all those who have contributed to the successful organization of this important meeting. We are deeply grateful for the warm welcome, gracious hospitality, and constructive spirit that have characterized our discussions here in Dushanbe.

سخن پایانی

جناب آقای رییس و همکاران ارجمند

در سامان سامانیان ، از زبان نیاکان این مرز و بوم به ویژه جناب رودکی بزرگ نگوییم به فرهنگ این سرزمین و بلکه به فرهنگ آسیا و جهان بی مهری و جفا کردیم. پس اجازه دهید با این ابیات معروف حضرت رودکی که از کودکی با آنها انس داشتیم سخن را به فرجام رسانم.

بوی جوی مولیان آید همی

یادیار مهربان آید همی

ریگ آموی ودرشتی راه او

زیر پایم پرنیان آید همی

آب جیحون از نشاط روی دوست

خنک ما را تا میان آید همی

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Attachment II

Asian Parliamentary Assembly

Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs



Dushanbe, Tajikistan
24-27 September 2026

Agenda

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Election of the Bureau
3. Opening Remarks by the Chairperson
4. Report by APA Secretary General
5. General Debate
6. Consideration of Draft Resolutions on:
 - 1- Measures to Promote Cultural Diversity and Protect Cultural Heritage in Asia
 - 2- Asian Integration through Information and Communication Technology
 - 3- Collaboration on Health Equity in Asia
 - 4- Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption
 - 5- APA Women Parliamentarians
 - 6- Promoting Dialogue and Harmony among Followers of World Religions
 - 7- Legal and Legislative Cooperation in Combating the Smuggling of Cultural Items in Asia
 - 8- Effective Cooperation in Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking in Asia
 - 9- The Promotion of Quality Child and Youth Development for Sustainable Society in Asia
 - 10- Ageing Society in Asia
 - 11- Human Development in Asia
 - 12- Tourism Cooperation in Asia
 - 13- Asian Parliamentarians in support of a more just multipolar world order reflecting its cultural and civilizational diversity
 - 14- The preservation of cultural diversity and strengthening multilateral cooperation in Eurasia
7. Situation of Women Parliamentarians in Asia
8. Any other Matters

Attachment IV



ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs
Dushanbe, Republic of Tajikistan
24–27 September 2026
Report by
H.E. Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi
APA Secretary General

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a profound honor and pleasure to address the meeting of the APA Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs, convened here in culturally vibrant city of Dushanbe.

Once again, behalf of all the delegations present at this magnificent building, the staff of the APA Secretariat, and on my own behalf, I extend my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to the Majlisi Namoyandagon Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, as well as other esteemed officials of the Government and the parliament for their generous hospitality and exemplary organization of this meeting.

Madam Chairperson,

I am confident that, under your wise and capable leadership, the Standing Committee will continue to fulfill its mandate effectively and further strengthen our collective efforts in advancing the vision, objectives, and shared aspirations of the APA.

Let me assure you that the APA Secretariat remain fully committed to lending its steadfast and unreserved support to the success of this meeting, as has consistently done in all its past endeavors.

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you may recall, during the 16th Plenary held in January last year, we successfully adopted 14 draft resolutions. Today, the Committee has before it two more drafts in addition to the already adopted 14 resolutions. Tajik delegation, as the Host and Chair the meeting, has submitted two new draft resolutions entitled:

- Strengthening the Culture of Peace, Tolerance and Respect for the Cultural Values of Nations in the Light of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the ‘International Decade for Strengthening of Peace for Future Generations (2027–2036)
- Strengthening a Culture of Responsible and Sustainable Water Use as a Civilizational Value and a Foundation for Sustainable Development in Asia.

I warmly commend and sincerely thank the Majlisi Namoyandagon for this valuable and forward-looking initiative, which reflects both vision and leadership in promoting the shared values of our Assembly.

It is important to note that 14 of the draft resolutions currently before the Committee, have remained under consideration for several years. Although some revisions and updates have been introduced during previous meetings, their substantive content has largely remained unchanged. With a view to revitalizing and updating the Committee's working agenda to be responsive to current developments, the APA Bureau, at its September 2024 meeting in Moscow, decided that draft resolutions for which no amendments had been proposed by Member Parliaments should be archived.

In conclusion, I wish once again to raise the important issue of the annual contribution and the opening of a bank account for the expenses of the APA Secretariat.

Regarding the opening of the bank account, I would like to inform you that necessary arrangements are underway to finalize this process. The account number and other relevant banking details will be communicated to all Member Parliaments once the account has been formally opened in the near future.

I thank you sincerely for your attention, and I look forward to our continued collaboration in advancing the noble objectives of peace, cooperation, and mutual understanding among the APA Member Parliaments.

Thank you very much.

Attachment V

Text of the Speech by
H.E Ebrahim Rezaei, Head of Iran Parliamentary Delegation
At the Meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs of the
Asian Parliamentary Assembly
(APA)
(September 23–27, 2026 – Dushanbe)

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

**Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Heads and Members of the Parliamentary Delegations of the Member States,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the parliamentary delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I would like to extend my most sincere gratitude and appreciation for the gracious hospitality and warm welcome extended by the Government, Parliament, and people of the Republic of Tajikistan in the beautiful and historic capital city of Dushanbe. I offer my heartfelt thanks to all those involved, particularly His Excellency Mr. Feizali Idizoda, the esteemed Chairman of the Supreme Assembly of Representatives of the Republic of Tajikistan, whose careful planning ensured the effective and constructive participation of the delegations.

I would also like to express my appreciation and support for Tajikistan's proposal to commemorate the ancient festival of Nowruz. This session, attended by parliamentary delegations from across Asia, once again demonstrates our collective resolve to build a better future and reflects the lofty and strategic standing of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly in shaping a new regional order. With its deep understanding of the cultural, civilizational, linguistic, and ethnic diversity of the peoples of Asia, the Asian Parliamentary Assembly has rightly become one of the most important platforms for multilateral cooperation and the resolution of shared regional challenges, drawing on the capacities of Asian parliaments.

Distinguished members of the parliamentary delegations,

The range of issues on the agenda of this session reflects a multidimensional, forward-looking approach that is deeply rooted in the real and diverse needs of member states. From the protection of cultural heritage and civilizational diversity — as among our most identity-defining assets — to regional integration through technology, the fight against corruption, the empowerment of women alongside the strengthening of the family institution, interfaith dialogue, the fight against drug trafficking, the development of children and adolescents, support for the elderly, cooperation in tourism, and dignity-based human development — all of these demonstrate the comprehensiveness and depth of vision with which the APA is charting the course of regional convergence. This approach shows that member states recognize the necessity of changing the unjust global order and confronting unilateralism, and that they seek a world in which the rights of all nations — regardless of military or economic power — are respected. This, in itself, is testament to APA's maturity and its serious resolve to build a united and just Asia.

Yet today, new security threats are targeting regional stability and endangering our cooperation — a matter that makes collective vigilance and solidarity more essential than ever.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, our region stands at a historic and fateful turning point. The aggression of the United States and the Zionist regime against Iran has not only targeted the security and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but has also endangered the stability, peace, and security of the entire region. These attacks — a clear manifestation of unilateralism and lawlessness — once again exposed the true nature of those who falsely claim to champion human rights and freedom, revealing the violent and blood-stained face of a civilization built on domination and coercion.

As you are aware, on February 28, 2026 the United States and the usurping, child-killing Zionist regime, in a barbaric act that violated all norms of international law — including the 1954 Hague Convention and the 1972 UNESCO Convention — launched an extensive and unprecedented aerial campaign against the Islamic Republic of Iran. These attacks targeted civilian infrastructure, scientific, educational, and research institutions, medical centers, and — above all — invaluable cultural and historical heritage, as well as the lives of thousands of innocent people. These attacks were not merely a military assault, but a flagrant crime against the civilization, culture, and rich history of the region — and indeed against humanity itself.

According to preliminary assessments, the strikes caused irreparable damage to more than 131 historical, cultural, and civilizational sites across 20 provinces of Iran. Sites recognized as masterpieces of Iranian-Islamic art and architecture, and as part of UNESCO's world heritage, were damaged. UNESCO has officially confirmed this damage. The destruction of these ancient sites shows that the target of this aggression was not merely military capability, but the historical memory and civilizational identity of a nation — an act that, under the Hague Convention and the Rome Statute, constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

However, these strikes were not limited to the destruction of cultural heritage. In this widespread aggression, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a number of senior military and security commanders, and prominent scientists in advanced scientific and technological fields were deliberately and mercilessly martyred. Regimes with a long history of assassinating innocent Iranian scientists once again demonstrated their terrorist and anti-science nature.

One of the most painful chapters of this aggression was the massacre of innocent schoolchildren at the Shajareye Tayyebbeh primary school in Minab, where multi-ton American and Zionist missiles reduced a school filled with the joy of childhood to rubble and blood, martyring 168 innocent children. Alongside these children, a number of teachers also lost their lives, and more than 110 others were injured. This act of treachery was so severe and brutal that, even seven months later, the remains of several innocent children have still not been found. Likewise, on the evening of September 1 of this year, when dozens of people had gathered for a wedding ceremony in a house in Kuhestak in southern Iran, they were subjected to a savage bombardment by American forces, resulting in the martyrdom of four people and the injury of dozens more. Attacks on oil, gas, petrochemical, and steel industries, industrial workshops, desalination plants, water resources, ships, passenger aircraft, rescue helicopters, and food stores were only part of the crimes committed by the United States and the Zionist regime in the recent war against our country. These crimes constitute clear instances of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, for which there can be no justification. These same regimes also have a record of bombing schools, hospitals, and civilian sites in Gaza, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq, and have repeatedly used their veto power in the Security

Council to obstruct any international action to hold them accountable. Although the military aggression of the United States and the Zionist regime against Iran caused damage, it was met with an unprecedented response from the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this war, Iran's powerful armed forces inflicted the heaviest losses on the American military, destroying hundreds of aircraft, fighter jets, drones, radar and defense systems, and enemy soldiers, and avenged the people of Gaza on the Zionist regime — to the extent that the Americans suffered their heaviest losses since World War II, and the world witnessed the humiliation of the U.S. military and its president at the hands of Iranians.

In this war, the United States and the Zionist regime used artificial intelligence tools and the theft of individuals' private data on social media to assassinate our citizens. The engineering of public opinion in other countries and interference in elections through modern communication tools — particularly social media — is another example of their illegal actions, one that must be condemned in Asian parliaments, with the necessary legislation drafted and adopted to address such interference and abuse.

**Distinguished parliamentary representatives,
Esteemed guests,**

Having failed to achieve its criminal objectives in its war of aggression against Iran, and having failed to persuade other countries to participate in the war, the United States has now decided to pursue the same unlawful goal through pressure and coercion aimed at enlisting participation in an economic terrorism operation. The declared aim of the United States in what is termed an economic exclusion operation — in reality, economic terrorism — is to sever countries' legitimate economic relations with Iran, coupled with threats of secondary sanctions and exclusion from the U.S. financial system. This operation targets civilians and imposes collective punishment by deliberately depriving them of access to food, medicine, medical equipment, energy, and other basic necessities. This so-called "operation" is a departure from the ruling of the International Court of Justice and reflects the severity of the crimes the United States is committing against the people of Iran.

**Distinguished delegations,
Esteemed guests,**

Over recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly, with an approach grounded in wisdom, tolerance, and good faith, welcomed dialogue and negotiation, consistently emphasizing the peaceful resolution of disputes through diplomacy. Yet this goodwill has each time been met with military attacks, targeted assassinations, and intensified, unjust sanctions. This double standard has not only undermined trust in diplomatic processes, but also demonstrates that the opposing parties view dialogue merely as a lever of pressure to advance their own hegemonic aims, and that they understand only the language of force. Nevertheless, despite such conduct, Iran remains firmly committed to the path of resistance, rationality, and diplomacy. It is evident, however, that there are limits to how much aggression can be endured, and the Iranian nation will defend its sovereignty and dignity with all its strength. Without a doubt, in this struggle and conflict, it is ultimately the American regime that must back down.

I hope this session marks the beginning of more effective cooperation toward the realization of an independent, just, prosperous, peaceful Asia enjoying lasting security — an Asia in which the spirit of solidarity and dialogue replaces policies of domination, and in which nations determine their own destiny.

In closing, while thanking Bahrain for its efforts over the past year, I invite each and every one of you, distinguished representatives of the Asian parliaments, to attend the General Assembly session and the Economic Committee meeting of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon you.



SENATE

KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation - Religion - King



Statement by
His Excellency Ngy Chanphal
Chairperson of the First Commission of the Senate
Head of the Cambodian Parliamentary Delegation at

APA Standing Committee
on Social and Cultural Affairs

Dushanbe, Tajikistan

25 September 2026

Vimeanrath Chamkarmon, Preah Norodom Boulevard, Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia
Tel : (855 23) 211 441, 211 442, 211 443 Fax : (855 23) 211 446, E-mail : secretariat@senate.gov.kh

Mr. Chairperson,

Honourable Parliamentarians,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Asia is home to some of humanity's oldest civilizations. Our temples, monuments, archaeological sites, manuscripts, sacred places and cultural landscapes are not merely stones or structures. They embody the memory, identity and spiritual life of our peoples.
2. Yet when conflict begins, cultural heritage can become one of its most vulnerable victims. The destruction of a monument is irreversible. A bridge can be rebuilt. A road can be reconstructed. But when centuries of history are destroyed, humanity may lose something that no reconstruction can fully restore. This is why the protection of cultural heritage in times of conflict must never be treated as a secondary concern.
3. The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict established the fundamental international framework for safeguarding cultural property during armed conflict. UNESCO reminds us that cultural property must be respected, protected against acts of hostility, and safeguarded because damage to the heritage of one people impoverishes the heritage of humanity as a whole.
4. During the armed clashes along the Cambodia–Thailand border in July and December 2025, cultural heritage was again placed at risk. UNESCO itself expressed concern, reminded both parties of their international obligations, shared geographical coordinates of heritage sites to help prevent damage, and offered technical assistance and monitoring.
5. Cambodian authorities have documented serious damage to the Temple of Preah Vihear, a UNESCO World Heritage property. At the 48th Session

of the World Heritage Committee in July 2026, Cambodia categorically rejected allegations that the Temple of Preah Vihear is a military base and reported that the 2025 hostilities had affected the property's Outstanding Universal Value. Cambodia proposed four priorities in consolidating the implementation of the World Heritage Convention:

- i. strengthen connectivity of civilizations and world heritage sites through a network of ancient sister cities so as to enhance peaceful coexistence and harmony of humanity.
 - ii. embrace digital connectivity and the use of technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), in the protection and conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as in the development of digital, creative arts as a tourism product in the digital era.
 - iii. prevent and prosecute theft, vandalism, and illicit trafficking of cultural artifacts in all forms.
 - iv. seek justice for world heritage destruction in time of conflicts. The deliberate destruction of the UNESCO world heritages, especially the listed UNESCO temple of Preah Vihear in Asia Pacific, which underwent severe armed attack in 2025, must be put under scrutiny.
6. Cambodia has also raised serious concerns regarding other ancient Khmer cultural sites, including Ta Moan Thom, Ta Krabey and K'nar, concerning military presence and unilateral activities which Cambodia considers incompatible with its sovereignty and with the protection of cultural heritage. In its official statements, Cambodia has called for the cessation of such activities and for outstanding questions to be addressed peacefully through international law and established mechanisms, including the Joint Boundary Commission.

Cultural heritage must never become a battlefield.

7. It must not be deliberately attacked. It should not be used for military purposes in a manner contrary to applicable international law. It must not be looted or unlawfully removed. Nor should cultural heritage be manipulated as an instrument for asserting territorial control or creating a *fait accompli* during conflict.
8. Our responsibility as parliamentarians is therefore practical. We should strengthen national implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols; promote inventories, emergency preparedness and digital documentation of vulnerable heritage; encourage appropriate training for armed forces in cultural-property protection; strengthen cooperation among heritage authorities, UNESCO and relevant international organizations; and support impartial assessment, conservation and restoration when heritage is damaged. UNESCO itself identifies inventories, emergency planning, competent safeguarding authorities and training as important implementation measures.
9. Asia should also strengthen preventive heritage diplomacy. We should not wait until an ancient temple has been damaged before acting. When tensions emerge around heritage sites, early communication, technical monitoring, exchange of coordinates where appropriate, and access for qualified heritage experts can help prevent irreversible loss.

Cambodia to host the APA Standing Committee Meeting on Social and Cultural Affairs.**Distinguished colleagues,**

Cambodia is honoured to host the next meeting of this Standing Committee in 2027, following the formal acceptance conveyed on behalf of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Cambodia on 26 March 2026. As a working

proposal, Cambodia is considering the theme, "Cultural Diversity and Asian Solidarity: Strengthening Parliamentary Cooperation for Peace, Inclusive Development and Shared Prosperity." We welcome the guidance of the APA leadership and Member Parliaments as this proposal and the programme are refined.

Cambodia looks forward to working with Tajikistan, the APA Presidency, the Secretary-General and all Member Parliaments to ensure continuity from Dushanbe to Cambodia. We warmly invite all delegations to participate actively in the 2027 meeting.

Distinguished colleagues,

Our message from this Assembly should be unequivocal:

Ancient temples are not military targets.

Cultural heritage is not an instrument of conflict.

History cannot be rewritten by force.

And the heritage of one nation is part of the inheritance of all humanity.

Thank you.

—end—

APA STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS**Dushanbe 24 – 26 September 2026****Intervention by Mr. Christos Christophides, MP - Head of the Cyprus****Delegation**

Esteemed Chairperson,

Dear colleagues,

First of all, allow me to warmly thank our hosts for their excellent hospitality. It is a pleasure to be in Dushanbe and I look forward to discovering more of the rich history and culture of beautiful Tajikistan.

Asia's diversity, dynamism and enormous human potential give it a unique contribution to global peace, stability and prosperity. Our shared objective, however, must remain firmly centred on the well-being and dignity of our citizens. The broad range of resolutions before us, covering cultural heritage, digital transformation, health, women and youth, ageing, tourism, corruption and illicit trafficking, reflects the interconnected nature of today's challenges. None of these can be effectively addressed in isolation or solely through national action.

This is where multilateralism remains indispensable. The United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals provide an important common framework, while international conventions and cooperation mechanisms allow us to translate shared commitments into practical action. Parliaments have a vital role in this process through legislation, adequate and targeted budgets, oversight and accountability, while working closely with governments, civil society and the private sector.

Importantly, multilateralism is not the preserve of the largest states. Small and medium-sized countries have a valuable contribution to make to international cooperation. Our size does not limit our capacity to contribute ideas, build bridges, facilitate dialogue and support consensus. On the contrary, our experience often demonstrates the importance of rules, institutions and partnerships in addressing challenges that transcend national borders. Parliamentary assemblies such as the APA provide an important platform through which states of different sizes can participate meaningfully, exchange experiences and contribute to shaping common responses. For Cyprus, this perspective is particularly relevant. Situated at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean, Cyprus has throughout its history been a meeting point of cultures, religions and civilisations. Our cultural heritage is therefore not only a link with our past, but also a bridge between peoples and generations. Its protection requires sustained international cooperation, particularly against the destruction, illicit trafficking and illegal transfer of cultural property. We therefore encourage continued cooperation among APA member parliaments in strengthening national legislation and implementing the relevant international instruments for the protection of cultural heritage.

The same principle applies to cultural and religious diversity more broadly. Diversity should be protected as an asset that enriches our societies and promotes mutual understanding. Dialogue among cultures and religions, respect for freedom of religion or belief, and parliamentary diplomacy can help create conditions in which differences are addressed through cooperation rather than confrontation.

Our approach must equally remain people-centred in addressing health inequalities, the empowerment of women and girls, the development of children and young people, the needs of ageing societies and access to quality education. Digitalization can significantly support these objectives, including by improving access to knowledge, healthcare and cultural resources. At the same time, technological progress must remain inclusive and human-centred, with appropriate safeguards for privacy, equality, non-discrimination and fundamental rights.

The same spirit of cooperation is essential in confronting corruption, organized crime, illicit drug trafficking and the smuggling of cultural objects. These challenges are inherently transnational and require effective legal cooperation, information sharing and coordinated action. No country, regardless of its size, can address them effectively alone.

Esteemed Chair,

The APA has an important role to play in strengthening this multilateral approach. Through parliamentary diplomacy, we can turn the diversity of our experiences into a source of collective strength; share legislation and good practices; encourage implementation of international commitments; and ensure that the voices of small and medium-sized states are fully reflected in our common efforts.

Cyprus therefore welcomes the resolutions before us and their emphasis on cooperation, dialogue and human development. If we are to achieve lasting peace, progress and prosperity, we must move from shared commitments to sustained collective action. The APA provides us with an important platform to do precisely that to strengthen multilateral cooperation and transform parliamentary dialogue into tangible benefits for our peoples.

Thank you.

Remarks by Dr. Rizvan Nabiyeu, MP, Republic of Azerbaijan

Distinguished Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Fayzali Idizoda,

Distinguished Deputy Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan

Distinguished APA Secretary General, His Excellency Dr. Majidi,

Distinguished Representative of the APA Presidency (Kingdom of Bahrain) His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Alsloom,

Honorable colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great privilege to address this distinguished gathering of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly as the Head of the Azerbaijani delegation here in Dushanbe, in our brotherly Tajikistan, with which Azerbaijan enjoys close and friendly relations.

Few days ago, on 9 September commemorated the Republic of Tajikistan the 35th anniversary of the state independence. President Ilham Aliyev congratulated Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan on this historic occasion. I join and share these sincere congratulations:

Over the past thirty-five years, thanks to the visionary and resolute leadership of President Rahmon, Tajikistan has made remarkable progress in state-building, internal stability, and socio-economic development, while steadily raising its standing on the global stage.

It is gratifying to note that the strategic partnership and the bonds of friendship and brotherhood between Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, rooted in our shared religious, cultural and historical ties, continue to grow stronger.

Azerbaijan's accession in 2025 to the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia as a full-fledged participant has opened new opportunities for strengthening our cooperation with all Central Asian countries, including Tajikistan. As President Ilham Aliyev noted at the 7th Consultative Meeting in Tashkent, "Central Asia and Azerbaijan today form a single geopolitical and geo-economic region, whose importance in the world is steadily growing."

Distinguished colleagues,

However, governmental diplomacy, while remaining essential, cannot by itself address the increasingly complex challenges facing our world today. In this regard, parliamentary diplomacy complements and reinforces governmental activities.

The Asian Parliamentary Assembly, bringing together 44 Member States, provides an important platform for strengthening parliamentary diplomacy and fostering dialogue in Asia.

In this context, we highly value also the role of the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of Tajikistan in advancing parliamentary diplomacy and promoting cooperation among the parliaments of Asia.

It was therefore fitting to note that Azerbaijan hosted the 20th Session of the Conference of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC) in Baku in June this year. The session was dedicated to the theme of “Promoting Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Development in OIC Member States through Parliamentary Cooperation.”

Next year, Azerbaijan will host the 16th Session of the Islamic Summit Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and will assume the OIC chairmanship.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In April 2026, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming 2027–2036 as the International Decade of Strengthening of Peace for Future Generations. This important initiative was put forward by Tajikistan and received the support of Azerbaijan, as well as a number of other APA Member States.

The resolution builds upon the principles of the 1999 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, emphasizing the importance of promoting peace, non-violence and mutual understanding, particularly for the benefit of future generations.

It also underlines the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, reconciliation, confidence-building, inclusive political processes, post-conflict recovery and social cohesion.

In this context, the peaceful resolution of border issues by the brotherly Central Asian countries, particularly Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, represents an encouraging example of how dialogue and political will can contribute to lasting peace and regional stability.

Azerbaijan fully supports this approach, drawing on our own extensive experience over many years. We believe that sustainable peace requires more than simply ending armed conflicts. It also requires reconciliation, reconstruction and humanitarian demining. It requires the safe and dignified return and reintegration of displaced persons and the development of regional connectivity.

During nearly thirty years of Armenian occupation of Azerbaijan's territories, this rich Islamic heritage suffered extensive destruction. Historic cemeteries, 65 mosques, and other Islamic cultural monuments were vandalized. Following the restoration of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and sovereignty, large-scale efforts have been launched to restore and reconstruct these religious monuments. Today, historic mosques in cities such as Shusha, Aghdam, and other liberated areas are being carefully restored.

The historic Victory of Azerbaijan in the Second Karabakh War has reshaped the regional landscape, creating new opportunities for trade and cultural cooperation between Asia and Europe, as well as among Asian nations. With its favourable geographical position between Europe and Asia and its modern transport infrastructure, Azerbaijan has become an important transport and logistics hub in Eurasia. The opening of the Zangazur Corridor will further

strengthen regional connectivity, create new transport routes and give additional impetus to trade and economic cooperation within the region and beyond.

Azerbaijan remains firmly committed to fostering regional stability and cooperation, building on the peace agenda advanced under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev. Following the restoration of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, Azerbaijan initiated the peace process with Armenia, culminating in the initialing of the Agreement on Peace and the Establishment of Interstate Relations in Washington, D.C., in August 2025.

We therefore welcome and support the new Draft Resolution on Strengthening the Culture of Peace, Tolerance and Respect for the Cultural Values of Nations, initiated by Tajikistan and presented for consideration at today's meeting of the APA Committee. The resolution has been prepared in light of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on the "International Decade of Strengthening of Peace for Future Generations (2027–2036)".

Distinguished delegates,

Azerbaijan's digitalization agenda is closely aligned with the objectives of the APA Draft Resolution on Asian Integration through Information and Communication Technology, which we will consider and adopt at today's meeting.

In February 2026, Azerbaijan established the Digital Development Council, chaired by First Vice-President Ms. Mehriban Aliyeva, as an important step towards ensuring a more coordinated and systematic approach to the country's digital transformation. The Council focuses on coordinating digital development policies, strengthening cooperation among government institutions, overseeing strategic digital projects. In parallel, we have been improving the relevant legislative framework in response to today's challenges.

The 2026–2028 Action Plan includes 58 initiatives covering digital transformation, artificial intelligence, innovation and cybersecurity. These initiatives include the development of a National Data Hub. At the same time, cybersecurity and information security remain essential priorities.

Overall, Azerbaijan's experience demonstrates that successful digital transformation requires an integrated approach combining digital infrastructure, innovation, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, effective public services and human capital development.

Dear colleagues,

Over the years, Baku has become an internationally recognized platform for dialogue among religions and cultures. The Baku Process, launched in 2008, has evolved into a globally recognized framework for promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

Building on this initiative, Azerbaijan has hosted the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue biennially since 2011, in partnership with UNESCO, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the Council of Europe, and ICESCO. Azerbaijan has also hosted the World Summit of Religious Leaders since 2010, bringing together representatives of different faiths to promote peaceful coexistence and interreligious cooperation. The 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue was held in Baku in 2024.

At the same time, we must stand united against discrimination, extremism and all forms of hatred against any faith or community. The growing spread of Islamophobia in different parts of the world, including certain political circles in the West, remains a particular concern. Our response must be based on dialogue and coordinated action, as also reflected in the Manama Declaration of the APA, adopted in January 2026 under the chairmanship of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The APA remains an important platform for turning our shared values into coordinated action.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to conclude my remarks.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan for their generous hospitality and the excellent organization of this meeting. I bring best wishes for a successful meeting from Her Excellency Professor Sahiba Gafarova, Speaker of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to His Excellency Dr. Mohammad Reza Majidi and the APA Secretariat for their continued dedication and tireless efforts to advance our shared objectives.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Draft introductory remarks
Meeting Chair / Secretary General of APA
Dushanbe, Tajikistan (24-27 September 2026)

Revised introductory remarks

Your Excellency, President of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,
 Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,
 Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

First, allow me to express the appreciation of the Cambodian Parliamentary Delegation for this opportunity to meet with you during the Standing Committee meeting in Dushanbe.

I wish to congratulate the Parliament of Tajikistan, the APA leadership and the Secretariat on the organization of this important meeting. Its discussions and outcomes will provide valuable guidance for the future work of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs.

Cambodia is honoured to host the next meeting of the Standing Committee in 2027. Following the proposal made by the Council of Representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Cambodia's formal acceptance was conveyed on 26 March 2026 by Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, on behalf of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

We regard this responsibility not simply as the organization of another meeting, but as an opportunity to maintain the continuity of the Committee's work, deepen cooperation among APA Member Parliaments and translate our shared commitments into practical benefits for the peoples of Asia,

Cambodia recently demonstrated its commitment and organizational capacity through the successful hosting of ISC-2 in Phnom Penh. The conference brought together parliamentary leaders and distinguished delegates around the theme of solidarity for peace and shared prosperity and concluded with the adoption of the Phnom Penh Declaration.

The experience of ISC-2 reaffirmed that parliamentary diplomacy, dialogue, mutual respect and international cooperation can contribute meaningfully to peace and inclusive development. While ISC and APA are separate parliamentary frameworks, Cambodia believes that the spirit of dialogue and cooperation embodied in the Phnom Penh Declaration can complement the social and cultural mandate of the APA.

For the 2027 meeting, Cambodia is considering the following working theme:

“Cultural Diversity and Asian Solidarity: Strengthening Parliamentary Cooperation for Peace, Inclusive Development and Shared Prosperity.”

This proposed theme would build upon the outcomes of Dushanbe and reflect Cambodia’s experience in peacebuilding, national reconciliation, intercultural and interfaith harmony, cultural-heritage protection and people-centred development.

It would also provide an inclusive framework for the Committee’s wider priorities, including women and youth, education, health, social protection, responsible technology, sustainable tourism, cultural exchange and cooperation against the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

At this stage, the proposed theme remains a working proposal. We would highly appreciate the guidance of the APA President and Secretary-General on its consistency with the Assembly’s priorities and on how it might be refined through consultation with Member Parliaments.

Cambodia is also considering Phnom Penh and Siem Reap as possible venues. Phnom Penh would facilitate direct engagement with Cambodia’s parliamentary institutions, while Siem Reap would provide a meaningful setting for discussions on cultural diversity, civilizational dialogue, heritage protection and sustainable tourism.

We have not yet made a final decision on the venue or programme arrangement. We would therefore welcome the Secretariat’s advice regarding accessibility, delegation size, logistical requirements, costs and the feasibility of either a single-city meeting or a combined programme.

During our consultation today, we would particularly appreciate your guidance on:

- **First**, the institutional procedures and decisions required to formalize the meeting arrangements;
- **Second**, the proposed dates, duration and venue;
- **Third**, the development of the theme, annotated agenda and expected outcomes;
- **Fourth**, the review and preparation of the Committee’s draft resolutions;
- **Fifth**, the respective responsibilities of the Cambodian Parliament and the APA Secretariat concerning documentation, interpretation, protocol, registration, accommodation, transportation, security and communications; and
- **Sixth**, the establishment of focal points and an agreed preparatory timetable following the Dushanbe meeting.

كلمة سعادة النائب أحمد صباح السلوم
ممثل مملكة البحرين (دولة الرئاسة) في الجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية
في افتتاح اجتماع اللجنة الدائمة للشؤون الاجتماعية والثقافية لعام 2026
جمهورية طاجيكستان

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه
 أجمعين،
 أصحاب المعالي والسعادة رؤساء وأعضاء الوفود،
 سعادة الأمين العام للجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية،
 السيدات والسادة،
 السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،

يسعدني في مستهل هذا الاجتماع أن أنقل إليكم تحيات صاحب المعالي السيد أحمد بن سلمان المسلم، رئيس مجلس النواب، رئيس اللجنة التنفيذية للشعبة البرلمانية لمملكة البحرين، وتمنياته الصادقة لأعمال اللجنة بالتوفيق والسداد، وأن تكلل مداولاتها بمخرجات نوعية تعزز مسيرة العمل البرلماني الآسيوي المشترك، وتستجيب لأولويات شعوب القارة وتطلعاتها.

ويسرني، بهذه المناسبة، أن أعرب باسم مملكة البحرين، بصفتها دولة الرئاسة للجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية، عن خالص الشكر والتقدير لجمهورية طاجيكستان الصديقة على كرم الاستضافة وحسن الوفادة، وعلى ما تبذله من جهود مقدرة لإنجاح أعمال هذا الاجتماع، بما يعكس حرصها على دعم مسيرة التعاون البرلماني الآسيوي وتعزيز أواصر التواصل بين الدول الأعضاء.

أصحاب المعالي والسعادة،

لقد أصبحت قارتنا الآسيوية أمام تحولات عميقة ومتسارعة تمس مختلف جوانب حياة شعوبها، من الصراعات والنزاعات الإقليمية والتحولات الديموغرافية والاجتماعية، إلى التطور التكنولوجي والذكاء الاصطناعي، والتحول في أنماط التعليم والعمل، وتغير المناخ، والهجرة، والأمن الغذائي، والصحة، وحماية الأسرة والطفولة، فضلاً عن التحديات المرتبطة بالهوية الثقافية والحفاظ على التنوع الحضاري.

وهذه المتغيرات تفرض على العمل البرلماني الآسيوي أن يواكبها بالوتيرة ذاتها، وأن ينتقل من مجرد رصد التحديات إلى استباقها، ومن مناقشة آثارها إلى الإسهام في صياغة السياسات والتشريعات القادرة على التعامل معها، بما يجعل العمل البرلماني أكثر اتصالاً بالواقع وأكثر قدرة على الاستجابة لمتطلبات المستقبل.

ومن هذا المنطلق، حرصت مملكة البحرين خلال رئاستها للجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية على الدفع باتجاه تطوير أداء الجمعية وتعزيز فاعلية أجهزتها ولجانها، انطلاقاً من قناعة راسخة بأن القيمة الحقيقية لأي منظمة برلمانية لا تُقاس باتساع عضويتها أو تعدد اجتماعاتها، وإنما بقدرتها على تحويل التحديات المشتركة إلى مواقف ومبادرات وقرارات ذات أثر حقيقي في حياة الشعوب.

السيدات والسادة،

ومن موقع المسؤولية التي تضطلع بها مملكة البحرين في رئاسة الجمعية، أود أن أطرح أمامكم، بكل صراحة ومسؤولية، مسألة نرى أنها تستحق مزيداً من النظر خلال المرحلة المقبلة، وتتصل باستمرار إدراج بعض الموضوعات ومشاريع القرارات على جداول أعمال بعض لجان الجمعية، ومنها هذه اللجنة، عبر دورات متعاقبة، دون أن يواكب ذلك في بعض الأحيان تطور مماثل في مضمون المعالجة أو في مستوى المخرجات.

ونحن لا نطرح هذه المسألة باعتبارها ملاحظة على عمل لجنة بعينها، وإنما باعتبارها قضية تتصل بجودة العمل البرلماني المشترك وفاعليته، وبمدى قدرتنا على توظيف الوقت والجهد البرلماني في إنتاج قيمة مضافة حقيقية، تواكب ما تشهده قارتنا من تطورات وتستجيب لأولويات شعوبها المتغيرة.

فليس المقصود من استمرار تناول موضوع ما أن تبقى المعالجة على حالها، وإنما أن تتطور مضامينها كلما تغيرت الظروف والمعطيات، وأن تنتقل من مرحلة التشخيص إلى تقديم الحلول، ومن إعادة التأكيد على المبادئ إلى بلورة سياسات ومبادرات قابلة للتطبيق والمتابعة والتقييم.

فاستمرارية القضية لا ينبغي أن تعني جمود المعالجة. فالقضايا قد تبقى، ولكن مقارباتنا تجاهها يجب أن تتطور، وحلولنا أن تتجدد، وقراراتنا أن تعكس ما يستجد من تحديات وتجارب ومعطيات.

ومن هنا، فإننا بحاجة إلى مراجعة منهجية للموضوعات التي يتكرر إدراجها على جداول أعمال اللجان، بحيث يُنظر في كل دورة إلى ما تحقق بشأنها، وما استجد عليها، وما إذا كانت لا تزال تعكس الأولويات الفعلية لشعوبنا، وما القيمة الجديدة التي يمكن أن يضيفها القرار المقترح.

أصحاب المعالي والسعادة،

ولمعالجة ذلك بصورة مؤسسية، تستدعي المرحلة المقبلة الارتقاء بمنهجية إعداد مشاريع القرارات داخل الجمعية، والانتقال بها إلى مقاربة أكثر ديناميكية وارتباطاً بالواقع، تبدأ بتحديد القضايا والتحديات بصورة دقيقة، ورصد ما يطرأ عليها من تطورات، والاستفادة من الخبرات والتجارب المتراكمة لدى الدول الأعضاء، وصولاً إلى توصيات أكثر تحديداً وواقعية، وقابلة للتنفيذ والمتابعة وقياس الأثر.

كما ينبغي، حيثما تقتضي طبيعة الموضوع، أن تتضمن القرارات مسارات واضحة للتنفيذ وآليات محددة للمتابعة والتقييم، بحيث لا تنتهي مسؤولية القرار عند اعتماده، وإنما تمتد إلى رصد ما تحقق في ضوءه، وتحديد ما يتطلبه من تطوير أو تحديث في الدورات اللاحقة.

ومن شأن هذا النهج أن يرتقي بالقيمة المؤسسية لقرارات الجمعية، ويعزز وزنها السياسي والبرلماني، ويجعلها أكثر اتصالاً بالواقع وأكثر قدرة على الاستجابة للأولويات المتجددة لشعبنا، وأكثر تأثيراً في صياغة رؤى مشتركة تجاه التحديات التي تواجه قارتنا.

السيدات والسادة،

وفي هذا الإطار، تبرز أمام هذه اللجنة مسؤولية خاصة في إعادة صياغة أجندتها بما يعكس التحولات العميقة التي تشهدها المجتمعات الآسيوية، ويجعلها أكثر اتصالاً بالأولويات الفعلية للمواطن الآسيوي وتطلعاته نحو مستقبل أكثر أمناً واستقراراً وازدهاراً.

فالقضايا الاجتماعية والثقافية لم تعد تقف عند حدود المفاهيم التقليدية، بل أصبحت تتقاطع بصورة متزايدة مع التحول الرقمي والذكاء الاصطناعي، ومستقبل التعليم والعمل، وحماية الأطفال والشباب في البيئة الرقمية، وتمكين الأسرة وتعزيز تماسكها، والصحة النفسية والاجتماعية، وصون الهوية والتراث الثقافي في ظل التحولات العالمية المتسارعة، فضلاً عن الآثار الاجتماعية والإنسانية المتنامية للتغير المناخي والتحديات البيئية.

وهذه التحولات لا ينبغي أن تظل مجرد موضوعات للنقاش، بل يتعين أن تتحول إلى أجندة برلمانية قادرة على استشراف المستقبل، وصياغة رؤى مشتركة، وتقديم استجابات عملية تتناسب مع طبيعة التحديات المستجدة.

فالمواطن الآسيوي الذي نمثله لا ينتظر منا مزيداً من الوثائق بقدر ما ينتظر أن يرى في عملنا البرلماني استجابة حقيقية لما يواجهه في حياته اليومية، وأن يجد في قراراتنا ما يعكس تطلعاته إلى تعليم أفضل، وفرص أوسع، وحماية اجتماعية أكثر

فاعلية، وبيئة أكثر استدامة، ومجتمعات أكثر أمناً وتماسكاً، وقدرة أكبر على التعامل مع التحولات التكنولوجية المتسارعة.

ومن هنا، فإن تجديد أجندة الجمعية ليس مسألة إجرائية، وإنما هو جزء من مسؤوليتنا السياسية تجاه الشعوب التي نمثلها؛ فكلما اقتربت موضوعاتنا وقراراتنا من الواقع، ازدادت قيمتها، وكلما استجابت لمتغيراته، ازدادت قدرتها على التأثير.

أصحاب المعالي والسعادة،

ومن موقع المسؤولية التي تضطلع بها مملكة البحرين في رئاسة الجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية، نرى أن المرحلة المقبلة تستدعي ترسيخ ثقافة التقويم والتجديد والابتكار في العمل البرلماني، وتطوير منهجيات إعداد القرارات، والارتقاء بمستوى التنسيق والتكامل بين اللجان، والاستفادة بصورة أوسع من الخبرات والتجارب الوطنية المتركمة لدى الدول الأعضاء.

كما تقتضي هذه المرحلة توجيه مزيد من الاهتمام نحو الموضوعات التي تحمل بعداً آسيوياً مشتركاً، والتي يستطيع العمل البرلماني الجماعي أن يضيف إليها قيمة حقيقية، بما يضمن توظيف جهود الجمعية ومواردها في القضايا الأكثر اتصالاً بأولويات شعوب القارة وتحدياتها الراهنة والمستقبلية.

إن مسؤوليتنا المشتركة تفرض علينا أن نجعل من الجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية مؤسسة أكثر حيوية واستجابة وتأثيراً؛ وأن ننقل بالعمل البرلماني من مجرد تبادل المواقف إلى بناء المبادرات، ومن إصدار التوصيات إلى متابعة أثرها، ومن إعادة إنتاج ما قيل إلى صياغة ما يحتاجه المستقبل.

ومن هذا المنطلق، ستواصل مملكة البحرين، خلال رئاستها للجمعية، دعم كل جهد يستهدف تطوير آليات العمل، وتعزيز التنسيق بين الدول الأعضاء، والارتقاء بمخرجات اللجان، بما يرسخ مكانة الجمعية بوصفها منصة برلمانية آسيوية فاعلة، قادرة على استشراف التحولات، والتعبير عن أولويات شعوب القارة، وتحويل التحديات المشتركة إلى فرص للتعاون والعمل الجماعي.

وفي الختام،

أتمنى لأعمال هذه اللجنة كل التوفيق والنجاح، وأن يشكل اجتماعنا في جمهورية طاجيكستان محطة جديدة في مسيرة العمل البرلماني الآسيوي، نحو أداء أكثر فاعلية وتجديداً وتأثيراً، ومخرجات تضيف إلى ما تحقق، وتستجيب لمتطلبات الحاضر، وتستشرف تحديات المستقبل.

فآسيا التي تتغير بوتيرة متسارعة، تستحق عملاً برلمانياً يواكب تحولاتها، ويستبق تحدياتها، ويترجم تطلعات شعوبها إلى رؤى ومبادرات وقرارات ذات أثر؛ بما

يضمن أن تظل الجمعية البرلمانية الآسيوية مؤسسة حيّة ومتجددة، قادرة على مواكبة عصرها، والاستجابة لشعوبها، وتعزيز حضورها وتأثيرها في محيطها الإقليمي والدولي.

أشركم على حسن استماعكم،
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

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In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,
Honorable Speaker of the Assembly of Representatives of the
Supreme Assembly of the Republic of Tajikistan,
Honorable Secretary-General of the Asian Parliamentary
Assembly,

Distinguished Members of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Peace, mercy, and blessings of God be upon you.

From the cradle of first civilizations and the land of
Mesopotamia, and on behalf of my colleagues in the Iraqi
Council of Representatives and myself, I extend our profound
gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of
the Republic of Tajikistan, and to the Supreme Assembly, for
their warm hospitality and the impeccable organization of the
Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs of the Asian
Parliamentary Assembly.

Distinguished Guests,

We convene today against the backdrop of accelerating
regional and international challenges and critical junctures that
cast long shadows over the stability of our societies. These
realities place us, as parliamentarians and representatives of
our nations, before a solemn duty: to elevate social and cultural
affairs to the forefront of our collective priorities. These issues
are no longer secondary or merely complementary to
development; they constitute the primary bedrock for
achieving social cohesion, stability, and sustainable prosperity.
Our Asian continent is blessed with a rich tapestry of
civilizations and cultures. Iraq, with its deep-rooted historical
heritage, fully recognizes cultural diversity as a source of
national strength and mutual enrichment. In this spirit, the Iraqi
Parliament remains steadfast in enacting laws that safeguard
human and cultural heritage, promote tolerance and peaceful
coexistence, and counter all forms of extremism and fanaticism.

To this end, the Iraqi Council of Representatives actively seeks to enhance its legislative framework to advance social well-being by:

Empowering Women and Youth: Championing their full integration into development and decision-making processes.

Reinforcing Social Protection Nets: Alleviating poverty and safeguarding the most vulnerable segments of society.

Upgrading Essential Services, Healthcare, and Education: Recognizing that investing in human capital is the highest form of national investment.

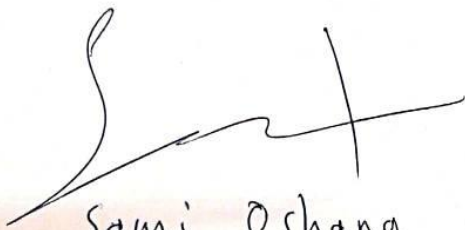
From this platform, we reaffirm the imperative of fostering intercultural and interfaith dialogue to build bridges of trust across our continent; expanding parliamentary cooperation and the exchange of legislative expertise; launching joint initiatives to protect Asian heritage from human infringements and climate change; and harnessing cutting-edge technologies and Artificial Intelligence to digitize and preserve historical landmarks and rare manuscripts from loss.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Within the framework of safeguarding our shared heritage, we call upon all Asian parliaments to enact deterrent legislation to combat the illicit trafficking of antiquities and cultural property. We urge classifying the smuggling of artifacts as a transnational organized crime, enforcing severe penalties against perpetrators, establishing a unified Asian database for stolen antiquities, and strengthening legal, customs, and security cooperation to interdict illicit trade.

Furthermore, states must be bound by legislation prohibiting the possession or commercialization of smuggled cultural assets, ensuring their mandatory repatriation to their countries of origin in compliance with UNESCO conventions. The cultural treasures of Iraq, plundered through decades of war and terrorism, have surfaced in international markets; we can only recover them through unified, binding Asian legislation applied without exception.

In conclusion, we reiterate the firm commitment of the Iraqi Council of Representatives to supporting all initiatives and resolutions of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly aimed at elevating our cultural landscape and preserving our shared human heritage—in alignment with sustainable development goals, full respect for state sovereignty, international law, and the preservation of global peace and security. We wish our deliberations every success in delivering tangible recommendations that meet the aspirations of our peoples. Thank you, and peace, mercy, and blessings of God be upon you.



Samir Oshana
Head of the Iraqi
Parliamentary delegation

25/9/2026

Attachment VI

**Text of the Speech by
H.E Mrs Lajevardi, Member of Iran Parliamentari Delegation
at the Meeting on the Status of Women Members of Asian Parliaments
Permanent Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs of the Asian
Parliamentary Assembly
(APA)
(September 23–27, 2026 – Dushanbe)**

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

**Honorable representatives of Asian parliaments,
ladies and gentlemen,**

On behalf of the parliamentary delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the government and noble people of Tajikistan for the warm hospitality to the attending delegations. We hope that these meetings will pave the way for ever greater and more fruitful cooperation in the region.

The effective presence of women in parliaments and decision-making institutions is one of the important factors in improving the quality of policymaking and in giving fuller attention to the needs and priorities of all segments of society. Parliaments can, by creating suitable opportunities for participation, removing structural obstacles, and preparing the ground for the effective presence of women in political processes, benefit from women's extensive capacities in legislation, oversight, and public policymaking. At the same time, national approaches to increasing women's participation must be designed and implemented with due regard to the legal, social, and cultural structures and development priorities of each country.

Honorable representatives,

In this context, attention to the national conditions and structures and the electoral systems of member countries is of particular importance. The political and electoral systems of Asian countries have been formed on the basis of different constitutional, historical, and social structures, and no single model can be prescribed for all countries. At the same time, all countries can, in accordance with their national conditions, identify obstacles to women's political participation and take action to remove them. Exchange of parliamentary experiences in the field of electoral laws, political education, increasing women's access to decision-making processes, and creating opportunities for women can help strengthen their presence and effective participation in electoral institutions.

It should be noted that real empowerment of women is not limited merely to increasing their numbers in political institutions; rather, it requires providing suitable conditions for their access to education, economic opportunities, social, health, and technological services, and equal opportunities to play a role in various spheres of life. Women's enjoyment of education and

the necessary skills, independence, and economic security, and equitable access to opportunities, will provide the ground for their more effective participation in society and decision-making. From this perspective, parliaments play an important role in formulating laws and policies that help remove existing obstacles and expand opportunities for women's advancement.

In the same vein, strengthening the position of the family and its role in the welfare and empowerment of women deserves attention. The family is one of the most important social institutions and a source of support, security, and welfare for its members. Strengthening the position of women must be considered in connection with support for the family. Support policies for women can, by creating a balance between family responsibilities and social duties, support for mothers, the development of supportive and merit-based services, and the creation of work environments compatible with family responsibilities, contribute to the sustainable empowerment of women. From this perspective, support for the family and the empowerment of women are two complementary goals that can reinforce one another.

Honorable representatives,

In addition to the foregoing, ensuring the role of women in peacemaking and creating security is one of the requirements of today's world. Women should not be considered merely from the perspective of vulnerability in conflicts; rather, they can and should be recognized as active actors in peace and security. Women in many societies play an important role in preventing conflicts, mediating, resolving disputes, rebuilding communities, and establishing peace. Therefore, policies relating to women, peace, and security must, in addition to protecting women against the effects of conflicts, focus on increasing their presence in peace negotiations, mediation, security decision-making, and post-war reconstruction processes.

In the current era, which is accompanied by the expansion of digital technologies, using the capacity of parliamentary cooperation to protect women against threats in cyberspace is one of the areas deserving special attention in the age of artificial intelligence. The expansion of digital technologies has created new opportunities for women's political and social participation, but at the same time threats such as online harassment and violence, intimidation, dissemination of private content, hate speech, and misuse of new technologies have also increased. The parliaments of Asian countries can, through the exchange of legislative experiences, capacity-building, promotion of digital literacy, and cooperation in the field of technology policymaking, help create a safer cyberspace for women. Regional parliamentary cooperation can be an effective platform for identifying successful models and developing solutions tailored to the national conditions of member countries.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the effects of unilateral coercive measures on women, children, and families, and the experience of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Unilateral coercive measures, especially when they affect economic, financial, pharmaceutical, food, and energy sectors and access to basic services, can have disproportionate consequences for women, children, the elderly, and families. The experience of the Islamic Republic of Iran also shows that under sanctions and economic pressures, women and children may face multiplied difficulties in accessing services, livelihoods, and social support.

Moreover, in the recent aggressions by the United States and the Zionist regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran (the Twelve-Day War, the Forty-Day War, and the Hormuz War), women and children have been exposed to the direct and indirect consequences of conflict,

including human casualties, injuries, displacement, loss of family members, and disruption of family life. In a single American military attack on a school, 168 schoolgirls were martyred. On September 1, 2026, during an American missile attack on a house where a wedding ceremony was being held, four people, including a young girl, were martyred. These aggressions and these crimes have had the greatest impact on women and children, and the international community must condemn these aggressions and violations of the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

I thank all of you honorable representatives for your attention and wish success for everyone.
