

PROMOTING PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND DIALOGUE IN ASIA

First and foremost I would like to extend greetings and goodwill from the Parliament of Malaysia and the Speaker of the Parliament of Malaysia. I would like to thank the Chairman for this opportunity to speak at this 8th plenary of Asian Parliamentary Assembly.

On behalf of our delegation we thank the organising chairman Hon Dr. Nguon Nhel and the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia for the warm hospitality and the excellent organisation of this meeting in this beautiful and historical city of Phnom Penh.

Prosperous community needs more than just words postulated by politicians and the legislature in determining its success. The people today ask for more actions and globally oriented workings and understanding in promoting peace, reconciliation and dialogue in Asia.

A peaceful and prosperous community to advance further requires many elements supported by good capacity through its legislature and good governance supported by its people. The system of good governance should be in place over demands, change or policies of the Executive to suit to new conditions to aspire people to their quest for peace. Parliamentarians should have strong understanding and awareness of entrenched rights under the laws and at all times must act as law abiding citizens.

STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Democracy has its own intrinsic values and that too has liberty and equality. The nation should understand that there are many elements to go for in democracy in ensuring that peace is not taken for granted. According to the United Nations GA in March 2005, democracy entails certain essential fundamentals inclusive of inter alia:

- Respect for human rights
- Separation of Powers for check and balance between the Executive, Legislative and the Judiciary
- Respect for law
- Transparency and accountability

Crisis in democracy should be avoided because they do undermine the promotion of peace, reconciliation and the better dialogue among the countries. It is no good for future collaboration in that the notion of democracy has been tarnished. No extremism and terrorism should be tolerated in a democracy as

this is a threat to democracy and practice of moderation. We believe this is where dialogues and proper understanding among leaders and between states is of significance. As had been mentioned by many of our distinguished colleagues here we have to look inward to our strength together to face many of the challenges that the Asian community faced today – both in economy and security - that need states to work together and hold bilateral and multilateral dialogues.

This is when it is timely, the process towards an Asian Parliament to proceed , where regional integration to allow for Peace, Reconciliation and Dialogue in Asia.

PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

The political and legal cooperation between communities could be set up and a blue print be designed to provide for legal and political cooperation without encroaching into the sovereignty of any states.

As we have in front of us the noble proposal of an Asian Parliament which we all can work towards its realisation. The benefits are all there for us to consider and weigh against the challenges we have to face in the process. The focus on this development must be full and worked upon with a well-defined direction.

ENHANCING FACTORS

The factors that can also enhance a strong democratic system as a basis for dialogues for peace and reconciliations are:

A. Good and strong leadership that has to be maintained in each state to contribute to the strength of the whole. Leadership to be able to change the mindset of the people to be more resilient and work towards peace and harmony.

B. Empowering Women

To ensure full participation of women in all levels of decision making in conflict prevention, resolution and peace building. Women's presence in political movements reveals something about health, empowerment, peace, security, integrity and capacity of the political system in which they occur.

Succinctly, it could be said that the government has realised that the economic and social empowerment of women, young girls and youths at large

were crucial to bring the country into developed nation for peace, reconciliation and dialogue were no short cuts to progress.

These are some of the points I see could contribute to the development of peace, reconciliation and dialogues in the region.

Thank you.