

ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Second Session of the Plenary

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

19 -20 November 2007

Tehran Declaration

1. We, the representatives of member Parliaments from Asian countries met in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran from 19 to 20 November 2007 for the Second Session of the Plenary of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), at the kind invitation of His Excellency, Dr. Haddad Adel, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the President of the APA, hereby adopt the following declaration:
2. We strongly believe that APA will help us realize the objectives of its establishment i.e. the promotion of freedom, justice and the spread of knowledge in order to further strengthen progress and prosperity of its members; making better use of the region's vast human and natural resources while advancing the interests of the member states and their peoples through cooperation.
3. We appreciate the reports and documents prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the APA member parliaments which were discussed and further elaborated in the Executive Council meetings (9-11 September 2007 and 17-18 November 2007) and finally adopted in this session of the Plenary of the APA as follows:
 - Charter of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly contained in document APA/2007/10
 - Rules of the Procedures for the Plenary of the APA contained in document APA/2007/09
 - Plan of Action on Cultural Diversity contained in document APA/Res/2007/02/Annex
 - Plan of Action on Globalization contained in document APA/Res/2007/03/Annex
 - Plan of Action on Alleviating Poverty contained in document APA/Res/2007/04/Annex

- Plan of Action on Combating Corruption contained in document APA/Res/2007/05/Annex
 - The Friendship Pact in Asia contained in document APA/Res/2007/06/Annex
 - APA decision on Asian Monetary Fund contained in document APA/Dec/2007/01 and its Annex
4. Furthermore, we welcome the deliberations of the five Standing Committees which has resulted in five resolutions adopted by the Assembly. These resolutions cover important issues facing Asia today and are summarized as follows:

I- POLITICAL ISSUES

5. Call for enhanced cooperation between Asian countries in combating international terrorism. Such cooperation could include exchange of data, and training to enhance the professionalism among counter terrorism officers, for information exchanges and practical cooperation, in a manner not to contradict with human rights, between law enforcement agencies to update the legal provisions in the area of counter terrorism.
6. Recognize the importance of addressing the root causes of international terrorism. Realized the foreign occupation and inhuman behaviors of occupying forces as the main source of threat to regional and international peace and security particularly in the case Iraq where the peoples are suffering from behaviors of occupying forces and terrorist groups acting in Iraq. Reiterated that the struggle of peoples living under the yoke of foreign occupation and colonialism, to achieve national liberation and establish their right to self-determination, does not in any way constitute an act of terrorism.
7. Strongly condemn the crimes committed by the Israeli regime's occupying forces against the innocent people, women and children of the Palestine. Demand also the release by Israeli regime without delay of thousands of the Palestinians, including the speaker of the Palestine parliament and 40 Members of the Parliament who have been in the hands of Israeli regime for years.
8. Repeat its strong Condemnation of the aggression imposed by Israeli regime with the support of the United States against Lebanon and reaffirmed that the aggressor and its supporter have the responsibility for all the consequences of the aggression against Lebanon. Also, stressed the liberation of the occupied areas of Golan Heights and Lebanese Sheba Farms from the occupation of Zionist regime.

9. Urge Israeli regime to respect the ceasefire and stop aerial and land aggressions against the territory of the Lebanon in conformity with the international decisions.
10. Commit themselves to promote peace and security both at global, continental and regional levels on the basis of justice, mutual respect and the rule of law through expanding cooperation and interaction with all nations within and outside Asia,
11. Express deep concern over the deterioration of the political situation in parts of Asia, especially in the Middle East and particularly in Palestine, and Afghanistan,
12. Noting the considerable changes in the dynamics of the international relations in recent history, believe that the need for a major reform in the structure of the United Nations and its organs, including the Security Council, is profoundly required in order to make the decision-making process in the UN system more representative,
13. Believe that the expansion of the culture of unilateralism in International relations nurtures the challenges at global level and in Asia, leading to undermine the fundamental rights of nations including the right to self-determination,
14. Express their deep concern about continuing resort to terrorism around the world and condemn, in the strongest term, all kinds of terrorist acts under any pretext, including state terrorism, and the need to differentiate between terrorism and the right of peoples under occupation to resistance.
15. Condemn attempts to violate sovereignty and territorial integrity of Asian countries and interference in their internal affairs,
16. Reject application of double standard in dealing with issues in international relations,
17. Further reject imposing unilateral sanctions against any state including countries of Asia under any pretext, undermining the welfare of people and the principles of free trade,
18. Call for an end to occupation and presence by foreign forces in Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan and any other country with a clear timetable for withdrawal and

urge concerted efforts by members of international community to help rebuild these countries,

19. Call upon international community to help achieve a just settlement for the Palestinian issue in which the rights and dignity of the Palestinians are duly acquired, the return of all refugees secured and the occupation of the Zionist Regime in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria is for ever ended,
20. Call upon International community to take urgent measures for the relief of the humanitarian crisis imposed on Gaza by the Israeli policy.
21. Express deep concern about continued interference by the United States, the Zionist Regime and any other external force in the internal affairs of Lebanon, especially the continued military maneuvering and the violation of its air space and sovereignty by the Zionist Regime, and fully support the election of a new President for Lebanon by national consensus.
22. Strongly condemn threats of the use of force by the United States against the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syrian Arab Republic and any other country in the world.
23. Emphasize that the founding of international relations on the basis of justice remains a high priority agenda; and in this respect welcome, with great interest, the remarks by His Excellency Dr. Ahmadi Nejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and decide to form a working group in order to explore ways and means of fostering justice in international relations at national, regional and global levels,
24. Decide to further discuss the modalities of efficient cooperation and coordination between the APA and respective governments. In this respect, they ask the Secretary General of the APA to pursue the formation of an ad Hoc Committee and prepare all documents required for its work. The ad Hoc Committee shall hold at least one meeting before the next session of the General Assembly and submit its final report to it.

II. ECONOMIC ISSUES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

25. Call on Member Parliaments to collectively support South –South Cooperation specially through the Triangular cooperation initiative ,considering the different levels of economic development of the Asian countries that can be exploited as a window of opportunity for expanding such economic cooperation;

26. Recall the need for the creation of the mechanism by the APA to exchange information and best exploit the experiences through the good or the best practices of the Asian countries to further address the current economic and developmental challenges posing by the globalization process,
27. Recall the huge economic potentials of the region, and encourages the creation of Asian integrated markets in appropriate fields such as energy, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and other new technologies, contributing the sustainable development of Asian countries.
28. Also recognize that the appealing cultural diversity in the Asian region is a genuine asset for its economic growth, and that there is a real need for expansion of tourism in the region which, in addition to economic advantages, would create closer link between Asian people and more understanding among each other;
29. Stress the importance of SMEs, trade, services, insurance and investment flows as the engines of economic growth throughout Asia, and urges all Member Parliaments to accelerate ratification of those national, sub regional, regional and international trade and investment agreements to this end.
30. Encourage Member Parliaments to promote investment and trade cooperation through bilateral or multilateral trade agreements, and incorporate MDGs in the trade cooperation as well as pave the way for the establishment of an Asian common market.
31. Reject firmly the application of coercive economic measures and sanctions. The imposition of such measures not only have adverse impacts on the well-being and daily lives of ordinary people, but also contradicts the main principles of multilateral trading system and WTO rules.
32. Remind Member Parliaments to promote the development of a swift response and a regional cooperation on early warning system to reduce the tragic consequences of natural disasters which affect the lives and livelihoods of many Asians every year. Encourages the establishment of a regional center for information, communication and space technology – enabled disaster management to be taken into consideration;
33. Welcome regional and international initiatives to preserve sound global environment for future generations, and urges Member Parliaments to observe environmental issues in their review of economic development plans.

III- PEACE AND SECURITY

34. Express its concern over the misuse of veto power by certain permanent members of the UN Security Council and stressed that the reform of the United Nations is an essential need in order to meet the challenges around the world.
35. Reaffirm the inalienable right of all states to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination and in conformity with their respective legal obligations and stress that nothing should be interpreted in a way as inhibiting or restricting this right of states to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes.
36. Recognize the International Atomic Energy Agency as the sole competent authority for verification of the respective safeguards obligations of the Member States, and emphasize that all issues on the IAEA safeguards and verification, including those of Iran, should be resolved within the framework of the Agency, and be based on technical and legal grounds. Therefore, we expressed our strong conviction that the only way to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue is the continuation of negotiations without any preconditions and enhancing cooperation with the involvement of all relevant parties with the view to facilitating Agency's work on resolving the few remaining issues. In this context, they support the recent IAEA Director General report's in which it is stated "the Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran" and emphasize on the continuation of the cooperation with the Agency.
37. Express the conviction on the necessity of developing effective measures to ensure the security of Non-Nuclear Weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and stressed that the total elimination of nuclear weapons in accordance with provisions of the NPT is the only absolute guarantee against the use of such weapons.
38. Consider the establishment of a Zone free from Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East as a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament.
39. Condemn the rejection of Israeli regime to join the NPT and the IAEA Safeguards and considered its nuclear weapon program as a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region. They urge the International community to put pressure against Israeli regime to accede to the NPT without delay and place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive Safeguards.
40. Reiterate its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms including Israel's state terrorism, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international

peace and security. They express concern about the selective approaches to the issue of terrorism and stress the need to consider this issue in a comprehensive manner.

41. Encourage the efforts for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula through the genuine aspiration and concerted efforts of the Korean People themselves in accordance with the North – South Joint Declaration, dated 15 June 2000.
42. Recommend to accredit the Organization of the Islamic Conference the status of the observer taking into account that such action would serve to the common concerns and interests.

IV- Energy

43. Encourage Asian energy producing and energy consuming countries to undertake joint projects in exploration, extraction, production, refining, transit, transportation, and marketing of oil and gas and other forms of energy; Minimize political, technical, and bureaucratic impediments encountering investment in energy related fields in Asia at regional and international levels; and Contribute to the stability of world energy market by trying to balance the supply and demand in the Asian energy market;
44. Recommend the establishment of a ‘body’ by the Asian States in order to promote regional cooperation in various fields of energy in the interest of all Asian nations. The principle objectives of this body shall comprise the following:
 45. Create financial, capital and insurance markets in Asia through mechanisms such as establishing banks for further promotion of investment in energy supply and demands and provision of finance, financial guarantees and insurance;
 46. Promote trade in products, equipments, technologies, and services related to various fields of energy;
 47. Establish an Asian integrated research network and a statistics center focusing on energy related research and information to facilitate joint projects and exchange of information as well as academic cooperation;
48. Support public and private sectors investment in upstream and downstream industries of oil and gas by fostering Asian transnational corporations;

49. Reduce energy intensity as well as optimize energy consumption by enhancing existing facilities and utilizing new technologies whereby upgrading current standards and making them applicable in all Asian countries;
50. Encourage member countries to further utilize clean and environment-friendly technologies in managing their fossil energy resources and to employ renewable energies such as bio-fuel for diminishing environmental damages;
51. Promote investment in utilizing the most reasonable, economical, and optimized transit and transportation routes of energy in Asia;
52. Facilitate energy exchange and swap in Asia aiming at the reduction of energy costs.
53. Urge the APA Member Parliaments to encourage their respective governments to adopt strategies leading to the establishment of an organization by participation of Asian Governments to pursue the objectives delineated in the Plan of Action annexed to APA resolution number APA/Res/2007/08, dated 19 November 2007.

V- Social and Cultural Issues

54. Inspire by the Tehran Declaration and Program of Action on Human rights and Cultural Diversity adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Human Rights and Cultural Diversity, which was held on 3-4 September 2007 in the Islamic Republic of Iran;
55. Affirm that cultural diversity is a cherished asset for the advancement and welfare of Asian states and should be valued, enjoyed, genuinely accepted and embraced as permanent future which enriches their societies;
56. Recall the role of women in the political, cultural and social development and the need for utilization of women's capabilities in the development of their societies;
57. Emphasize the importance of the family unit in the preservation of social stability and the need for the establishment of a balanced role for women in the family and society;
58. Decide to formulate policies and strategies to protect cultural diversity and facilitate the mandates stipulated in the Plan of Action for Protecting and respecting Cultural Diversity in Asia,

59. Establish a Working Group of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly to consider the draft document on the rights and duties of Asian Women.
60. Set up three sub-committees under the social and cultural committee of APA composed of delegations from at least 7 Member parliaments to meet at least once a year prior to the APA Executive Council session to facilitate the implementation of Plan of Action on Cultural Diversity, and to examine ways and means to protect Asian culture and heritage from the negative aspects of globalization, as well as to adopt a holistic approach to combating corruption,
61. Consider establishing an Asian news agency in order to open further new information fields and horizons to serve the Asian member states,
62. Underline the importance of organizing inter-faith dialogue in order to deepen regional solidarity and reinforce understanding among different Asian religions and cultures,
63. Encourage local governments, city councils and mayors from APA Member Parliaments to find ways to exchange information and experience on their activities in support of the work of the APA and welcome the proposal by the Mayor of Tehran to host a meeting in 2008 of the mayors of the capitals of APA member Parliaments to explore the idea of public participation in promoting the vision of greater integration in Asia.

VI. General Issues

64. Upon suggestions of a number of delegates, the Second Session of the APA Plenary requested the President of the Assembly to forward a message of condolences to the Speakers of the Parliament of Bangladesh and Afghanistan, respectively for the loss of lives of several hundred people as the result of the clone in Bangladesh and the terrorist act in Afghanistan that killed nearly forty people including five members of the Parliament of Afghanistan.
65. Upon suggestions of a number of delegates, the second Session of the APA Plenary requested the President to issue a statement about the arrest and incarceration of the speaker and a number of representatives of the Parliament of Palestine by the Zionist regime, condemning this act, and calling for their immediate release.

VII. Election of the APA Secretary-General

66. The Second Session of the APA Plenary elected, by acclamation, H.E. Dr. Mohammad Hadi Nejad Hosseinian, as the Secretary-General of the APA for a four-year term.

VIII. Acknowledgement of Appreciation

67. We express our gratitude to the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran for graciously hosting the Session in which the AAPP was transformed into APA (November 2006) as well as the Second Session of the Plenary of the APA. We acknowledge the great contribution of H.E. Mr. Haddad Adel, the First President of the APA in the promotion of the APA in so short a time since its inception, and therefore we hereby, invite him to take part, as a special guest, in the subsequent Sessions of the APA Plenary.

68. The Speaker of the Parliament of Indonesia will serve as the next President of the APA. The Parliament of Indonesia will host the 2008 Session of the APA Plenary and the Executive Council meeting.