



EC1/Rep/2008
8 October 2008

Report of the First Executive Council Meeting in 2008

8 October 2008
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The first meeting of APA Executive Council in 2008 was hosted by the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on 8 October 2008 in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. Delegations from Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Tonga, Turkey and Yemen participated in the meeting. The Delegation of the Parliament of Oman participated as Observer. A complete list of participants is attached as Annex 1.
2. The list of documents before the Executive Council consisted of:
 - 2.1. Report of the First Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Asian Integrated Energy Market, SC/2008/01, dated 15 May 2008.
 - 2.2. Report of the Sub-Committee on Alleviating Poverty in Asia, SC/2008/02, dated 13 June 2008.
 - 2.3. Report of the Sub-Committee on the Friendship Pact of Asia, SC/2008/03, dated 24 June 2008.
 - 2.4. Report of the Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues, Global Warming and Planting Billions of Trees throughout Asia, SC/2008/04, dated 22 July 2008.
 - 2.5. Report of the Sub-Committee on Protecting and Respecting Cultural Diversity in Asia, SC/2008/05, dated 22 August 2008.
 - 2.6. Report of the Sub-Committee on Combating Corruption in Asia, SC/2008/06, dated 6 October 2008.
 - 2.7. Report of the Sub-Committee on the Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization in Asia, SC/2008/07, dated 6 October 2008.
 - 2.8. Report of the Sub-Committee on Enhancing Cooperation between APA Member Parliaments and Their Governments for Implementation of APA

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Decisions, SC/2008/08, dated 7 October 2008.

- 2.9. Report of the Second Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Asian Integrated Energy Market, SC/2008/09, dated 7 October 2008.
3. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Mohammad Hassan Abutorabi Fard, Chairman of the APA Executive Council and First Vice-Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
4. Honorable, Dr. Ali Larijani, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the APA President, delivered an opening statement in which he underlined the following points:
 - a) In the wake of radical changes in the former Soviet Union, theories such as global management and unilateralism overshadowed the policies and actions of one of the poles of global power. This later led to fanatic domination of a militaristic approach over the polarized international system again to such an extent that notions like pre-emptive war and military occupation were promoted under the pretext of fighting terrorism and local lackeys were implanted under the pretext of promoting democracy using an arrogant language. This period witnessed the worst crimes against humanity, while they tried to present a legal justification for it. Brutal bombardments of Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan and Lebanon and maintaining terrible prisons in Abu Ghuraib and Guantanamo are all horrible consequences of such a policy of unilateralism in recent decade.
 - b) Despite these unpleasant developments, the world is now surpassing the rigid and unproductive, unilateralist approach. The current situation has not yet been clearly shaped and world players have not been able to establish their roles in this chess game. Therefore, this shapeless situation can be considered an opportunity for Asia to define an appropriate position for itself in the international equations.
 - c) Asia's civilizations, cultures, power of inspirations, energy, technology and unutilized opportunities promised by a coordinated development, have bestowed this continent a prominent position in the world. In fact, Asia is itself a pole that could influence political, economic, trade and cultural developments worldwide. Russia's active outlook in the regional and global scenes, China's emerging economic and technological power, the significant developments in the economic life of Southeast Asia, the significant political and technological developments in West Asia and Mideast and the power of oil and gas in Asia are some examples of the important tools which enable Asia to play a responsible role in the next decades. If Asia does not take advantage of this vital opportunity to redefine its power, others will unrighteously make the space tight for Asia's evolutionary movement by their faked presence.
 - d) Other players in the current jelly-like, polarized world system create problems for Asia because they do not have an accurate knowledge of the culture and

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social characteristics of the peoples of this continent. NATO's faulty moves in Afghanistan and the West's dreams and temptations of influencing the Caucasus and Central Asia and dominating the future energy reserves of the world are just some instances of such miscalculations on their part.

The Executive Council decided to include Hon. Dr. Larijani's statement in the meeting's official documents.

5. Hon. Abutorabi Fard, Chairman of the APA Executive Council and First Vice-Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, said that "our world today is facing numerous challenges and opportunities. The trend of development is so rapid and complex that no one is capable of predicting the world's future."

"Different capacities to overcome the current difficulties and achieve prosperity exist in Asia. With an aggregated four billion population, amazing histories, great civilizations, rich mineral resources and a rapid economic growth, this continent has been able to enhance its standing at the international level and defend the common interests of its nations and its historical identity" he added.

He also elaborated on the numerous activities of the APA throughout 2008 including organization of different Sub-Committee meetings, saying that while all of the APA agenda items are important on the road towards integration in Asia, the following points also deserve special attention:

- a) Issues that have not been taken heed of in 2008 such as the economic and sustainable development, and cooperation of APA Member Parliaments in this regard; and
- b) The issue of transportation in Asia (Mr. Abutorabi suggested that a Sub-Committee be set up in the course of 2009 to study this issue and its various aspects);

He underlined energy as one of the most important issues on APA's agenda and expressed the conviction that "with our perseverance and cooperation, we can achieve the integrated energy market in Asia." He also underscored the issue of close cooperation between the Asian parliaments and governments as the key to success and integration in Asia. "Therefore, it is necessary that the relevant APA Sub-Committee continues its work until specific solutions are formulated in this regard" he said.

Pointing to the unfolding crisis in the financial markets of the U.S. and all other capitalist economies, Mr. Abutorabi proposed that the APA explore the ramifications of this crisis for the economies of its members.

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6. APA Secretary-General, H. E. Dr. Nejad Hosseinian, presented his report, entitled “State of the Assembly,” on the current situation and progress of APA activities. Below is a summary of his report:
 - a) During its first year of activity, APA Secretariat could not only overcome the initial challenges such as finding and equipping an appropriate headquarters and putting together a capable expert team and staff members, but also successfully performed all of the tasks as assigned by the APA Plenary as follows:
 - I. Coordination of nine Sub-Committee meetings in various host countries for each of which the Secretary-General and his team prepared an expert report, as mandated by Plenary’s resolutions, to set the ground for discussions and deliberations, as well as a meeting report containing a draft resolution;
 - II. Coordinating, with Tehran’s Municipality, holding of the first meeting of Asian Mayors Forum in Tehran, 19-20 November 2008, with the aim of exploring new perspectives on local governance and urban development throughout Asia;
 - III. Setting up a working group to consider various methods of producing and disseminating news reports on the developments across Asia with particular emphasis on Asian Parliaments;
 - IV. Working to expand relations with international organizations such as the United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UN Environment Program, as well as keeping cordial working relations with the ambassadors of APA Member Countries in Tehran to discuss means and ways of promoting APA objectives and programs; (In light of the above, the Secretary-General proposed considering several draft resolutions by the Executive Council on obtaining observer status for the APA at the UN, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Association of East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community, and the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States.)
 - V. Exploring the means, including cultural and artistic media in general and the movie industry in particular, to make APA and its goals known to the public in every Asian country.
 - b) To increase the chances of lively and active debates among APA delegates and to facilitate handling the increasing volume of communication on the growing number of its agenda items, the Secretary-General proposed that the idea of setting up a “Virtual Parliament” alongside the current conventional meetings of APA be considered by the Members.
 - c) The Secretary-General also proposed consideration of the following issues as



some of the main priorities of APA which may be included in its new agenda:

- I. Developing APA's budgeting and financial regulations and diversifying its financial resources;
- II. Consideration of further dynamic topics and innovative areas – such as transportation and health equity – to catch up with the rapid developments and trends at global and regional levels; and
- III. APA delegates' use of experts from their own country or beyond, who would provide them with continuous background information regarding the subject matter of various APA meetings and deliberations.

General Debate

7. All speakers in the General Debate expressed their gratitude to the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially its Speaker, Hon. Dr. Larijani, and First Vice-Speaker, Hon. Abutorabi, for hosting this important event and for the hospitality and professional organization maintained by the host throughout the meeting. They also thanked the permanent Secretariat of APA, especially Secretary-General Dr. Nejad Hosseini, for his efforts since last year's Plenary in organizing and servicing various APA-related meetings in various forms including preparation of issue-oriented reports, meeting reports and draft resolutions for the Sub-Committees and the Executive Council and for maintaining and efficiently circulating APA documents.

The speakers in the General Debate were as follows:

8. Hon. Mr. Tosari Widjaja, Head of the Indonesian parliamentary delegation, expressed his appreciation for the productive Sub-Committee meetings held in several countries and stressed the commitment of his parliament to work hard for hosting the upcoming meeting of APA Plenary in Jakarta, on 26-29 November 2008.
9. Hon. Mr. Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh reminded that APA's predecessor, the "Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace and Prosperity (AAPP)", came to existence in 1997 by holding its first meeting in his country. He said that he set forth the idea of forming APA, along with proposals for formation of an Asian Union like the European Union and establishment of an Asian Anti-Poverty Fund by co-sponsorship of Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation. He also expressed his satisfaction at the way in which APA, with its Secretariat in Tehran, had been functioning under the able stewardship of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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10. Hon. Senator Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, Deputy Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, referred to the Palestinian issue and highlighted the recent uprising in Kashmir. He stressed that peoples of Asia have great cultural heritages and all of the necessary resources which make them capable enough. He further highlighted the importance of energy in the world saying that the IPI gas pipeline, jointly pursued by Iran, Pakistan and India, is a significant project, the finalization of which has been challenged by the US-India nuclear pact.
11. Hon. Dr. Waleed Musa'id al-Tabtabae, Member of the National Assembly of Kuwait, said that a study of all of the issues stipulated in Tehran Declaration of 2007 regarding formation of working groups for consideration and formulation of action plans on many issues of common interest among Asian nations has been accomplished. Accordingly, he expressed his parliament's appreciation for the efforts made to realize these goals by preparing the reports and documents by the APA Secretary-General with the assistance of the international centers of expertise. He said that since APA's First Plenary in 2006, "we have witnessed a true and rapid actualization of the decisions included in Tehran Declaration. This clearly indicates the significant devotion of APA's Presidency."

He proposed formation of a work group to study the issues of particular interest to the Member Countries including the modality for exploiting the expertise of Asian countries to deal with the political, economic and developmental challenges imposed by the Globalization process; using the huge potential and capabilities of the region to create integrated markets in areas such as energy; promoting investment and trade relations, as the key to economic growth, through mutual trade agreements; the means to establish better relations among Asian nations and encourage cooperation between the governments of APA Member Parliaments and the APA; and setting up Asian research centers.

He expressed his hope that the main goal of the meeting would be to move from the stage of adopting resolutions to one of actual implementation on the ground of reality through a transparent and clear-cut plan.

12. Hon. Mr. Hassan Fadlallah, Member of the Parliament of Lebanon, presented a brief picture of the situation in his country.
13. Hon. Mr. S. Rajabov, Member of the Parliament of Tajikistan, proposed that Persian be added to the list of APA's official languages.
14. Hon. Dr. Salah Ali Abdulrahman, Second Deputy-Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain, said that the biggest challenge for the APA and all of its members is to transform its resolutions to practical reality. He suggested that the representatives of Asian governments be invited to APA meetings so that they become aware of what has been done in the APA. He underlined the need to form Expert Committees to advise the APA on specialized matters such as energy.

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Hon. Dr. Abdulrahman urged the APA to take clear positions regarding the problems and challenges facing APA Members such as Iraq and Afghanistan. In his opinion, it is incumbent upon the APA to support promotion of peace and cessation of conflicts and bloodshed and to protest the hegemonic powers that interfere in the affairs of APA Members. He expressed regret at the fact that some major Asian parliaments were not represented in the meeting and hoped that the Parliament of Indonesia, who will host the upcoming Plenary session, will do its best to ensure participation of all APA Members.

15. Hon. Mr. Taysir Quba'a, Deputy-Speaker of Palestine's National Council, thanked APA Secretariat for the great effort it put in preparation of the documents which made the Executive Council's task easier. He underlined his Council's continuous participation in various stages of APA's activities since its inception in Dhaka, and expressed his conviction that APA's roles will grow everyday as a result of the sincere efforts of all of its members.

He said that the Palestinians face a war of demolition waged by an enemy who has occupied their land and rights with the blind support of the most powerful government in the world, i.e., the United States of America. "Our nation experiences the killing, torture, humiliation, robbery, imprisonment, uprooting trees and destruction of homes and institutions perpetrated in its own land by the Zionists every day. Blockading one and a half million of our fellow Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, turning that region into a huge prison for its residents, and kidnapping about 70 Palestinian Members of Parliament, including the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Brother Dr. Aziz al-Duwaik, are only some instances on the long list of Zionists' crimes" he said.

He stated that, despite all of its allegations, the Zionist enemy is not planning or working to achieve peace, but pursues full domination over Palestine's land and usurpation of its inalienable and legitimate national rights with U.S. support. However, the will of the Palestinian nation will not weaken and resistance will remain its only choice until it returns to its homeland and redeem its sovereignty and independent statehood with its capital in al-Quds al-Sharif.

Hon. Mr. Quba'a highlighted the failure of the plots of Imperialism and Zionism to disintegrate Lebanon and terrorize and subdue Syria and pointed to their continuous efforts "to entangle our nations in consecutive crises ranging from their occupation in Iraq or Afghanistan to the financial crisis which has been unfolding these days."

16. Hon. Mr. Mijhim al-Khrasha, Member of the Parliament of Jordan, also made a statement in support of the work of the APA and preparatory efforts of the APA Secretariat.
17. Hon. Dr. Seyed Ali-Reza Marandi, Member of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran, underscored the existing socio-economic inequalities in Asia and their impact on the health situation of Asian communities, particularly the



poor and vulnerable groups, and also the vast health inequities within and among Asian countries. He emphasized the urgent necessity of reducing such health inequities and narrowing the health gap in Asia.

In this regard, he cited the final report of WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) addressing the problem of health and socio-economic inequalities at the global, regional and country levels, which was submitted to the Director-General of WHO, who has decided to submit a resolution on Social Determinants of Health (SDH) to the 62nd Session of the World Health Assembly. He proposed that APA Members explore the possibility of adopting joint policies on health equity and strengthening collaboration among themselves in this regard as elaborated by CSDH, the first step in this direction being to identify the main social determinants of health inequities and the methods of tackling this phenomenon.

His proposal was supported by some delegations. The Executive Council considered and decided to recommend the text of the draft resolution prepared by the Secretariat based on this proposal to the upcoming Plenary session for adoption.

Consideration of Draft Resolutions

18. The Executive Council considered the draft resolutions proposed by various Sub-Committees as well as APA Member Parliaments. The Chairman invited delegates to express their opinions regarding each Draft Resolution. Finally, the Executive Council decided to recommend all of the Draft Resolutions before it, to the upcoming Plenary Meeting to be held on 26-29 November 2008 in Jakarta, for final adoption. The Draft Resolutions were as follows:
 - a) Draft Resolution on Integrated Energy Market in Asia EC1/2008/01 dated 8 October 2008;
 - b) Draft Resolution on Alleviating Poverty in Asia EC1/2008/02 dated 8 October 2008;
 - c) Draft Resolution on Pursuing Implementation of the Friendship Pact of Asia EC1/2008/03 dated 8 October 2008;
 - d) Draft Resolution on Environmental Issues, Global Warming and Planting Billions of Trees Throughout Asia EC1/2008/04 dated 8 October 2008;
 - e) Draft Resolution on Protecting and Respecting Cultural Diversity in Asia EC1/2008/05 dated 8 October 2008;
 - f) Draft Resolution on Combating Corruption in Asia EC1/2008/06 dated 8 October 2008;

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- g) Draft Resolution on the Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization in Asia EC1/2008/07 dated 8 October 2008;
 - h) Draft Resolution on Enhancing Cooperation between the Asian Parliamentary Assembly Member Parliaments and Their Governments for Implementation of APA Decisions EC1/2008/08 dated 8 October 2008;
 - i) Draft Resolution on Seeking Observer Status at the OIC and PUIC EC1/2008/09 dated 8 October 2008;
 - j) Draft Resolution on Seeking Observer Status at the United Nations EC1/2008/10 dated 8 October 2008;
 - k) Draft Resolution on Seeking Observer Status at the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community, EC1/2008/11 dated 8 October 2008;
 - l) Draft Resolution on Seeking Observer Status at the ASEAN, EC1/2008/12 dated 8 October 2008;
 - m) Draft Resolution on Seeking Observer Status at the Inter-parliamentary Union, EC1/2008/13 dated 8 October 2008;
 - n) Draft Resolution on Achieving Health Equity in Asia, EC1/2008/14 dated 8 October 2008; and
 - o) Draft Resolution on APA Budget and Expenditure, EC1/2008/15 dated 8 October 2008;
19. The Executive Council also requested the Secretary-General to draft two resolutions based on the proposals set forth during the meeting and submit them to the second meeting of the Executive Council in Jakarta for consideration and recommendation to the Plenary, as follows:
- a) Draft Resolution on Exploring the Ramifications of U.S. Financial Crisis for the Economies of APA Member Countries; and
 - b) Draft Resolution on Adoption of Persian as an Official Language of APA.



Annex 1

List of Participants in the First Executive Council Meeting 2008

8 October 2008
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

In alphabetical order

I. Members:

Countries	Members of Parliaments	Government Representatives/ Experts/ Staff
Bahrain	- Hon. Dr. Salah Ali Abdulrahman (Second Deputy Speaker, Council of Representatives)	- Mr. Fahad al-Shehabi (Chief, Public Relations)
Bangladesh	- Hon. Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui (Deputy Speaker)	- Mr. Md. Humayun Kabir (Private Secretary to Hon. Deputy Speaker)
Bhutan		- Mr. Nima Tshering (Secretary General) - Mr. Lakshuman Chhetri (Chief Information & Media Officer) - Mr. Tenzin Namgai (Research Officer)
Cambodia	- Hon. Try. Chheang Hout - Hon. Sik Bunhok	- Mr. Nguon Raksmeay (Delegation's Secretary) - Mr. Hok Bunly (Delegation's Secretary)

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Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Tosari Widjaja (Head of Delegation) - Hon. Luthfi Hasan Ishaq 	- Mr. Sugeng Wahono (Adviser)
Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Dr. Seyed Alireza Marandi (MP, Islamic Consultative Assembly) - Hon. Nasser Sundani (MP, Islamic Consultative Assembly) 	
Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Adel al-Khawaldeh - Hon. Mijhim Khrasha - Hon. Abdelhamid al-Thnaibat 	- Mr. Ayman al-Majali (Administrative Staff)
Kuwait	- Hon. Dr. Waleed Musa'id al-Tabtabae (MP, National Assembly)	- Mr. Jamal Abdallah al-Khamees (Director of Foreign Affairs)
Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hassan Fadlallah (MP, National Assembly) - Hon. Nader Sukkar (MP, National Assembly) 	
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Senator Mir Jan Mohammad Jamali (Deputy Chairman, Senate) - Hon. Mrs. Belum Hasnain (MP, National Assembly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Rafique Ahmad Dahar (Press Counselor, Embassy of Pakistan) - Mr. Mohammad Hashim Khan (Delegation's Secretary)
Palestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Taysir Quba'a (Deputy Speaker, Palestine's National Council) - Hon. Zuhair Sanduka (MP, Palestine's National Council) 	
Russian Federation	- Hon. Rudik Iskouchine (MP, Council of Federation)	- Mr. Maxim Tokarev (Delegation's Secretary)

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Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Saeed Jarman (MP, Shura Council) - Hon. Dr. Hezam al-Otaibi (MP, Shura Council) 	
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. S. Rajabov - Hon. A. Sharifov - Hon. J. Kamolov 	
Tonga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Akilisi Pohiva - Hon. Ma'afu 	
Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Abdulkadir Emin Onen (MP, Grand National Assembly / Head of Delegation) - Hon. Mehmet Sahin (MP, Grand National Assembly) - Hon. Nevzat Korkmaz (MP, Grand National Assembly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Erdogan Sakal (Vice Director of Foreign Relations, Grand National Assembly) - Mr. Murat Hasturk (Delegation's Secretary) - Mr. Emirhan Yorucmazlar (Second Secretary of Turkish Embassy)
Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hon. Mohammed Esmaeel Ahmad al-Arhabi (Member of Rights and Liberties Committee) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Jamal A. al-Sallal (Ambassador of Yemen in Tehran) - Mr. Zain M. al-Quaiti (Yemen Embassy) - Mr. Mohammed A. Maudha (Yemen Embassy)

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II. Observers:

Oman	- Hon. Nasser al-Mawali (Deputy Chairman, Shura Council) - Hon. Saif al-Rahbi (MP, Shura Council / Head of Legal Committee)	
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* Please report any error in the above list to the APA Secretariat at:

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