



**GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY CONGRESS
THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD
12–13 May 2023, Vilnius**

PLENARY SESSION 1: GEOSTRATEGIC RECONSTRUCTION OF THE WORLD

Speech by Mr Duarte PACHECO

President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Excellencies,

Distinguished Members of Parliament,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor to address this gathering at the Congress on the Future of the World in Vilnius. The subject of “Geostrategic Reconstruction of the World” is extremely urgent and more topical than ever, considering the current geopolitical context.

When most of us hear the words “geostrategic affairs” and “future world order,” we first think of Heads of State, foreign affairs and defense ministers, ambassadors, the United Nations Security Council, and those who are in the process of negotiating either peace or security agreements. These actions are of critical significance, and yet, there is another kind of diplomacy that I believe is of critical importance: parliamentary diplomacy.

Indeed, parliaments are increasingly expected to play a significant role in addressing the international policy challenges that will shape our world’s future for generations to come: the climate emergency, nuclear safety, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, operationalizing the SDGs, addressing global pandemics, among many others. As the representatives of the people, our involvement in multilateral affairs is critical to ensuring that policies and decisions made at the international level are fully grounded on the needs and realities of our constituents – and that global commitments are effectively implemented.

Thus, parliamentary diplomacy complements traditional inter-governmental cooperation and enhances its democratic legitimacy. This idea is embedded in the High-Level Declaration on parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism, adopted at the 5th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Vienna less than two years ago. Accordingly, the IPU aims to bolster parliamentary participation and engagement in international decision-making processes, with the goal of ensuring that parliaments are fully integrated into a human-centered multilateral system, one that has a strong United Nations at its core and which is guided by international law.

Indeed, the IPU is closely monitoring and contributing to the ongoing process of UN reform, as well as the upcoming 2024 UN Summit of the Future. Through its Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, the IPU is mobilizing parliamentarians around key UN reform issues: improving the gender balance of the General Assembly, supporting the reform of the Security Council to be more effective and more representative, and making the UN budget and UN operations more transparent. As parliamentarians, we need to systematically apply a high degree of scrutiny and input into UN processes, hold our governments to account for what they say or do at this forum, and exercise our legislative and budgetary functions so that international commitments become domestic realities.

We also need to do a better job in future-proofing our decision-making process. This is one of the issues that we will be examining in greater detail in the context of the Summit of parliamentary Committees of the Future, which will be held later this year in Uruguay. A high degree of parliamentary involvement in the UN will be vital in establishing the groundwork for a more efficient and democratic global cooperation system that is capable of addressing today's issues and any emerging challenges.

Needless to say, parliamentary diplomacy is also particularly relevant in the context of the war in Ukraine. The IPU, through two emergency item resolutions, has clearly condemned the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of the territories of another State, and has forcefully called for the return to the fundamental principles of international law and of the UN Charter. We have also established a Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine: the Task Force has travelled to Kyiv and Moscow, held regular consultations with parliamentary leaders from both Russia and Ukraine, and is seeking to engage on specific issues which both sides can address – such as nuclear safety, environmentally vulnerable sites, the treatment of and access to prisoners of the war, and the grain deal.

The war in Ukraine has highlighted the fact that our current international structures are deficient, ineffective, and routinely disregarded. Repairing the common security breakdown is of critical importance. This is no small feat, but as parliamentarians, it is our duty to take action and rise to the moment. Beyond regimes and political systems, we should work together to see how we can move from the battlefield to the table of negotiations. In that regard, inclusiveness is non-negotiable: we need to ensure that women, youth, and marginalized populations are part of the conversation. We must work collaboratively across party lines, borders, and sectors, to lead by example and uphold the principles of tolerance, democracy, and the rule of law.

The IPU's vision of effective multilateralism towards a new political world order is one that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and the planet, and one that leaves no one behind. We believe that multilateralism is not just an end in itself but a means to an end – the achievement of a more just and equitable society in which all people have the opportunity to flourish both now and in the years to come.

Thank you.

A video of the speech:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjDf50fsLz0&list=PLafTseM15bmGXfMyNS2B41zIF24U8cX6h&index=6>