

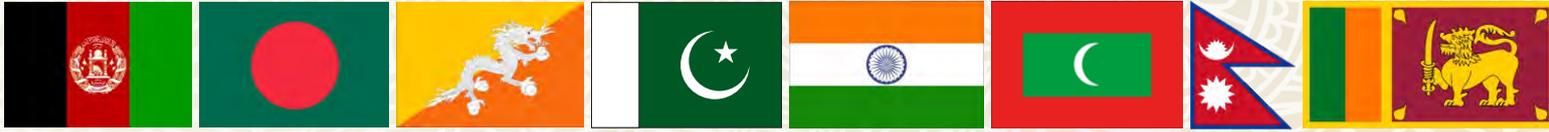


# 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers & Parliamentarians 2012

4-6 November, Islamabad, Pakistan



7th NOVEMBER, 2012



## 6th Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers & Parliamentarians Concludes



Hon'able Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Dr. Fehmida Mirza in her concluding remarks said "I am extremely grateful for the vote of thanks, proposed by Excellency Abdulla Shahid, the Vice President of the Association and the Speaker of the Maldives, which was seconded by all other distinguished Speakers and leaders of the delegations from SAARC Parliaments, present here. The sentiments expressed by each one of you have indeed humbled us and on behalf of the National Assembly of Pakistan, I whole-heartedly thank you for your kind appreciation.

I also consider the successful and timely holding of the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference our joint achievement. I warmly acknowledge the personal interest of Smt. Meera Kumar in making this possible and also congratulate all other worthy Speakers for their valuable contributions. The wisdom and foresightedness, reflected in their respective keynotes to this Conference, enabled the discussions of this Conference to remain focussed and mutually beneficial. I am sure that under our collective leadership, the Association will continue to progress in future. The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians enabled the parliamentarians of the member countries to forge close links. The acceptance of the idea by the Speakers' Council to institute a Women's Committee of the Association is a historic landmark. It has not only given shape to the long-cherished desire for a regional network of women legislators but has also set the course for the Association's possible future expansion in other areas of mutual cooperation.

The need now is to sustain this meaningful parliamentary dialogue. As the President of this Conference for 2012-13, I will be working on finding ways to increase the momentum of parliamentary exchanges among member Parliaments. The women legislators have already taken the lead by calling for their meetings on biannual basis. This practise can be replicated by organising parliamentary seminars, workshops and discussions on mutually agreed issues on regular basis. I also intend to visit all member parliaments to explore the possibilities of further expanding cooperation in our Association. I am confident that with the able support of the distinguished Speakers of SAARC, we will succeed in taking the Association.

As I conclude, I, once again, whole-heartedly thank them for their support in the holding of this Conference and for reposing their confidence in me by electing me their President for the current year. I also express my sincere appreciation to each one of you for your valuable contributions. Some of you travelled long distances and I hope that your brief stay was comfortable, which enabled you to benefit from this Conference. The Parliament and people of Pakistan will eagerly wait for your return, as and when you may desire to visit your second home, Pakistan.

I am particularly indebted to the Honourable President of Pakistan for inaugurating this Conference and setting the tone of our meeting through his thought-provoking address.

Pakistan Zindabad"

# Vote of Thanks



During the last sessions of General Assembly Meeting Smt. Meira Kumar in her vote of thanks said “It is indeed my privilege to extend a vote of thanks on behalf of all the Delegates and on my own behalf to Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan for hosting the Sixth Conference of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians in such an incredible manner. Right from arriving here to the conclusion of the Conference today, we all had a wonderful experience – met each other, had meaningful discussions on topics of common concerns, with a view to strengthening our democracies and making them more transparent, accountable, participatory and meaningful.

Distinguished Delegates, during this Conference we had the opportunity to discuss two very relevant themes. The vibrant discussion on the theme 'Meaningful Participatory Democracy in South Asia – Parliament's Affirmative Action' was indeed very noteworthy. It gave us a chance to exchange our experiences and views on the current trends and devices being adopted towards making our democracies more mature and constructive for the common man.

The other subject of discussion – 'Targeting Food Security for the Region: Ensuring Parliament's Role in Accomplishing MDGs' was also extremely relevant for our region consisting mainly of developing countries. The meaningful deliberations on both the topics at the Conference will help us to address these very vital issues in our context. We must follow up on the outcome of themes as well to address them in all their varied manifestations in the interests of our nations and peoples.

Distinguished Delegates, the Conference of the Association of SAARC Speakers and Parliamentarians is ever committed to the concept of delivering democracy and development in our region. We must continue to work towards making every human being maximise one's potential and lead a happy and peaceful life.

Before I conclude, I would like to congratulate Dr. Fehmida Mirza for the excellent manner in which she has guided the Conference and thank her once again for the warm hospitality that we have all experienced since our arrival. I would also like to thank all the fellow Delegates for their enthusiastic participation during the discussions and making them fruitful. I would also take this opportunity to commend the Secretariat of the National Assembly of Pakistan for exceptional management and smooth conduct of the Conference”.



## Proceedings of General Assembly of CASSP

During the 5th session of General Assembly Meeting of CAASP Hon'able Dr. Mehboob Beg from Indian Delegation said "this is very important for all of us for all the people living in the region, and let me tell you this is a world of regions now. Gone are the days when we had a world of countries. We are a world of regions. We have to come up as a region which is SAARC, and I am proud that I belong to one of the member from India and draft which has been given to me is very important I will only go through that very briefly. And it says while targeting this we in India we have micro management of Agriculture



, National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission Support to State Extension Programme for Extension Reforms and Rain Fed Area Development Programme etc. And so far as MDGs is concerned, we were already doing that, we were already at it and hopefully will be able to do that. But having said all this, I take this opportunity when we say that we know that we are one fifth of the world's population".

Pakistan delegates, Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali and Ms. Nuzhat Sadiq contributed by saying "We are meeting at a time of momentum changes in the lives of 1.7 billion people of our region. Each country has traveled its own unique but courageous journey towards democracy and peace. Representative democratic political systems are in place. Newly one democratic orders are shedding the baggage of non-representative and autocratic regimes. The attainment of the Millennium Development Goals is a prime concern for the government of Pakistan. The government is committed to



achieving these targets by 2015, and has adopted an innovative approach to improve entitlements and basic services for the poor. A special 19-member parliamentary committee is taking the lead on the MDGs, and is also monitoring executive agencies at the federal, provincial and local levels to reduce child mortality rates, improve maternal health, and combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases".

In the same session Hon'able R. Yogarajan of Sri Lanka delegation said "Hon'able Attiya Inayatullah very appropriately said, it is not food availability but equitable distribution, that is important. Yes, I am in agreement with this I think, most of our countries are today reaching self-sufficiency in food production. India is exporting large amounts; Sri Lanka has trade self-sufficiency. In these circumstances ensuring that every citizen has access to food. It should be our target. In 70s and 80s, it was subsidies for food but with the opening up of the economies and the adoption of new liberal policies, it has become each man's task to access his own food".

Dr. Nafisa Shah Member, National Assembly of Pakistan said "I want to quote a very eminent scholar, academic and a noble award winner from our region, who made a very important contribution to the politics of food in the global world. I quote him and this is Dr. Amartya Sen and he says: "No famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy".



There is certainly then a link between democracy and food supply. I also want to make a link between food security and peace. And there are studies that have been carried out in Pakistan which show that militancy, geographically is located in those areas that are traditionally historically food insecure. I would also recommend that we also take a closer look at the regional conflict that has engulfed parts of Pakistan and large parts of



Afghanistan for a long period".

Prof. P.J. Kurien Hon'able Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, India said "In MDGs goals, we have set certain goals for civilizing the population. See the land is not increasing, in fact, this is sinking. A lot of land is made useful for other purposes. And, therefore, the population is growing rapidly. I do not think, infact, by 2015, we are not able to bring it to the level as required by MDGs. Therefore, one of the most important challenge, we have to face, is to stabilize the population. Unless that is done, I think, food security will not be achieved by us we are expecting". \

Ms. Shireen Arshad Khan and Ms. Ishrat Ashraf MNAs from Pakistan said "Our basic issue is unemployment, trade revenue generation and we need voices for socio justice to curtail our poverty. All of us are facing this issue. I would like to say that our region, all eight courtiers is a very rich in handicraft and we should put special attention to give our handicraft support and I must give complements and I must appreciate Bangladesh because they raised their economy with projection of their handicrafts".



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**On the Concluding Ceremony Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Dr. Fehmida Mirza, Speaker Lok Sabha Smt. Meira Kumar, Speaker of Jatiyo Sansad Mr. Abdul Hamid Advocate and Speaker of Peoples Majlis Mr. Abdulla Shahid freeing White Dove as a Traditional Symbol of Love and Peace.**

## Glimpses of the Conference



# S A R C



## Proceedings of General Assembly of CASSP

(Continued from Page 3)

Mr. Muhammad Aslam Bhootani, Speaker Provincial Assembly of Balochistan said "I come from Baluchistan which is the largest of all provinces of Pakistan; amounting for 43 per cent of Pakistan's territory but is the smallest in terms of population. No doubt achievement of the MDGs is a cherished goal for all governments whether provincial or federal. But the need to achieve food security is the first fundamental on which we have to focus. As we know that food security is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical,



social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. It means that we are looking at a very large canvas of government actions to achieve food security".

Hon'able Mrs. Rose Senanayake, Sri Lankan Parliamentarian said "The emphasis has always been women and



children and when we talk about food security. I think, we need to look at the women engaged in the informal sector. If you take Sri Lanka, our 60% of the economy is contributed by women whether it's the micro women

worker or the women engaged in the apparel industry or the women engaged in the agricultural sector".

Dr. Abdul Qadir Khanzada Member National Assembly of Pakistan said "As an agricultural scientist, I feel and propose that for achieving food security in SAARC, we need to establish a SAARC Agricultural Research Centre for cereals, pulses and other major crops. In the past, we had some experience when Australia, India and Pakistan in a coordinated project

developed several disease resistant wheat varieties for the who region and the project was very successful".

**Hon'able Abdulla Shahid, Speaker Peoples Majlis Maldives** in his farewell address said "As we now prepare to bid farewell to our distinguished host and to our friends and colleagues it gives me great pleasure on behalf of my distinguished farewell Speakers and Parliamentarians and on my own behalf to propose a vote of thanks, to extend our deepest and heartfelt appreciation to the many people who have ensured the productivity of our Conference and the joy of our stay in this beautiful city of Islamabad. You have surpassed our every expectation in the excellent arrangements made for our meeting. You and your team of officers have welcomed us with much warmth and friendship, served the needs of our Conference with efficiency and good organization, with professionalism and expertise. You and the people of Pakistan have touched the heart of each and every one of us and we take back with us to our respective countries and our peoples that love and affection so generously bestowed upon us by you and the people of Pakistan, shukarya, mehrbani, Madam Speaker aur Pakistani awam. May I also take this opportunity to extend a very heartfelt vote of gratitude to His Excellency the President of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, for having graced our opening ceremony, despite his very busy schedule of national duties".

**Hon'able Mr. Abdul Hamid Advocate, Bangladesh Speaker** said "I take this opportunity to thank you Madam Chairperson and the people of Pakistan for the very warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to me and Members of my delegation. We are really touched by the warmth of your hospitality and the pains that you have taken to make our stay comfortable in your beautiful country. I

would also like to express our deep appreciation to the National Assembly of Pakistan, members of the Conference Secretariat and all those involved in the organization of this conference. They have done splendid work to make the conference a grand success".

**H.E. Mr. Lyonpo Jigme Tshultim, Bhutan Speaker** said "It is my humble privilege on behalf of my delegation from Bhutan to thank the President of the Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Speaker a most dynamic Chairperson of the Conference, Dr. Fehmida Mirza and all the officials in the National Assembly of Pakistan for your kind hospitality and ensuring a successful Conference. We as a region for the benefit of people must work and cooperate and with through such cooperation, through such Conferences we can further our cooperation in our region. European Union, the Asian are doing very well and we have every reason that in South Asia we can do better because our people need more. We need cooperation, we need peace and prosperity and through such interaction of the Speakers and parliamentarians we can further our cause".

**Hon'able (Al Haj) A. H. M. Azwer Parliamentarian from Sri Lanka** said "I am conscious of the fact that I am proposing the Vote of Thanks in the absence of our Deputy Chairman Mr. Chandima Weerakkody, who has to fly back to Colombo in order to not only preside over Parliament because our Speaker honourable Chamal Rajapaksa will be there and also to vote for the Devi Nagamma enhancement living Bill that is being presented in Parliament today. And who of us are defaulters I hope the Chief Government will not take action against us because four members of Parliament who should be present there at this right moment are here. They are hiding under the shadow of the SAARC Conference.



**Host of 7th CASSP**

*"It is noteworthy that our People's Majlis Building a gift by the people of Pakistan to the people of Maldives stands as a symbol enduring ties between our two nations"*



His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid  
Hon'able Speaker  
People's Majlis Maldives