

Address
of
Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha
(Parliament of India)
on
12 March 2023
during the
146th Assembly of the
Inter Parliamentary Union
in
Manama, Bahrain

**Hon. Chairperson; and
Distinguished Delegates :**

1. I extend a warm welcome to all Hon. Delegates gathered here to take part in the 146th assembly of IPU.
2. Today, we are deliberating on the subject - "Promoting peaceful co-existence and inclusive societies: Fight against intolerance". This subject, in my view, is extremely topical, relevant and important. I am taking this opportunity to present my views in this regard from the perspective of India.
3. Hon. Delegates, today India is the largest functional democracy on the planet. India is being recognised as the "Mother of Democracy". The roots of democracy in India go deep into the ancient times and the democratic ethos has guided our way of life.
4. India is a country of richly diverse culture. Ours is among the most comprehensive Constitutions in the world which is based on the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity and the principles of social, economic and political justice for all. It embodies the values of tolerance, multi-culturalism and peaceful co-existence of all the religions. Our country has been the cradle of many religions. Followers of different religions, faiths and cultures

have co-existed peacefully and flourished in our country for thousands of years.

5. Distinguished Delegates, our country upholds the principle of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', i.e., the whole World is one Family. We believe in working for the welfare of all people of the whole world and have always strived for peaceful co-existence of all. That our societies should become tolerant and inclusive, is the spirit that is deeply embedded in our Constitution.
6. The Constitution of India provides freedom to practice the religion of choice along with social, economic and political freedoms.
7. We are proud of our diverse culture and rich heritage. Cultural and social diversity and pluralistic ideology have been the biggest strengths of our democracy.
8. Distinguished Delegates, democracy in our country has gone from strength to strength during the last 75 years. The increasing percentage of voters in our successive elections reflects the faith that people have continued to repose in our system of democratic governance.
9. Distinguished Delegates, in India we have a robust participatory democracy and a vibrant multi-party system. Our Parliament is a forum where hopes and aspirations of the citizens find expression through the elected representatives. All representatives enjoy

the freedom to express their views and thoughts in Lok Sabha.

10. Hon. Delegates, during the 75 years of our democratic setup, our Parliament has worked relentlessly with the spirit of "*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishvaas, and Sabka Prayas*" (Collective Efforts, Inclusive Growth, Shared trust and Concerted Endeavours) to bring about socio-economic transformation in the lives of our people. We have worked diligently and with utmost dedication towards the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals. With the aim of ensuring the welfare and upliftment of every section of the society, particularly the economically weaker sections, youth and women, our government has implemented various schemes targeted at improvement in education, health, housing, and skill development. Backward districts of the country have been identified as aspirational districts to provide them with focussed attention in order to put them up and bring them at par with their developed counterparts. These efforts have borne rich dividends. This only reflects our commitment towards people-centric governance and resolute action for bringing about a more egalitarian society.
11. *Distinguished Delegates*, in the changing scenario, we firmly believe that all global issues can be and

should be resolved peacefully through dialogue. The Parliament of India has always held extensive and meaningful debate and deliberations on contemporary global challenges such as climate change, gender equality, sustainable development and COVID-19 pandemic.

12. *Hon. Chairperson*, global institutions propagating peace, harmony and justice are crucial for peace, prosperity, sustainability and a just world order. In global institutions like the UN Security Council, there is a broad consensus among many nations to bring about reforms to reflect the realities of a rapidly changing world order. We believe that this important matter requires serious discussions. Reform in the UN Security Council cannot be delayed any further. It is crucial that the subject is included in future global agendas so that we can contribute more and more in addressing challenges such as climate change, sustainable development, poverty, gender equality and terrorism.
13. *Hon. Chairperson*, today, India is ready to fulfil its global obligations. India has carried out the world's largest vaccination programme against COVID-19 for its citizens and at the same time helped other nations in their respective fights against the pandemic by providing medical equipment and vaccines under *Vaccine Maitri*. Similarly, we are

leading the world in the articulation of Global Climate Action Plan to combat the issue of climate change.

14. We are of the opinion that inclusive development can promote peaceful co-existence and tolerance in society. By way of eliminating various socio-economic anomalies, we can further strengthen people's faith in democracy.
15. *Distinguished Delegates*, before I conclude, I would like to say that India has always given the message of peace and harmony to the entire world. We believe that building inclusive and tolerant society is only possible through peaceful co-existence, mutual discussions and dialogue. Our Parliaments have a decisive role to play in this regard.
16. Let us all come together to build a better future for the humanity. With these words, I convey my best wishes to all of you.

Thank you.