

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Dmytro RAZUMKOV,  
Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,  
at the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments**

*Virtual meeting,  
19-20 August 2020*

**PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP FOR MORE EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM  
THAT DELIVERS PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE  
PEOPLE AND PLANET**

*Dear Madam President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,  
Dear Fellow Parliamentarians,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to address the current COVID-19 crisis at this timely moment while our societies are at risk. The pandemic as a phenomenon is not something new within the history of humanity, but each generation of policy-makers should be proactive in order to contribute to a safer future.

Since the very beginning of the COVID-19, governments as well as parliaments have faced a great responsibility. Within the crisis management measures, governments around the globe have addressed the health care system needs not only of their respective nations. The devastating nature of the COVID-19 pandemic has called for international solidarity requiring multilateral cooperation as a natural response to an emergency of this magnitude.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a new challenge for an integrated, interconnected and interdependent world, pointing out its downsides on the one hand, but at the same time providing an opportunity to modernize the entire system of international crisis management. Today, it is more important than ever to build a system of mutual trust and assistance.

Our societies are gradually getting used to a *New Normalcy*, while there is a global need to seek for a new balance based on new forms of regional and international cooperation.

International organizations remain the most powerful and comprehensive tools that have been governing the rules-based order, but the current state of affairs emphasizes the necessity to reform global and regional institutions in order to bring their capabilities and mandates in line with the threats and challenges that already exist and would occur in the future.

I have to admit that since 2014 multilateralism as a basis of the world order and global security system has been going through a crisis when the violation of the basic principles of international law by a permanent member of the UN Security Council seems to be tolerated. Unfortunately, we are witnessing security architecture degradation not only in Europe. To justify their aggressive policy and to hide their own responsibility for the current state of affairs, individual states have resorted to using hybrid warfare tools to interfere in internal affairs and influence the international community. In order to prevent the further aggravation of this negative scenario,

one more additional argument in favour of a multilateral approach to global threats could be voiced.

### ***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The geopolitical implications of the coronavirus crisis would shape international cooperation for several years ahead. A new term, *medical diplomacy*, along with *humanitarian diplomacy* seems to be an integral part of the *New Normalcy*. The need for multilateral diplomacy, especially its parliamentary dimension, is now stronger than ever.

To ensure a sustainable international order, Ukraine approaches multilateralism as a vision for its foreign policy based on a two-dimensional strategy of European and Euro-Atlantic integration as well as on supporting restoration of the effectiveness of international and regional agreements.

The first track is about the process of our integration into the European and transatlantic community. Regional organizations, such as the EU and NATO, probably serve as the best examples of how beneficial a union of the like-minded may be in terms of security, economic prosperity and rapprochement among nations. Such great examples also exist in other parts of the world.

The second track for Ukraine as a contributor to global efforts relates to restoring the efficiency of universal and regional arrangements tasked to secure the rules-based international order. These are, first and foremost, the UN and the OSCE.

### ***Distinguished participants of the Conference,***

I am convinced that the mankind will overcome COVID-19 reducing its impact, as it happened before with HIV/AIDS, SARS or the Ebola virus.

The global socio-economic repercussions of the pandemic are still hard to predict. However, it is obvious that we must ensure that economic instruments to adapt to the post-pandemic world should be made available for each household. Good governance during the future crises is essential as parliamentary and governmental outcomes of the present crisis.

The COVID-19 lessons should be learned carefully by the entire generation of today's policy-makers. The main conclusion to be drawn is about solidarity, domestically and internationally. Ukraine's Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, has set aside any partisan and internal political disputes and worked as one team adopting COVID-19 legislation in order to serve the best interests of our citizens and to overcome this health emergency. Even under the crisis conditions, democratic procedures remain a core value that the Ukrainian parliamentarians stand for. Bringing together public opinion and community leaders, the Parliament of Ukraine has been able to provide rapid feedback to citizens, providing a reliable political partnership for solutions suggested by the government. At the same time, this pandemic has accelerated digitalization in every field, including parliamentary work, bringing Ukraine closer implementing the e-parliament vision.

Representing all groups within our societies, parliaments remain the principal architects of legal mechanisms for cooperation. While promoting the exchange of best practices, the parliamentary support of medical diplomacy could remain the short-term solution to help contain the crisis until a viable vaccine is found. Meanwhile, in the long-term perspective, we should undertake steps in

order to establish sustainable inter-parliamentary dialogue, fully utilizing the potential of such multilateral formats as the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

In conclusion, let me underline that Ukraine is ready to contribute to the common cause of multilateralism, keeping in mind that the future is linked to our ability to respect obligations arising from treaties and to hold a perpetrator accountable for committed violations. The current challenges such as the pandemic, climate change, digital and information threats, terrorism and economic insecurity could become less destructive if all states would demonstrate their will to joint, coordinated and adequate efforts in order to achieve our common goal – peace, prosperity and democratic security for our nations.

Thank you very much.