

**Report on the 4<sup>th</sup> South Asian Speakers' Summit on Achieving  
Sustainable Development Goals  
at Male, Maldives.**



**01-02 September, 2019**

## **Background**

The 4th South Asian Speakers' Summit on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), jointly organized by the Inter Parliamentary Union and the People's Majlis, Maldives. This is the fourth event in a series of Speakers' Summits for the region on SDGs, the previous three having been hosted by Bangladesh in 2016, India in 2017 and the Parliament of Sri Lanka in 2018. This high-level Summit has build on the conclusions of the previous summits and allowed Speakers of Parliament to continue to develop dialogue and parliamentary cooperation on achieving the SDGs. Given their legislative, oversight, representative and budgetary functions, parliaments play a key role in ensuring a sustainable future for current and future generations.

The participants grasp opportunity to build on the recommendations identified during the previous editions and pursue discussions on key challenges and opportunities with respect to SDG implementation.

The Summit is actually intended for Speakers of the Parliaments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives but Speakers from Nepal and Myanmar failed to participate in two days Summit held in Maldives. The Summit was also attended by Secretary General of IPU Mr. Martin Chungong. H.E Wangchuk Namgyel, Speaker of the National Assembly represented the Parliament of Bhutan along with Secretary General of the National Assembly and a Delegation Secretary.

### **Day 1: Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019**

Hon'ble Speaker of the People's Majlis, H.E Mohamed Nasheed opened the 4<sup>th</sup> South Asian Speakers' Summit and welcomed the Speakers' of the Member state presents. In his inaugural speech he said our people have always wanted a decent life. A good life; A roof over their head; A stable job and a decent wage; Education for their children; A good school; They want to be treated when ill, Just ordinary things; running water; a sewerage system and do not want to bored out of their minds- in their villages, in their islands, they want a good life.



They want to be happy and not be beaten up or ill-treated. They want Fairness and justice; they want to be governed by people they choose, and they want to be governed well. Sustainable development goals aim to achieve, the betterment of the human. The rationale for the Inter Parliamentary Union, member states' Speakers' to meet in summit to achieve these goals indicates one very fundamental truth. The Inter Parliamentary

Union is a unique organization made up of national parliaments from around the world. They protect and build global democracy through political dialogue and concrete action.

After opening remarks by Speaker of the People’s Majlis, all the other Speakers present delivered speeches on implementation of previous three Declarations on SDGs and different issues from their countries before the Summit. H.E. Tshogpon Wangchuk Namgyel in his brief



speech during the Summit talked about Bhutan’s initiative towards implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the Parliament as well as by the Nation. H.E. shared that Parliament of Bhutan reserved one whole day for the deliberation on SDGs in every session of the National Assembly and recently constituted joint Parliamentary Committee on SDGs and

regarding National initiative, Bhutan has been able to align relevant targets of the SDGs with the national plans. In fact, in the current 12th Five Year Plan, Bhutan has succeeded in directly aligning and integrating all, except one of the seventeen SDGs.

Right after Lunch, H.E. Wangchuk Namgyel called on Hon. Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan and Hon. President Mohamed Nasheed, Speaker of the People’s Majlis, Maldives and conveyed His Majesty’s Warm and Best Wishes to the Parliament and people.



*Call on with Hon. President Mohamed Nasheed, Speaker of the People’s Majlis, Maldives*



*Call on with Hon. Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan*

Later in the afternoon, session one was conducted on SDG 8: Promoting equality at work including equal remuneration and creating jobs for young people. The session focused on the importance of promulgating laws that favour full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities and equal pay for

work of equal value. The session was chaired by Hon. President Mohamed Nasheed, Speaker of the People's Majlis and the Panelists are:

1. Ms. Aisha Shujune Muhammad, former Civil Court Judge, Member of Bar Council of Maldives Executive Committee.
2. Ms. Aishath Rizna, Assistant Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme, Maldives.
3. Ms. Aya Matsuura, Gender Specialist on the technical support team for South Asia, the International Labour Organization, India.

The second session on achieving SDGs 2 and 3: Nutrition and food security as drivers of Maternal, child and adolescent health in the South Asia region. The session has provided and overview of nutrition challenges and considered the linkages between nutrition and health. Session was chaired by Hon. Eva Abdulla, MP, Deputy Speaker of the People's Majlis and the Panelist is Dr. Purnima Menon, Senior Research Fellow, Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division, International Food Policy Research Institute, South Asia Office, India.



Later in the evening, the delegation joined all the other delegates to an official dinner hosted by Hon. President Mohamed Nasheed, Speaker of the People's Majlis, Maldives. The President of Maldives Ibrahim Mohamed Solih graced the occasion.

## **Day 2: Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2019**

In the morning, third session on Catalyzing the global agenda on climate change- overcoming challenges and utilizing opportunities to strengthen the regional agenda for delivering on the Paris Agreement has been conducted. The session deliberates on the interlinkages between climate change, air pollution and health and discussed on how Parliaments can strengthen a regional response to help combat climate change and prevent existing risk, both of which particularly affect vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystem.

The session was moderated by Hon. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, Speaker of the Parliament of Bangladesh and Panelists are:

1. Hon. Ahmed Saleem, MP, Chair of Environmental and Climate Change Committee, People's Majlis, Maldives.
2. Mr. Arnico Kumar Panday, Regional Programme Manager, Atmosphere, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Nepal.
3. Mr. Charles Chauvel, Leader, Inclusive Political processes team, UNDP HQ

After that, H.E. Speaker participated in roundtable meeting for Speakers of Parliament (closed session). The roundtable session provided opportunities to further exchange on the issues that have been addressed during the summit and share possible comments on the Malé Declaration before its adoption. With this, the 4<sup>th</sup> South Asia Speakers Summit was concluded by adoption of Malé Declaration consisting eleven resolutions. (*Malé Declaration attached*)

H.E. Tshogpon Wangchuk NAMgyel called on Hon. Om Birla, Speaker of Lok Sabha, India and conveyed His Majesty's Warm and Best Wishes to the Parliament and people of the Government



of India. Hon. Speaker also offered condolences for sudden demise of former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley. Moreover, Hon. Speaker congratulated Hon. Om Birla for elected as 17<sup>th</sup> Speaker of Lok Sabha and BJP for winning second term. Also thanked Parliament of India for supporting in capacity building for Parliamentary staff of Bhutan and requested for some support in capacity building and exchange programme for both Parliamentarians and staff.

Hon. Om Birla, Speaker of Lok Sabha expressed his gratitude and appreciation to His Majesty the King and people of Bhutan for their warm welcome and gracious hospitality provided during H.E. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India's visit to Bhutan. Regarding capacity building and exchange programme, Hon. Speaker committed to provide support in capacity building in terms of sending their experts to Bhutan or training in India.

Later in the Afternoon, the entire delegations from seven countries visited Rusdhoo Island.

## **Conclusion**

The People's Majlis has made excellent arrangements and VIP treatment was extended to H.E the Speaker. Proficient protocol and security services were also provided.

The Parliamentary delegation of Bhutan was a success as all the subjects covered and discussed in the meeting were all very enriching.