



Resolution on Measures to Promote Cultural Diversity and Protect Cultural Heritage in Asia

Resolution 201510

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We, the Members of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly,

Recalling APA Resolutions, APA/Res/2013/05; APA/Res/2010/05; APA/Res/2009/05; APA/Res/2008/17; and APA/Res/2007/02; on Protecting and Respecting Cultural Diversity in Asia;

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on Protecting and Respecting Cultural Diversity, submitted to the meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran on 11-12 August 2014;

Recognizing the significant role of parliaments both in safeguarding their respective national cultural heritage and in harmonizing Asian approach in respect of cultural diversity;

Emphasizing that cultural diversity is depended to protection of cultural heritage, and the existence of common grounds among Asian ancient civilizations provide platforms for co-existence and co-operation among nations in the region;

Recognizing that tolerance is one of the fundamental values of humanity, which entails promotion of cultural diversity, culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations;

Recognizing the increasing importance of culture, as an integral part of development plans of all nations in Asia and beyond; Promotion of greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures and religions by means of concrete projects in the priority areas of youth, education, and media, in collaboration with governments, international and regional organizations, in line with the outcome of the first World Cultural Forum, in Bali, Indonesia in November 2013 and document entitled “Bali Declaration on the Alliance of Civilizations”, held in Bali, Indonesia, in 29 and 30 August 2014;

Reiterating that multicultural dynamism in Asia provides an indispensable asset for making a strong Asian community based on mutual respect and recognition of all Asian cultures and civilizations;

Noting the opportunities offered by globalization for greater interaction among cultures and civilizations, as well as challenges brought about by its trends to preserving and celebrating the rich intellectual and cultural diversity in Asia;

Considering the smuggling of cultural objects from Asia a threat to the richness of Asian cultural heritage, and underline the important role of parliaments to both raise public awareness about this challenge and to strengthen, where necessary;

Remaining Concerned about smuggling of cultural items, particularly those that are in areas under foreign occupation;

Expressing great concerns regarding the damage brought to cultural and religious heritage by terrorism and, crimes, and organized crimes, especially damages to Muslim and Christian historical sites and holy shrines and mosques by indiscriminate aerial bombing and shelling in Syria by ISIS and other terrorist groups condemning the grave violations of Israel against the sanctity of the AL Aqsa Mosque, particularly the intrusions of the Israeli settlers and far right extremists under the protection of the Israeli occupation forces into the AL-Haram AL-Sharif rightly leading to reaction and resistance on the part of Palestinians and resulting in increased tension;

Express great concern with regard to the Israeli plans to spatially and temporally divide AL-Haram AL- Sharif, threatening the historical status quo at this Holy place;

Expressing grave concerns regarding theft, damage, or destruction to any place of worship of any religion, any cultural, religious, or historical heritage in Asia especially to Muslim, Christian and Buddhist historical sites by any person, group, or organization;

Determine to encourage and promote further intercultural dialogue and inter-religious exchanges throughout Asia;

Resolve to appreciate and promote the benefits of diversity in Asian nations, and encourage values such as justice, human rights, non-discrimination, democracy and respect within and among communities and nations;

Reject all manifestations of exclusion and arrogance that are based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance;

Remain Committed to the protection of the rights of indigenous and ethnic communities so as to ensure the fulfillment of indigenous community rights in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

Urge relevant government agencies to increase facilitation, consular services as appropriate for citizens of Asian countries to allow for greater people-to-people interaction;

Decide to remain cognizant of damages to Moslem and Christian holy places and historical sites, by ISIS terrorist organization in Iraq and Syria, as well as destruction of cultural and educational premises brought about by Israeli invasion to Gaza Strip;

Urge Member Parliaments to ratify international conventions such as the International Convention for the Safeguarding of World Natural and Cultural Heritage and also the International Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;

Call Upon APA Member Parliaments to consider drafting common legislations on the basis of principles endorsed by APA, as annexed to APA/Res/2013/05, with a view to develop a model legislation to combat smuggling of cultural objects in Asia;

Urge all APA Member Parliaments to actively participate in an open-ended ad-hoc working group, under the auspices of the APA Standing Committee of Social and Cultural Affairs to prepare a draft common legislation for combating the smuggling of cultural objects in Asia;

Call Upon all Member Parliaments to promote tolerance and empathy among Asian nations with a view to diminish distrust, misunderstanding, and conflict among religious communities;

Call Upon APA Member Parliaments to support establishing an award to be presented annually to outstanding Asian artists; authors, poets, film makers, painters, etc, who best convey the APA's commitment to cultural diversity in Asia;

Condemn all forms of contemptuous actions against religions, holy books, religious places and personalities and religious rituals;

Condemn Israeli attempts to alter the religious and cultural heritage in the Palestinian occupied territories, particularly in Jerusalem, including the provocative practices violating the sanctity and historical status quo of Haram AL- Sharif and Aqsa Mosque; the dangerous excavations under Al-Aqsa Mosque and its surroundings; imposing changes in the educational curricula; changing the original names of places into Jewish names by referring to so-called "list of Jewish heritage" and disrespecting Islamic and Christian holy and historical sites;

Request the APA Secretary General to uphold cooperation between APA and international and regional organizations such as UNESCO, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations(UNAOC), ISESCO and relevant Asian NGOs active in promoting cultural diversity and dialogue among civilizations;

Request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member Parliaments on their efforts to implement this resolution and to submit a report thereon to the next meeting of the Standing Committee on Social and Cultural Affairs.

