

Day 2: Wednesday, 15th September 2021

Multilateral Session

Time: 1530 – 1645 hrs (IST) / 1000 – 1115 hrs (GMT)

Future of Global Governance & Development Partnerships

Speech by

Ms. Margareta Cederfelt, MP (Sweden); President, Parliamentarians for Global Action, Sweden

Distinguished Entrepreneurs and other Participants in LEADS,
Dear Fellow Members of Parliaments:

I am truly delighted to be here today in this important gathering on behalf of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), the largest NGO of individual Parliamentarians dedicated to human rights causes with presence in more than 135 countries in all regions of the world.

As the tragic developments in Afghanistan have confirmed, we live in a world in which DEMOCRACY is under attack, HUMAN RIGHTS are under attack, PEACE and SECURITY for our peoples –who want to live in FREEDOM– are under attack.

I therefore welcome this great gathering of minds from the private and the public sectors of our economies in the LARGEST DEMOCRACY of the world, namely INDIA, and I call upon you to make sure that it becomes a meeting of our hearts and minds in support of a better world in which the fundamental rights of everyone are safeguarded, and the national security of any State corresponds with the international peace and security for all the persons living on Planet-Earth: Our planet is one and the same, and we must safeguard it. Our peoples are made of human beings who want to be free from fear and from want, and who want to express themselves in a way that does not violate the rights of others: In other words, the WELLBEING of each of us, individually, corresponds to the WELLBEING of the WORLD!

Therefore, the vision of Parliamentarians for Global Action – an organization of LEADERS from all regions of the world – is here to renew its partnership with the Indian society at large and, in particular, Indian Parliamentarians, whom I am

privileged here to invite to join our Organization, which was the recipient of the first Indira Gandhi Peace Prize in 1986, in recognition of the fact that PGA had been convening the Six Nations Peace Initiative¹.

It is time to unite our forces and ensure that *our work* for democracy and human rights becomes more and more focused and effective. In order to play its part meaningfully, our Organization launched a series of Campaigns aimed tangible results through which GLOBAL PROBLEMS can be address with viable and workable GLOBAL SOLUTIONS.

- In the face of more and more *mass-atrocities perpetrated against the civilian and vulnerable populations in all regions of the world* especially by oppressive regimes and violent-extremists' Non-State-Actors, PGA is conducting a global campaign to fight impunity and prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and aggressive wars: It is **the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Campaign**, which inspired 78 States to join the ICC system in The Hague, and which should also be supported by the Parliament of India in order to embrace a world-order based on law and justice, and not on revenge and the abuse of armed violence. The recent events in Afghanistan must remain a lesson to be learned by all of us, especially in light of 20 years in which the strategies of the “global war on terror” proved to be rather ineffective in bringing peace and stability to the world. Now we have a duty to put the highest possible pressure on the Taliban regime to prevent new atrocity-crimes against innocent women, girls and boys.
- In the face of discrimination and persecution of LGTBI persons, PGA is conducting a global **Campaign for Non-Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI)**. We are all equal and we all deserve to live peacefully with the ones with love. Our society must be inclusive and must respect the human dignity of all.
- In the face of the proliferation of weapons in any type of situations (be it war-time or peace-time), with the most dramatic implications for the civilian populations, PGA is strongly promoting the realization of the UN Programmed of Action on **Small Arms and Light Weapons**, and it is firmly

¹ See <http://www.defenddemocracy.press/six-nation-peace-initiative/> .

supporting the unconditional prohibition of **Biological and Bacteriological Weapons**, while addressing emerging threats posed by **cyber-attacks** or **fully autonomous weapons** (also known as “killer robots”).

- In the face of gross human rights abuses and dictatorial or oppressive regimes, PGA is conducting a global **Campaign for Democratic Renewal and Human Rights**, including through the dissemination of a GLOBAL CODE OF DEMOCRATIC CONDUCT which, if adhered to by Parliamentarians worldwide, would bring about a profound change in our political societies. There is no genuine democracy without human rights, and the democratic competition amongst political parties cannot be polluted by hatred, incitement to violence, fake and defamatory news, and aggressive behavior that is often victimizing women, whose access to elected positions is often much more difficult than for men.
- In the face of threats to our global eco-system, PGA has launched a global **Campaign for the Protection of the Oceans**, which must be safeguarded from Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and from other forms of massive exploitation that can deprive humankind from the essential role of the Oceans in contributing to the containment of climate change and the preservation of our standards of lives that depends on healthy seas, given that Planet Earth is predominantly covered by waters.
- PGA has other campaigns aimed at protecting the most vulnerable components in our society, such as women, girls and boys at risk of being victims of **Child, Early or Forced Marriage**, or convicted persons who may be subjected to the **death penalty**, bearing in mind that humans are fallacious and so is the justice system, which has historically condemned to the capital punishment many innocent individuals.

The [Annual Freedom House report](#), *Freedom in the World*, established in 2021 that “[t]he impact of the long-term democratic decline has become increasingly global in nature [...] Nearly 75 percent of the world’s population lived in a country that faced deterioration last year.”

This diagnosis is not new – the world has been experiencing steady democratic decline for over a decade, notably illustrated by a progressive erosion of

democratic principles, infringements on the independence of the judiciary, rising perpetuation of disinformation, dismantling of protections for press freedoms, and repression of vulnerable populations and minorities. These trends have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Under its *Campaign on Democratic Renewal and Human Rights*, PGA has based its advocacy on three pillars:

- A. the Parliamentary Rapid Response Team (PARRT) to raise awareness on situations where human rights defenders, legislators or institutions are under attack;
- B. the Global Parliamentary Code for Democratic Conduct to ensure legislators are accountable for their public speech; and
- C. the Parliamentary Toolbox for Democracy Defense which serves *inter alia* as a prevention mechanism to address early signs of democratic decline.

Why is this important for the private sector? Simply put, because a vibrant and functioning democracy fosters growth, development, and good governance; and a committed private sector is beneficial to democracy. Challenges in the democratic space must be dealt with by public and private actors together. Public-private partnerships are an efficient tool in the arsenal to align for profit interests with public ones.

PGA therefore calls all the friends and colleagues gathering today at LEADS to unite our limited forces and fight together for the advancement and the protection of human rights, democracy, justice under the Rule of Law, equality and inclusion, as well as for international peace, security and wellbeing of all peoples and communities of the world. We need to do so for the sake of the present and future generations.

Thank you.