



Asian Parliamentary Assembly
Secretariat

Annex 3

The First Round Table on Asian Monetary Fund

Statement by APA Secretary-General

H. E. Dr. Hadi Nejad Hosseinian

To

The First Round Table Discussion

On

"Asian Monetary Fund"

Tehran, 9-10 July 2007

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Honorable APA Delegates,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am grateful to each and every one of you here; both the guests who have come a long way and those from the neighboring countries. I also wish to thank our Iranian guests who have shown interests in the work of the APA. I think we are making history, however, in a small way. Getting together from so many countries to discuss an issue like "Asian Monetary Fund" seems a small step in the direction of Asian integration, but again "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a first step."

As the Secretary-General of the APA, I am personally very glad to play a part in this journey. I think we in Asia are on the right track. Asia as the ancient continent, the cradle of civilizations and all religions, a continent with vast and complimentary human and natural resources should and will

choose a fast track for integration. I think the journey may prove to be shorter, the road not as bumpy and the objective not as far as many anticipate. Asia dares to build a strong foundation for moving forward together. We will be left behind if we do not move faster than it is customary. Banking on experiences of integration in other parts of the world, Asia can gain the pace needed to achieve success in a shorter period of time. And success will be defined by a better standard of life for all peoples of Asia, where each of us would be a stake holder in Asia and beyond.

I wish to register my gratitude to the Islamic Consultative Assembly in general and to Dr. Haddad Adel, the Speaker and the President of the APA for his support and for his confidence in the Secretariat, Hujjat-ul-Islam val-Muslemin, Mr. Aboutorabi, the vice-Speaker of the Majlis and the engine behind APA activities in the last few years, as well as Hujjat-ul-Islam val-Muslemin, Dr. Mesbahi Moghaddam, who spared no time and effort to get this Round Table discussion off ground, in particular. I am also thankful to the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, its staff and directors, particularly Dr. Komijani, the vice Governor, whose views and contributions to our discussion was crucial, and who has accepted to chair this Round Table Discussion. I shall not fail to thank Dr. Ma'navi Rad for making some sense out of our discussions and for drafting the working paper now before you for your consideration.

The Secretariat has been very busy since its establishment following the First Session of the APA in November 2006 in Tehran. We have been engaged in ten different research projects to develop action plans called for under different resolutions of the First Session of the APA. "Asian Monetary

Fund" is one of the ten projects underway. I wish to refer to Socio-Economic Resolution in document 2006/w-SE/Doc.1/Rev.1. Operative Paragraph 3 of this resolution reads:

"Requests the President of the APA to set up an expert team among Member Parliaments to conduct a study for the creation of 'Asian Monetary Fund' and Poverty Alleviation Fund in one or separate bodies, and to report the outcome of the study to the President for approval and implementation in the next APA General assembly."

This is the legislative mandate for our meeting today to discuss "Asian Monetary Fund." Poverty alleviation is subject of a different project and will be addressed in a Round Table Discussion later in 26-28 August 2007, here in Tehran.

In the invitation letter I sent to Presidents and Speakers of Member Parliaments for this Round Table Discussion in early June, I had alluded to the desirability of a second meeting on the subject of "Asian Monetary Fund". My intention was to allow for wider consultation among Member Parliaments and their governments and further study of the subject before the report of the President to the second Session of the APA Plenary is prepared. In this connection, I encourage Member Parliaments who wish to hold the Second Round Table Discussion in their own countries, would announce their interests. The best date to hold the Second Round Table would be late August 2007, so as to prepare the President's report in time for the meeting of the Executive Council scheduled for 8-9- September 2007.

Having said these organizational points, I wish to reiterate that you have a crucially important job here. It is absolutely critical that we take each step in the direction of Asian integration with an educated degree of certitude and strong resolve, while of course avoiding sensationalism and haste. This is the art of multilateralism; striking a balance between effectiveness and representativeness.

I hope that you would take advantage of this opportunity to exchange views on the two questions that are subjects of this Round Table in a frank and business-like manner and have the long-term best interests of the wider Asia in mind. In the Working Paper transmitted to your countries last week and circulated to you again last night, you must have noted the background of the issue, analysis of the current financial trends, and a suggestion for possible action in the future. The finding of our experts is that before establishment of an "Asian Monetary Fund", other steps may be required on the part of Asian countries to prepare the ground.

There may be some short-term measures, which could be instrumental in getting us closer to our aim. One such measure could be consideration of widening the memberships of multilateral arrangements in Asia like "Chiang Mai Initiative" to include all Asian countries within a fixed period of time. I hope that a real exchange would take place in these two days on various aspects of the issue with a view to coming up with practical recommendation to APA.

I thank you very much again and wish you continued success.