

**The Second General Assembly of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly
Tuesday, 20 November 2007, Tehran, the Islamic Republic of Iran**

(Address of **Honorable Mrs. Prathoomporn Vajrasthira**, Member of the National Legislative Assembly and the First Spokesperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the National Legislative Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand, Deputy Leader of the Thai Delegation, at the Plenary Session of the Second General Assembly of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly - APA)

**Your Excellency Dr. Haddad Adel, Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA),
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Thai Delegation, I would like to thank the Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to all of us since our arrival in Tehran a few days ago.

Since its inception in November 2006, the APA has developed into one of important inter-parliamentary organizations in Asia. The APA is planning to devote itself to cope with various problems in the region and in the world. With the concerted efforts of the APA Members, we believe that the APA is able to achieve its principles, goals, and objectives to enhance understanding and strengthen trust and cooperation among all of us – Asian parliamentarians – and with all the peoples of Asia. Thailand's presence in this Assembly reaffirms our commitment to foster dialogues and pro-actively contribute to the APA inter-parliamentary milestones.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We the delegates from Thailand are of the strong conviction that, as the APA covering the vast area of the most part of Asia, it does not allow us to enjoy neither geographical proximity nor political, economic and social uniformity. Therefore, before all of us should sit down together and discuss the idea of negative impact of globalization or poverty alleviation; good governance or cultural diversity; Asian Monetary Fund or the best way to combat corruption, it must be our priority to narrow the gap of ignorance and alienation and prejudice, especially sexual, that exist among us by

educating ourselves about histories, beliefs and what is values of and cherished by our friends in other societies. And by only being fully informed of others' particulars is not sufficient in the absence of openmindedness and tolerance among us. "Justice" as being mentioned repeatedly in the opening address of His Excellency Mr. President Ahmadi Nejad the other day would render meaningless if we do not share the common standard of justice and to our varied experiences that are poles apart. The APA as a meeting ground of physical contacts and mental encounters for us Asian peoples is the most appropriate forum for widening and deepening our mutual knowledge, understanding and tolerance. Until and unless we the APA members are fully equipped with sufficient information of one another, there would serve as a solid base for our future endeavours.

**Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

After all said and done, it is the time for all the APA Members to think seriously about how to fulfill the calls by the past AAPP and APA declarations to strengthen the role of the APA in Asia as well as to continue improving its institutional structure.

As of now, it may be too early for APA to enlarge itself. But one should not rule out that an enlargement is necessary for APA in the future, and will benefit the APA in the longer term. In addition, I do believe that the APA must give importance to parliamentary diplomacy and engaging itself with national parliaments, inter-parliamentary bodies elsewhere and relevant international organizations. In particular, it should foster parliamentary cooperation with the Executive Branch of each member country and explore common legislations in all areas critical to Asia.

This November, we return to Tehran again with the mission to chart the next steps for all of us to walk together toward the progress and prosperity of Asia. I therefore wish to extend my best wishes for the success of the Second General Assembly of the APA and sincerely hope that we shall commit to the objectives of the APA together in the next Assembly to come in 2008 in Indonesia.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you very much for your kind attention.
