



ICAPP/7GA/012

**Baku Declaration
of the 7th General Assembly of the ICAPP
Nov. 23, 2012**

We, the leaders and representatives of political parties from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam—gathered here in Baku, the capital city of the Republic of Azerbaijan, for the Seventh General Assembly of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP). The Assembly was graciously hosted by the New Azerbaijan Party from November 22 to 23, 2012 under the main theme of “Security, Peace and Reconciliation in Asia.”

The 7th General Assembly of ICAPP was held in Baku in the context of a rapidly transformed world. The global balance of economic, cultural and political power is shifting inexorably from the West to the East. ICAPP is a unique forum, bringing out the best of Asia’s unity in diversity by leading the way forward in what is now generally accepted as the “Asian Century”. Interfaith harmony and political pluralism remains a pillar of ICAPP’s principles.

In just 12 years since its launch in Manila, the ICAPP now counts 336 member parties (governing and opposition) from 53 Asian states. The ICAPP has witnessed its institutionalisation as a unique, one-of-its-kind international organization that has demonstrated the capacity to cut through barriers of race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, age, politics and ideology. ICAPP has also manifested its ability to forge partnerships and broaden its base with an outreach that extends to Latin America and Africa. At the Joint Conference between the ICAPP and the COPPPAL held in Mexico last October, it was agreed, in another first, to convene an unprecedented conference of political parties of Asia, Latin America and Africa. In this context, we welcome the participation of the National Congress Party (NCP) from Sudan as an observer in ICAPP and support efforts to establish an Africa-wide body on the ICAPP Model.

ICAPP today embodies the Asian spirit of resilience evident in the dynamism and can-do vibrance of our societies, surmounting crises and overcoming economic difficulties with creativity and innovation.

The ICAPP now also has a Youth Wing and Women Wing to mobilize Asia’s young, and women, and ICAPP Medical Emergency Forum (IMEF) to cope with natural disasters; a strong partner in Climate Change through its affiliate, the International Ecological Safety Cooperative Organization (IESCO), accredited by the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and similarly engaged by COPPPAL, representing the political parties of Latin America and the Caribbean; and another partner aimed at harnessing the growing power of public opinion by bringing together political parties and civil society organizations on one platform through the Centrist Asia-Pacific Democrats International (CAPDI).



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We reaffirm our commitment to the principles—and the spirit—of the ICAPP Charter and of ICAPP’s subsequent Declarations at its biennial assemblies: in Manila in 2000, Bangkok in 2002, Beijing in 2004, Seoul in 2006, Astana in 2009 and Phnom Penh in 2010.

We would like to reaffirm that peace is indivisible and reconciliation is the only way forward to win the battle for “hearts and minds” of communities, cultures and countries. We would like to emphasize that in today’s world, the notion of security has to give primacy to human security. ICAPP places priority on a people-centred development approach that promotes good governance by combating corruption, rejecting coercion, and avoiding confrontation. ICAPP seeks a security paradigm that would secure the people from want, war and warming of the climate, all of which present serious threats to humankind.

We see grounds for optimism as we survey the Asian scenario. Amidst the turbulence and turmoil seen in the world, there are a number of hopeful signs in Asia which are pointers to the spirit of peace and reconciliation prevailing over division and discord.

We welcome the results of the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of China, ICAPP’s biggest member, leading to the political transition to a fifth generation leadership that reflects success in building a peaceful, prosperous and stable society.

Peace and reconciliation as laudable goals of successful state policy are evident in the historic signing of the framework peace accord in the Philippines, thanks to the leadership of President Benigno Aquino III, leading to a final settlement of a decades-long conflict between the central authority in Manila and the Muslim fighters in the South. And this spirit is reflected also in the historic change in Myanmar with an opening up to the outside world. We would like to commend the role of ICAPP, which took a timely initiative in September 2012 to reach out to both the government and opposition in Myanmar.

We also applaud the political transitions in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya where elected governments are now in office.

We appreciate the positive signals emanating from one of the most turbulent regions in Asia which has seen recurring violence; Southwest Asia is making modest strides on peace and reconciliation. The establishment of a Trilateral Commission, including Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States seeks to promote a peace process that includes talks with the Taliban so that a conducive environment facilitates the military exit of the foreign forces from Afghanistan in 2014. We welcome the resumption of talks for normal communication and commerce between Pakistan and India after a gap of almost four years, as well as dialogue on all outstanding issues including Kashmir, a process pushed and promoted by ICAPP at its various fora. In Nepal too, the political transition has ended a decade-long armed conflict, giving primacy of the ballot over the bullet.

The eventual peaceful resolution of the Preah Vihear Temple dispute between Cambodia and Thailand and at a broader, sustained level, the success stories of peace and reconciliation in both Cambodia and Timor Leste show that bitterness and bigotry can be replaced by rapprochement and reconciliation, given a leadership with vision and will. We call on the ruling and opposition parties in Thailand to consider the resolutions for reconciliation and amnesty for the so-called “Yellow Shirts” and “Red Shirts” of Thailand to



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unite the country under the much-loved and much-respected King Bhumibol Adulyadej, respecting the rule of law and preserving democracy.

However, we express our concern at the lingering conflicts in Asia: the use of brazen force in Palestine (Gaza), the need for lasting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, or threats to use force to resolve the nuclear issue with Iran. All the potentially dangerous flashpoints in Asia should be resolved peacefully through negotiations, upholding international law and United Nations resolutions. Political parties must play their role in defusing issues in Southern Thailand or the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

In this regard, we commend the establishment of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC), initiated by the ICAPP and Saranrom Institute of Foreign Affairs Foundation (SIFAF) in Bangkok in August 2011, which seeks to assist and advise governments in helping to resolve conflicts in the region.

We realize that environmental degradation and poverty passed down from generation to generation are the gravest threats confronting humankind in our time. We support all efforts to promote Eco-safety to moderate the effects of climate change, which are ravaging parts of Asia with recurring frequency. We endorse ICAPP's initiative to gain observer status to the General Assembly, so as to coordinate its activities with relevant U.N. programs and institutions.

We reaffirm our resolve to establish an Asian Anti-Poverty Fund and an Asian Micro-Financing Fund—as called for by the Kunming Declaration of the ICAPP Conference on Poverty Alleviation held in the capital city of Yunnan Province, China, in July 2010. We reaffirm our will to enlarge the objective area of the proposed Fund into a Global Anti-Poverty Fund following consultations with our intra-regional political partners in Latin America and the Caribbean under COPPPAL and with the political parties in Africa.

We also take this opportunity to appeal for peace in Syria and we urge the government in Damascus as well as the opposition to work out an accord for national reconciliation that includes free and fair elections which can result in a government that has legitimacy through the ballot box. Since most international and regional efforts have failed, we propose the calling of “snap” elections under U.N. supervision that will finally determine the will of the Syrian people on the leaders they want to govern them and take note of the recent emergence of the Syrian national opposition. Otherwise, the conflict has a danger of spilling into the wider Middle East with disastrous consequences leading to sectarian and ethnic cleavages.

We share the vision presented by the U.N. Secretary General, H.E. Ban Ki Moon for a nuclear free world with nuclear disarmament being promoted as an achievable goal, equitably without any discrimination and double standards. We welcome the initiative taken by president of Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev at the 66th session of the U.N. General Assembly to develop a “Universal Declaration of Nuclear Free World” and appreciated his efforts in fighting against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieving global security under the framework of the U.N.

We also support resolving territorial disputes in parts of Asia based on the accepted principles of international law and the U.N. Charter, rather than resorting to the threat or the



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use of force. Political differences on such territorial disputes must not become impediments to normal economic and cultural interaction, based on mutual benefit.

As ICAPP grows and expands in the 21st century, we reaffirm our commitment to play a leadership role as the harbinger of new ideas and initiatives on issues. This will help to revive faith in the future and build on the hope for a better tomorrow for Asia's teeming millions so that they may thrive in peace and prosperity in a world without overlords and without underdogs.

The 7th General Assembly of ICAPP at Baku witnessed the expansion of the ICAPP family, with Youth and Women affiliates. No country can progress without a robust role of both.

We applaud the increasingly important role of the youth in Asia, who are the majority in most of its countries. The ICAPP Youth Wing will endeavour to galvanize the energies, creativity and dynamism of youth as a focal point through its website, and its activities and initiatives. In this regard, we welcome the proposal of the New Azerbaijan Party to host an ICAPP Youth forum in Baku in the summer of 2013.

We also welcome the launch of ICAPP Women Wing, and we feel that with such an inclusive approach, ICAPP today is more representative of all key segments of Asian society.

We thank the new President of Mexico H.E. Enrique Pena Nieto, the ruling party PRI and COPPPAL for endorsing ICAPP's call for Mexico and the U.N. to convene in Mexico a Global Summit in the battle against narcotics in the light of the increasing production and distribution of narcotics in almost all parts of the world.

ICAPP pays tribute to the late King Norodom Sihanouk for his outstanding contribution to Asian Unity and his steadfastness despite difficulties faced by him, his family and his country.

We express our profound gratitude to the Government and the people of Azerbaijan especially President Ilham Aliyev and the New Azerbaijan Party for their warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements to make the 7th General Assembly of ICAPP a resounding success.

The ICAPP would also like to express our gratitude to the representatives of political parties and institutions from various countries outside Asia who have participated in the 7th General Assembly as observers.

Adopted unanimously on this 23rd day of November, 2012 in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan.