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General Debate

Remarks by Mr. Adrian SEVERIN

**President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for
Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

Mrs. President,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by expressing my satisfaction for being the first President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE who addresses a Conference of the Inter Parliamentary Union. At the same time I would like to express my gratitude for the excellent hospitality offered by our Moroccan hosts. I am also proud to be the first OSCE PA President visiting in this capacity the Maghrebian countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's world is transforming itself day after day into a big village, as some rightly call it. The more numerous we are – since, indeed, we are more numerous every day – the more interrelated we are.

But, on the other hand, we must assess that even if we are closer and closer in our ever less spacious village, we are more and more diverse – or at least we feel more and more separated by our different cultural identities – and still we are very poor – or at least we are suffering of dramatic economic and consequently, social disparities.

These realities should not push us towards an anti-globalization attitude. To a large extent globalization is a natural process and that is why it is unavoidable. I believe that it brings also a lot of positive opportunities to all of us. What we must really do is to wisely administrate that process for the benefit of our citizens and of the future generations. And also to make this process clearer and more understandable for the citizens and the nations, yet more relevant to them.

What we are confronted presently with is not a crisis of globalization or a globalization crisis. Our capacity to understand, to accept and to cope with the challenges of globalization is in crisis. Our mentalities are in crisis. We cannot overcome this crisis by looking into the past. The past is real, indeed, but as we have learnt it, is very “unpredictable”. We are too much divided about the past and by the past. We value the past time differently. We should look into the future, even if the future is not yet real. By learning the lessons of the history we can transform the future’s potential into a better reality in accordance with our legitimate aspirations. In this respect we should give a second chance to our history by reconciling it with our geography.

Within this context, and for the reasons above, we should state that globalization must recognize and consolidate two main rights: the right to diversity and the right to solidarity. To keep this rights together we will have to develop a comprehensive and coherent system of global subsidiarity.

As for the right to diversity is concerned we cannot but asses that the world’s different identities are dangerously associated today with an increasing inequality. This is bad. And this must be changed. We are all different and as long as this is natural it should remain so. But at the same time we must be all equals. In rights and in opportunities. All different – all equals.

However, the unity between diversity and equality cannot grow and survive in poverty and without freedom. In fact, prosperity and freedom are also linked: prosperity without freedom is in vain; freedom without prosperity is in peril.

At the same time freedom is a source of prosperity. This is about the positive and rational freedom, the self disciplined freedom and the collectively organized freedom. It is also about the right to say no when you disagree twined with the wisdom to say yes when it is necessary. Certainly it is not about the freedom to kill, the freedom to bomb, the freedom to harass innocent people.

There are some who say that freedom cannot go together with democracy. They pretend that because of democracy freedom might be less efficient. I believe that, on the contrary, only democracy could give scope and strength to freedom. Only democracy, with its characteristic ingredients which are openness, transparency, accountability and respect for diversity, could prevent freedom to make room for our common bad instincts and to act against itself, to commit suicide. The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will be ready, I am sure, to cooperate in this sense for giving a new impetus to the International Conference of New and Restored Democracies which maybe should associate to its work the international parliamentary organizations.

President,

Many of the cultural crisis we are facing today are precisely the result of the lack of democracy both at the state level and at the international level. Mainly when poor people have to choose between an authoritarian ruler and a cultural (see religious) fundamentalism they choose the latter better than the first. The intolerance of the authoritarianism generates irrationality. The state terror generates the global terrorism. That is why it was a shortsighted wrongly called “real politik” to support undemocratic regimes under the assumption that they keep stability in their country and their neighborhood. In fact we have learnt that those who start by producing fear to the others are getting fear in return for themselves; and that fear is irrational and contagious. It is responsible, among others, for international terrorism.

There is no culture or religion responsible for terrorism. The terrorists have no excuse and they should receive their just punishment. However we must admit that the lack of civil rights has fueled the terrorism and not the excess of democratic freedoms.

That is why the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly believes that there is only one thing which must not be tolerated: the intolerance. That is not the incompatibility within the diversity which causes the so called clash of cultures but the lack of a real tolerant cultural dialogue. Consequently we believe in the concepts of “cultural security” and “security through multiculturalism” which require a permanent multicultural dialogue. And we think that the irrational cultural crisis can only be overcome by promoting a strategy of common projects. It is about those economic and social projects conceived at a transnational and of course trans-cultural level, which at the same time bring about the security through economic development, the security through communication, security through co-operation, and security through integration.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends,

Now a few words about the right to solidarity. We are confident that in today’s world there is just one single way to be selfish in an intelligent way: the solidarity. This includes solidarity at regional level and at the international level.

We must show this solidarity first and foremost in three main fields: education, health care, and environment protection. It is about education through solidarity and solidarity through education. Education makes people free and rational. They are free because they are rational. They are free because they are at the same time more creative and more adaptative. Adaptiveness through creativeness. Together with education, a good health and a clean environment make people more dependent on themselves and less dependent on the others. That is to say independent.

We should also show solidarity by opening the markets; including the labor markets. In fact, if we carefully look to the demographic trends we realize that in the

coming decades Europe will have a huge labor deficit while some other continents – see different cultures – will have an excess of labor power. That is why Europe should culturally and logistically prepare itself to receive a huge wave of positive migration. On the other hand Europe and America must think on how could migration be regulated by fixing the labor power in its countries of origin by exporting investments in those countries. A process which should be facilitated by a globalization which brings about the free circulation of people, goods, services, and capitals.

Migration is, indeed, at the same time, an asset and a liability of the globalization. It is a big problem which we must know to transform into an opportunity. In this respect the policy of the OSCE PA is to correlate and make live together the principle of free circulation of people, the multicultural dialogue through human direct contacts and the effort aiming to give everybody a future in his / her own country. These are, at least, the conclusions of our last year's International Parliamentary Conference on Migration.

As a parliamentary organization of the Nordic Hemisphere, at the same time pan-European, trans-Atlantic and trans-Asiatic, the OSCE PA Should also speak in favor of the resuming in a consistent way of the North-South dialogue which has been pushed in the shadow of our priorities concerning the European and Euro-Atlantic integration. This integration should not be done on the expense of our dialogue with the South, nor could it be successful in a world dominated by tensions consecutive to social and economic disparities. In the same respect we must also revitalize the Barcelona process which the OSCE PA is willing to do by organizing this Fall an International Parliamentary Conference on Security in the Mediterranean.

Speaking about solidarity the OSCE PA is looking forward to the regional and sub-regional cooperation. The Third Conference on Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation will be organized at the beginning of next year in Switzerland. This June a Conference on Cooperative Security in South-Eastern Europe will take place in Romania. The establishment of Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum to include our partners for Co-

operation in Asia (namely Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand) is in its way as well. We intend to invite the People's Republic of China and Afghanistan to attend it.

At the last OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting held in Bucharest I have suggested, on behalf of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, that the People's Republic of China should be invited to get a status of partner for co-operation within the OSCE. Now, I believe, one should consider the same possibility for the post-Taliban Afghanistan.

Dear colleagues,

I am confident that in present times, not only security is indivisible, but also real freedom and real prosperity. We are condemned to succeed or fail together. If we fail we would be confronted with an endless chain of cultural conflict, chaotic migratory streams, terrorist and organized crime actions, irrationality, misery, hate and fear. The next generation will blame us for letting them such a bloody international disorder.

If we succeed we will be blessed by our sons and grandsons and we will be able to leave then this world with a feeling of confidence and accomplished duty.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is ready to work with you in order to achieve the best possible success. Let us work together for our common better future, for our joint success.

Thank You.