

Abu Dhabi Process Parliamentary Dialogue
Joint Declaration
Islamabad, September 14, 2011

On September 13-14, 2011, the Speaker National Assembly, Dr. Fehmida Mirza hosted the Afghan-Pakistan Parliamentary Dialogue of the Abu Dhabi Process, sponsored by the United Arab Emirates, in the National Assembly of Pakistan and Deputy Speaker, Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi represented her during the proceedings.

The purpose of the Dialogue was to seek more parliamentary cooperation in the bilateral relationship. Participants recognized the positive developments that have marked bilateral relations in recent years. The challenges of transition will require however more efforts to develop the relationship and build mutual confidence and trust.

Against that background, participants emphasized the need that both parliaments determinedly exercise their oversight role over the executive to ensure timely implementation of the commitments of the executive of both countries to improve bilateral relations. In that regard, they considered increased and more regular communication between both parliaments to be of particular importance.

Participants emphasized the need for progress in establishing more security and stability in the border region. They recognized in particular the need for more effective border management. In that regard, contemporary administrative and technical measures need to be complemented by making use of traditional tribal structures and networks in the region, in particular to ensure legitimate cross border mobility.

The fight against militancy in both countries, notably in their border region, requires determined steps against money laundering and the financing of terrorism. Participants emphasized in that regard the importance to implement the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). They also strongly suggested joint operations of Afghanistan and Pakistan against narcotic drugs trafficking.

The participants emphasized the vital importance of fulfilling all commitments made by their respective governments regarding reconciliation. In that regard Pakistani participants emphasized that Pakistan must without delay implement the respective unanimous resolution of the Parliament and the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and develop a framework for reconciliation in Pakistan. Equally, the Afghan government must continue its commitments and fulfill the goals of the reconciliation process facilitated by the High Peace Council.

Participants underlined that the decisions of the bilateral Peace Jirga of 2007 continue to be of high value and are of increased importance in light of transition challenges. They agreed that the decisions of the bilateral Jirga of 2007 should therefore be laid before both parliaments. All participating parliamentarians encouraged the holding of a second Bilateral Jirga as soon as possible and suggested to the government of the United Arab Emirates, facilitation to that end through the Abu Dhabi Process.

As an important element for parliamentary cooperation and to achieve common oversight for the implementation of decisions to improve bilateral relations in all relevant fields, participants resolved to activate Afghan-Pakistani Parliamentary Friendship Groups in both parliaments.

They resolved to work towards more regular and frequent inter-parliamentary dialogue including representatives from both houses of respective Parliaments.

There is a need to synchronize national efforts for reconciliation with regional countries and with the international community. To support these efforts, more parliamentary exchange and communication between regional countries could be envisaged.

Against the background of the need for more exchange and cooperation between both countries in all areas, they encouraged a more liberalized visa regime wherever possible, to facilitate movement and communication.

Participants envisage a follow up meeting in Kabul as soon as possible.