

**Statement by Wangchuk Namgyel, Speaker of National
Assembly of Bhutan, at the 4th South Asian Speakers'
Summit: *Achieving Sustainable Development Goals***

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Nashed, Hon'ble Speaker of the People's Majlis, Hon'ble Speakers of the member states, Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of His Majesty the King, People of Bhutan and on my own behalf, I would like to extend our warm greetings to the distinguished speakers of member states and the delegates attending the 4th South Asian Speakers' Summit. I would like to express our deepest appreciation to the Hon'ble Speaker and through him the People's Majlis for the kind invitation to participate in the summit and the excellent arrangements made to receive in this beautiful city of Male.

I am honoured to partake in the 4th South Asian Speakers' Summit on Achieving Sustainable Goals (SDGs), have no doubt that this august gathering composed of Honourable Speakers' with diverse knowledge and experiences will enrich our deliberations.

In the South Asia-Pacific region, Bhutan is one of the early mover countries for SDG implementation. It is due to our development philosophy of Gross National Happiness, which is premised on the wellbeing and happiness of the people, and which strongly resonates with the principles and objectives of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Bhutan has been able to align relevant targets of the SDGs with the national plans. In fact, in the current 12th Five Year Plan, we have succeeded in directly aligning and integrating all, except one of the seventeen SDGs. Further, Bhutan has presented its first Voluntary National Report in 2018.

Coming to the role of Parliamentarians in achieving the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda Declaration demands the pivotal role of Parliamentarians in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of SDGs through enactment

of legislation, oversight and adoption of budgets. Given this significant mandate, the National Assembly of Bhutan accords high importance to ensure that our parliamentarians are fully sensitized on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs- its objectives, targets and indicators. Based on the Indore Declaration, the National Assembly adopted a resolution dedicating one whole day to deliberate on SDGs at every session of the Assembly. By this coming winter session, we would have discussed and passed resolutions on five Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, in our institutionalization process, the SDGs have been chosen and allocated between the various Parliamentary Committees to ensure that each and every goal receives adequate attention and is implemented. At the national level, the parliament has passed a resolution for government to establish a separate SDG unit to integrate and coordinate in implementation. A Joint Parliamentary Committee has also been established to review and report to the Parliament on SDG implementation. These are the national legislative and the support framework to create conducive environment in achieving the SDGs.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the challenges of our time demand continued collaboration, cooperation and dialogue to solve problems. Therefore, I welcome this inclusive dialogue on the important topic of achieving the SDGs, and look forward to hearing and learning from the wisdom and experiences of the distinguished delegates from member states.

In conclusion, I would once again like to express our deepest appreciation to the Hon'ble Speaker and the People's Majlis and the Secretary General of I.P.U for the excellent arrangements of the summit. I also would like to thank the Honourable Speakers of the member states and accompanying officials for making your time available for this important summit. I am sure we will have a very productive meeting and outcome.

Thank you & Tashi Delek