

**ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. MIYEGOMBO ENKHBOLD, SPEAKER OF THE STATE
GREAT KHURAL (PARLIAMENT) OF MONGOLIA AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF
THE 136TH ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

(Dhaka, 2 April 2017)

Mr. President of the Assembly,
Mr. President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,
Dear Parliamentarians,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 united by their resolve to collectively work for the well-being of humanity, for the preservation of the planet Earth and for attainment of prosperity for all.

It is quite timely that the General Debate of this IPU Assembly is being held under the theme of redressing political, social, and economic inequalities as one of the important SDGs.

Allow me to briefly touch upon some of the actions taken by my country within the framework of the SDG-10 on reducing inequalities.

Mongolia has set itself a noble goal of building a humane, civil, democratic society by promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms as enshrined in its Constitution. Within this framework, Mongolia has joined more than 30 international human rights instruments, including the core conventions and is serving as a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the period of 2016-2018.

Political rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the right to elect and to be elected, the right to freedom of thought and conscience, the right to freedom of press, and the right to freedom of association were embodied in our laws.

The recent adoption by the Parliament of Mongolia of the law on holding consultative polls and of the Resolution on Organizing Public Hearings was designed to further enhance the political rights of citizen to participate in the governing of the country and to exercise their right to freely express their opinion.

Ensuring policy stability and sustainability is imperative for the implementation of SDGs. Hence, the Parliament adopted the Law on Development Policy Planning in 2015 and Mongolia's 2030 Sustainable Development Vision in 2016 respectively in which the ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, creating job opportunities and reducing the unemployment were envisaged.

Through the successful implementation of MDGs, the poverty rate in Mongolia has been brought down from 38.7 to 21.6 percent. Furthermore, we have set ourselves an ambitious yet challenging goal to reduce this number to 18 percent by 2020, and to a single digit by 2025 and by 2030 end poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

It is essential to support small and medium-sized enterprises to end poverty, thus, a law has been recently adopted whereby entities engaged in specified production and have annual sales income of less than MNT 1.5 billion will enjoy only 1 percent income tax. In addition, equipment and machinery for small and medium-sized enterprises will be exempt from customs duty until 2018.

As a result of the above policy actions we anticipate an optimistic future with income inequality considerably reduced and the 80 percent of the population to be among the middle and upper-middle class by 2030.

Dear Parliamentarians,

We embarked upon our journey towards the sustainable development as one team with the earnest promise to leave no one behind, especially children, women, elderly and people with disabilities.

The Parliament of Mongolia recently passed the Law on Combatting Domestic Violence which criminalizes domestic violence with perpetrators subjected to criminal and administrative charges.

We also adopted a new law whereby a social insurance fee for mothers on maternity leave will be funded uninterruptedly by the state for up to three years and mothers' working years will be lengthened by 1.6 year per child born or adopted.

The recently enacted Law on the Elderly envisages comprehensive measures aimed at ensuring their healthcare, supporting their livelihood, promoting the elderly's active participation in the societal life and passing on their knowledge and experience to the younger generation.

These laws are a clear demonstration of Mongolia's resolve to redress social inequalities and build a just and civil society which is friendly and favourable to each and every citizen.

Protection of the rights of women and improvement of their situation are crucial to the implementation of SDG 10, SDG 5 on "Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls" as well as the relevant objectives on women as reflected in the IPU strategy for 2017-2021.

The recent IPU study reveals that the global average of women in national Parliaments stands at 23.3 per cent, women ministers account for 18.3 percent at the Cabinet level.

As for Mongolia, though the percentage of women in public sector reached 59.4 in 2016, women account for 17.1 per cent in the Parliament and 12.5 per cent in the Cabinet respectfully. Thus, further ensuring the rights of women to political participation remains our priority.

Due to social and nomadic ways of life boys tend to miss their opportunity to education and engage, by and large, in cattle-breeding in the rural areas. Lost education means limited opportunities to develop and find jobs, which in turn lead to such negative consequences as depression, alcoholism and poverty. As a result, social inequality deepens. Therefore, we believe that promotion of men's rights also deserve a particular attention in ensuring gender equality.

The role and participation of politicians and decision-makers, especially of members of Parliament who shape policies and adopt laws, is vital for the implementation of SDGs. Here, I wish to encourage my fellow members of Parliament to spare no effort to ensure that sufficient resources are budgeted nationally for implementing the SDGs and to enhance the representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in international economic and financial institutions.

In reducing inequalities among countries it is imperative to effectively implement our commitments we have collectively undertaken, including in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development as well as in the Vienna Program of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024.

Dear Parliamentarians,

This year marks the 55th anniversary of Mongolia's accession to the IPU. From this high podium I wish to pledge Mongolia's continued active engagement in the activities of the IPU, the distinctive platform where parliamentarians from all around the world exchange views and share experiences.

There is a Mongolian proverb which says "discussion by all will make no wrong". I am confident that at this IPU Assembly we will have constructive deliberations with productive outcome.

I wish success to the work of this Assembly.

Thank you for your kind attention.