

**Speech by Madam Tong Thi Phong, First- Vice President of the National
Assembly of The Socialist Republic of Vietnam at the General Debate of the
136th IPU Assembly
(Bangladesh, 2/4/2017)**

**“Redressing inequalities:
Delivering on dignity and well-being for all”**

Mr. President of the IPU,

Mr. Secretary General

Madam President of the 136th Assembly,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I would like to extend my warmest regards to Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General and all delegates at the 136th IPU Assembly. I would like to thank Madam Speaker of the Bangladesh's Parliament for the hospitality accorded to my delegation. Having hosted the IPU Assembly in the past, I am certain that this Assembly will be a major success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the beginning of the 21st Century, peace, national independence, cooperation and development have been the main trends in international relations. Globalization, international integration and the 4th Industrial Revolution have opened the doors for breakthroughs in a wide range of areas. But alongside new opportunities there are a number of global issues, traditional and non-traditional security challenges, that affect each and every country such as financial security, energy, food and water security, climate change, natural disasters, epidemics together with political, economic and social inequalities.

Faced with this reality, we have been doing everything we can together, implementing plans and solutions to realize our commitment to "leaving no one behind". We have worked hard to implement the Millennium Development Goals from 2000 to 2015. In September 2015, we adopted the 2030 Development Agenda with 17 sustainable development goals, including the SDG 10 on Reducing inequalities within and among Countries, for only when inequalities are redressed, can people's dignity and wellbeing be ensured.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I really appreciate the theme of the 136th IPU and the remarks made during this Assembly. I am happy with the fact that Mr. President, Mr. Secretary General and the IPU as a whole as well as its member parliaments are taking on important roles in international efforts to reduce inequalities and realize the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a developing country that has been through many difficult periods in the course of achieving significant progress in socioeconomic development, Vietnam is always mindful of the need to ensure equality and justice for the people in the national development process. Thanks to the sound policies of the State of Vietnam, which strive for a strong nation and a wealthy population in a democratic, just and modern society, Vietnam has completed most of the UN MDGs with 3 goals achieved ahead of the 2015 deadline, namely those on poverty and hunger, universal primary education and gender equality and women empowerment. Vietnam is working very hard to develop the National Action Plan for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the 169 targets of the 2030 Development Agenda with concrete policies laid out to realize the SDG 10 such as providing concessional credit access for the poorest groups, promoting social welfare, and ensuring equal opportunities and shared benefits for all members of society. The National Assembly of Vietnam has adopted the 2013 Constitution and continues to complete the legal framework to implement this Constitution through various laws on Social Insurance, Medical Examination and Treatment, Gender Equality, Union, Labor, Press, Information Access, Youth, People with disabilities, Elderly people, Children care and Protection, Religion and Faith, among others. In particular, the National Assembly also issued a number of socioeconomic development policies to improve the livelihood of minorities and developed the government bodies and human resources needed to take charge of these policies. The National Assembly and its functioning bodies will continue to review and amend relevant laws and monitor the Government's execution of the abovementioned programs and policies.

Nonetheless, Vietnam is also facing many challenges such as climate change, rise of sea level, lack of resources, uneven level of development among different

localities, and others. Therefore, Vietnam hopes to receive the continued assistance from other countries and international organization to enhance the quality of governance in order to achieve our development goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Redressing inequalities and delivering on dignity and wellbeing for people is an important and long-term mission. As each country needs to contribute to this important effort, I would like to make the following recommendations:

First, at the global level, we need to promote the role of the UN and realize the targets set out in the SDG 10 in every country. The agenda and activities of multilateral economic, trade and financial organizations need to be reformed to advance their roles, making sure that developing countries have their say at global economic and financial institutions.

Second, at the regional level, we need to build a network of regional organizations to coordinate actions in dealing with nontraditional security issues such as climate change, rise of sea level, epidemics and natural disasters especially in urgent situations, in order to ensure people's safety and wellbeing.

Third, at the national level, despite different political systems, all countries have shared interests in delivering on the wellbeing of their people and the prosperity of the nation. Therefore, I suggest each country takes steps to improve its institutions, policies and governance in order to reduce inequalities, eliminate discriminatory regulations and ensure equal access for everyone in political, social and economic activities.

Fourth, at this important forum, we urge developed countries to continue to provide support for the developing world through the sharing of knowledge and experience and transfer of technologies, which will promote socioeconomic development in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

Fifth, I encourage all countries to develop the tools to measure inequalities, with specific criteria for different groups in society. From such metrics, we will be able to gauge the level of inequality from economic, political and social aspects and set priorities for policies in each phase of development.

Sixth, all parliaments need to step up their legislative and monitoring activities to support Governments in realizing the inequalities reduction goal by 2030.

Seventh, efforts should be taken to promote cooperation mechanisms between the IPU and the UN and between IPU's member parliaments and international organizations to exchange experience in development and addressing inequalities.

Eighth, we need to enhance communication activities to raise people's awareness on their rights and responsibilities in helping one another to ensure social equality.

Thank you all for your attention.