



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY
H.E TAN SRI DATO' SERI DR. ABDUL HAMID PAWANTEH
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF
THE SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE OF
SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENTS,
UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK,
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Honourable Chairman,
Honourable delegates,
Distinguished guest,
Ladies and gentlemen.

This conference is about asking for a more meaningful role for legislators in international affairs, and for it to be appropriately institutionalised. It is only the second to be held in five years, therefore surely not anything done in haste or without due consideration or sensitivity.

It has involved the participation of legislators and presiding officers from every possible corner of the globe – practitioners of democracy, parliamentary rule and representative government, of whatever is the prevailing accepted form or interpretation, in their own societies, nation-states or supranational entities – under the auspices of the International Parliamentary Union.

This conference itself, as well as its primary objectives, clearly appear to have the support of career and professional diplomats in the service of their respective nation-states as well as from within the United Nations Organisation itself, or even leading it.

It is also but manifestation of the current paradigm in world affairs with its dimensions of instant information, instant perception, instant judgment and instant reaction.

It advocates a concept and practice of democracy and international relations in the context of "...pluralism and variety and an open market for ideas, an order of things that involves clashes and the constant need for conciliation, adjustment, balance, an order that is always in a condition of imperfect equilibrium, which is required to be maintained by conscious effort..." to paraphrase the historian Isiah Berlin.

It registers its pursuit of an ideal definition of democracy, but implicitly stipulates a commonly or universally accepted one.

It does not seek to usurp from the executive branch of governments their central and primary role in the conduct of diplomacy and foreign policy; neither does it threaten nor advocate anything anathema to the concept and principle of sovereignty of nation-states.

Therefore, Mr. President and Honourable Delegates, I cannot understand why we must wait five years for the next conference. My exhortation is that we should have one sooner.

Thank you.