



ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION
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Statement delivered by

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*Your Excellency Mr. Jose de Venecia, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippine Congress,
Honorable Heads of National Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Allow me to thank the Republic of the Philippines for its hospitality and the great work in organizing this Session of the AIPO. On behalf of the Russian Parliament's lower chamber, the State Duma, and particularly its Speaker, Mr. Boris Gryzlov, I would like to extend our warmest greetings and wishes of success to all participants of this Session.

Every gathering of this kind provides a new stage of development for our communication and interaction, an ability to span our dialogue and explore new frontiers of cooperation.

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The Asia-Pacific community constitutes one of the top priority issues of Russia's foreign policy. For one reason, Russia belongs directly to this region. Our country is determined to provide active assistance in securing peace and stability in the region. It is also keen on promoting its involvement in the vital international developments in this part of the world. We are always open to positive dialogue, and welcome an equal and mutually beneficial partnership.

While recognizing the crucial significance of the entire agenda of this Session, I would like to put a special emphasis on the issue of international terrorism and its related challenges and hazards of the 21st century.

Anti-terrorist cooperation in Asia is of paramount importance for Russia. Our inter-sessional Meetings on combating terrorism and transnational crime provide a practical framework for forging a global anti-terrorist alliance. Several significant international documents on fighting terrorism have been adopted in the past three years, such as the Statement on Cooperative Counter-Terrorism Action on Border

Security, the Statement on cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to maritime Security, the Statement on Strengthening Transport Security Against International Terrorism (composed jointly by Russia and the Philippines in July 2004), the Statement on Information Sharing, Intelligence Exchange and Document Integrity and Security, the Statement on Cooperation in Fighting Cyber Attack and Terrorist Misuse of Cyber Space, and the Statement on Promoting a People-Centered Approach to Counter Terrorism.

Following Russia's motion, inter-sessional Meetings have been resumed on providing emergency relief in cases of natural disasters, resulting in a Statement on Disaster Management and emergency Response.

I would like to note that Russia also takes an active part in promoting counter-terrorist cooperation within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Economic Forum (APEC). Our country strictly abides by the APEC Anti-Terrorist Statement, and contributes willingly to the APEC Counter-Terrorism Task Force.

Not only does Russia see APEC as a major integration engine of the Pacific Rim, as well as a unique multilateral communication framework for trade, investment, economic and technical cooperation. We also regard this organization as a very efficient mechanism for resolving the most critical issues of the region and the entire world.

When speaking of the most promising vectors for stepping up Russia's economic involvement in the Asia-Pacific region, one should primarily think of energy supplies and transport. Russia has successfully implemented an APEC project on promoting energy efficiency, and participated in the Meeting of the APEC Expert Group on Energy Efficiency and Conservation. The parties are presently discussing the issue of holding an APEC Energy Working Group Meeting in Russia in 2006.

Along with that, our country seeks to use its membership in the APEC to integrate its vast Syberian potential into the existing framework for economic cooperation.

We also see a growing interest in the Asia-Pacific region toward interacting with Russia in terms of science, culture, mass media, and tourism. Such involvement would be mutually beneficial for each of our nations.

Russia is rich with natural resources and has significant scientific potential. A joint venture of these riches can contribute greatly to improving the quality of life in our partner-countries. And this is where parliaments can play a historic role. I believe that our national parliaments can, and should take active part in implementing large-scale economic projects in the Asia-Pacific.

We are ready to engage in bilateral as well as multilateral discussion on how to strengthen inter-parliamentary relations in order to boost cooperation among our countries.

I am fully convinced that this Forum will serve the noble goals of promoting stability, security, and prosperity in the region. The AIPO will undoubtedly remain an essential tool for ensuring a steady and dynamic development for its member-states.

Together we can make this world much safer, wealthier, and happier place.

Thank you.