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Parlamentul României
Camera Deputaților

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Nr. 1031
privind participarea la cea de a III-a Adunare Generală a Asociației
Interparlamentare pentru Servicii Sociale
(Seoul, Korea, 22-24 august 2007)

În perioada 22 – 24 august 2007, la Seoul, s-a desfășurat, cea de a III-a Adunare Generală a Asociației Interparlamentare pentru Servicii Sociale (IPSS) la care Camera Deputaților a fost reprezentată de o delegație condusă de domnul Gheorghe Barbu, președintele Comisiei pentru muncă și protecție socială. Din delegație au mai făcut parte domnul deputat Adrian Miutescu, membru al Comisiei pentru muncă și protecție socială, doamna Nadia Ionescu, director în cadrul Direcției Generale Afaceri Externe și doamna Gabriela Enea, director al Direcției de relații publice.

La reuniune, care s-a bucurat de o deosebită atenție din partea autorităților și presei koreene, au participat peste o sută de parlamentari și înalți funcționari parlamentari și peste 30 de diplomați de rang înalt din 29 de țări membre și observatoare.

În prima zi a reuniunii, primul ministru al Republicii Korea, domnul Han Duck-soo, a rostit o alocuțiune în deschiderea lucrărilor transmise în direct de posturile locale de televiziune, dând o înaltă apreciere activității IPSS și obiectivelor acestei organizații și evidențiind încă o dată angajamentul țării sale față de dezvoltarea colaborării interparlamentare în domeniul protecției și serviciilor sociale.

La rândul său, vicepreședintele Adunării Naționale a Republicii Korea, domnul Lee Yong Hee, luând cuvântul în cadrul ceremoniei de deschidere a lucrărilor a subliniat importanța conlucrării între parlamentele din întreaga lume pentru identificarea unor soluții legislative coerente și complementare, în domeniul protecției sociale.

La lucrări a participat și președintele ales al Rotary Internațional, domnul Lee Dong-Kurn care a prezentat pe larg preocupările în domeniu ale organizației, modul în care acționează prin filialele pe care le are în întreaga lume în sprijinul dezvoltării serviciilor sociale și a subliniat importanța, din această perspectivă, a coordonării eforturilor tuturor actorilor sociali.

Șeful delegației române a rostit o alocuțiune, în plenul Conferinței, în care a făcut o prezentare amplă a legislației române și a subliniat că, în contextul profundelor schimbări din domeniul economic, protecția socială a impus abordări și reglementări noi, resurse sporite și o pregătire adecvată a specialiștilor în domeniu.

În contextul necesității eficientizării serviciilor sociale, domnul președinte Gheorghe Barbu a evocat imperativul descentralizării, al sporirii rolului autorităților locale și al dialogului social cu organizațiile neguvernamentale, cu sindicatele și patronatele, etc.

De asemenea, domnul președinte Gheorghe Barbu a prezentat poziția de principiu a autorităților române față de situația cetățenilor sud coreeni răpiți și ținuți ostateci în Afganistan. Participanții au adoptat prin consens o Declarație prin care s-a cerut eliberarea neîntârziată a ostatecilor sud coreeni și au fost dezavuate practicile de răpire și torturare a civililor.

Alocuțiunea domnului președinte Gheorghe Barbu a fost primită cu mult interes de participanții la lucrări și de reprezentanții mass media domnia sa acordând interviuri ziariștilor prezenți, postului public de radio din România și postului de televiziune Antena 3.

Adunarea Generală a IPSS a validat sporirea numărului de membri ai Comitetului executiv prin alegerea ca membri a reprezentanților Vietnam-ului, Bulgariei și Kenyei, a decis primirea ca membri ai organizației a Laos-ului, Serbiei, Uruguay-ului și Uzbekistan-ului precum

și convocarea reuniunii Comitetului executiv al IPSS în perioada următoare, în Sudan, ocazie cu care va fi stabilită și locația în care se va desfășura cea de a IV-a Adunare Generală a IPSS.

Reprezentanții Republicii Korea au reiterat angajamentul ferm față de această organizație și față de creșterea rolului său în plan internațional.

Deputat Gheorghe Barbu,
Președintele Comisiei pentru muncă și protecție socială
a Camerei Deputaților,



Deputat Adrian Miulescu,
Membru al Comisiei pentru muncă și protecție socială
a Camerei Deputaților,



Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service 3rd General Assembly

Seoul, Korea
22-25 August 2007

Speech by Mr **Gheorghe Barbu**, MP
Head of the Romanian delegation
Chairman of the Labour and Social Security Committee
House of Deputies, Parliament of Romania

Mr President,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking for the invitation to take part in the proceedings of the 3rd General Assembly of the IPSS and wish you success in your work.

The possibility to communicate, to exchange ideas and detail the evolution of social policies in our countries will certainly open new vistas of approaching these policies and identifying solutions to the problems that face us all.

That is why I deem it useful to give you a brief overview of the problems Romania has been confronted with in the last few years, problems whose solution has played a major part in attaining one of the key national objectives – Romania's integration in the European Union.

I. In the field of social assistance we have set in place the legislative and institutional framework conducive to a new system of social assistance, distinct from the social security (which refers to retirement pensions and other social security rights, like unemployment, health care a.s.o.). This system of social assistance is a decentralized one, the local authorities being in charge of the main State benefits and social assistance services.

In order to set up this social assistance system, the Parliament has passed bills and adopted a series of normative acts aiming at:

A. Improving the socio-economic status of the family through various programmes that grant benefits to families with children and to single disabled persons. These are:

- State benefits for all children below 18; the benefits are substantially increased for children below the age of 2;
- supplementary and income support allowances for single parent families;
- newborn allowances;
- monthly allowances for foster care families;
- benefits and other allowances for handicapped children;
- monthly food allowance for HIV/AIDS patients.

B. Supporting child rearing with a view to increasing the birth rate through:

- monthly benefits for working parents to rear children up to 2 years of age, or 7 years in the case of handicapped children, if the parents quit work, or of monthly allowances if the parents resume work during this period;
- monthly benefits for jobless parents to rear handicapped children up to 7 years old;
- crèche tickets and bonus tickets meant to encourage mothers to resume their work, to lower women exclusion and grant equal opportunities on the labour market;
- complete outfits for the newborn.

C. Granting the guaranteed minimum income to single persons or to families that lack a source of income or have very low incomes, with the aim of helping them go above the poverty threshold, but without discouraging employment.

D. Supporting young families through an allowance (the equivalent of 200 euros) awarded to each person at his/her first marriage.

E. Granting winter heating allowances to low-income families and single persons, whatever the heating system they use in their homes.

F. Supporting the elderly by:

- building new residential homes and modernizing the existing ones;
- offering home care services;
- implementing special programmes meant to prevent early dependence and encourage the social integration of the elderly;
- developing community social services.

G. Preventing and combating family violence through:

- a system of specialized services financed in public-private partnership for projects meant to develop units of prevention and combat of domestic violence;
- the development of services of rehabilitation and social integration of domestic aggressors.

II. In the field of employment several measures have been taken, among which:

A. For disabled persons:

- monthly benefits cumulated with the wages and the private complementary budget;
- State-paid interests on loans for buying a means of transport.

B. For employers:

- deduction of the expenses incurred by the adjustment of the workplaces and the acquisition of the equipment used by disabled persons from the taxable profit;
- deduction of the expenses incurred by the transport of the disabled persons to/from the workplace and by the transport of raw materials and finite products to/from the residence of the disabled persons who work at home from the taxable profit;
- deduction of the expenses related to the vocational training and guidance, as well as the employment of the disabled persons from the budget of the unemployment benefits.

III. In the field of labour force migration the Romanian legislation stipulates for the access of aliens on the national labour market, in keeping

with the international conventions Romania has signed, as well as the EU policy on the matter.

Thus, the Parliament has adopted laws to simplify the administrative procedures as concerns the right to work on the Romanian territory, the employment or transfer of aliens, the increase of the labour market liberalization.

At the same time, we should underline that, out of the 10 millions of working Romanian citizens, 2.5 million are employed outside the country. They too are entitled to social security. On the other hand, this situation results in a labour force deficit in Romania, so a complex and attentive approach of the labour force migration is necessary.

Ladies, and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Romanian Parliament I wish to express our solidarity with all the actions aiming at the immediate and unconditional release of the Korean volunteers held as hostages in Afganistan. We stand for such actions never happen again.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I shall wind up reiterating my pleasure at participating in the proceedings of the General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service and thanking my colleagues for their interest in our debates.

I also wish to thank the organizers for giving us the opportunity to exchange opinions and experience and, last but not least, for their hospitality.

Joint Communiqué of the 3rd IPSS General Assembly

Seoul, 24 August 2007

Overview

1. The Third General Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service (IPSS) convened from 22 to 24 August 2007 at The Shilla Hotel, Seoul, Korea, the invitation to which was extended by the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, was participated by 83 delegates from 29 member countries. The list of participating countries is found in the appendix.

2. The General Assembly aims at supporting social services at the parliamentary level and consolidating solidarity among countries through the exchanges and cooperation among members of parliaments around the world, and is the third General Assembly following the Inaugural General Assembly held from 28 to 31 August 2003 and the Second General Assembly held from 24 to 27 August 2005.

3. The first Executive Committee Meeting presided over by the IPSS President LEE Kyeong-Jae took place on 22 August 2007 prior to the Opening Ceremony, with the participation of delegates from six out of nine Executive Committee member countries elected in the Second General Assembly where the members deliberated on the meeting agenda, the election of IPSS executive members, and the examination of the next hosting country of the General Assembly.

4. At the Opening Ceremony on 23 August 2007, the Hon. LEE Kyeong-Jae, President of the IPSS delivered his opening remarks followed by welcoming remarks by H.E. LEE Sang Deuk, Vice Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, congratulatory remarks by H.E. HAN Duck Soo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea and congratulatory remarks by President-elect Mr. LEE Dong Geun of the Rotary International.

5. In the first Plenary Session, the membership of Laos, Serbia, Uruguay and Uzbekistan, all of which sent delegations for the first time, was approved. The Hon. LEE Kyeong-Jae of the Republic of Korea was elected as the president and the Hon. Bryon WILFERT from Canada and the Hon. Usamah Mohammed ALKURDI from Saudi Arabia were elected as the vice presidents. In addition to current executive committee member countries, Canada, Korea, Mexico, Mongolia, Saudi Arabia and

Sudan, three more countries, Vietnam, Bulgaria and Kenya were elected as new Executive member countries. At the first Plenary Session, there were discussions on the business plan and action plan of the IPSS as proposed by Vice President WILFERT. Vice President WILFERT stressed that there should be discussions for more specific ideas about the organization's visions, missions, goals, aims, executive plans and advocated outcomes. In general discussions, representatives from 18 countries made presentations, exchanged views and experiences in coming up with realistic alternatives to the 'Role and experience of each parliament in establishing legal and institutional infrastructure to promote social services,' an agenda that was resolved in the Joint Communiqué of the Inaugural General Assembly.

6. The second executive committee reviewed draft joint communiqué and agreed on the need for a separate resolution regarding to the kidnapping of Korean social workers in Afghanistan. Sudan confirmed their intention to host the next executive committee while considering the possibility of hosting the fourth General Assembly.

7. The second Plenary Session on 24 August 2007 began with the adoption and signing of the joint communiqué which was followed by Special Social Service Awards Ceremony and came to a close with closing remarks by the IPSS president.

Discussions

8. Participants pointed out in discussions that agendas such as the protection of human rights of migrant workers and the promotion of the employment of people with disabilities are important areas of social service as they create a basis for a society where every one can live in harmony, and also indicated that a society where every one lives in harmony can be obtained when there is a 'co-production' of a good public system and active social service activities in the private sector.

9. In the discussion for Agenda 1 on International Labor Migration and Protection of Human Rights, the participants agreed that the protection of human rights of migrant workers, who will be working side by side with us in the 21st century of multi-cultural society, lays the groundwork for an active migration of labor, and such protection is possible when there is an overall welfare service that includes education, interpretation, medical service, and information.

10. In the discussion for Agenda 2 on Promoting the Employment of the Physically Challenged and Vocational Training, participants focused their attention on the promotion of the employment of people with disabilities saying it is an important activity that realizes the respect for human rights namely "equal opportunity and participation," and added that to expand this respect further it is necessary to have the

provision of institutional and legal framework as well as the interest and participation by the employer based on the voluntary spirit, the essence of social service. Moreover in the ensuing presentations, participants expressed interest in expanding education and rehabilitation of people with disabilities, their right to movement as well as their access to information saying that such an expansion is critical in facilitating the employment of people with disabilities, and to this end shared successful cases of social service activities while emphasizing further the promotion of exchanges of programs and cooperation.

11. With regard to the kidnapping of Korean social workers in Afghanistan, which was submitted as an emergency agenda, the participants of the IPSS expressed their deep regret over the fact that Koreans who went to Afghanistan for social service activities became targets of terror and kidnapping. In addition, in line with a call for a peaceful resolution to the Korean hostage situation and increasing cooperation in the exchanges of social service activities in the international community, each parliament agreed to make concerted efforts and cooperate with each other so that social service activities can be carried out safely without being intervened by state or non-state actors.

Resolutions

12. The IPSS General Assembly after putting together the result of discussions formulated the following resolution of five provisions as well as an additional resolution on a newly-added agenda. The resolution on the latter is found in the appendix II.

The Third IPSS General Assembly,

Pledges to elevate the spirit of social service and play a leading role in promoting social service to enhance social welfare at both home and abroad,

Asks participants to create an organization within their respective parliament with other representatives who share the goal of the IPSS, to promote mutual understanding and cooperation among representatives and member countries, and to urge non-member countries to join the IPSS,

Urges each parliament to face the fact that international migration of labor and globalization go hand in hand, to strive to provide institutional and legal framework for the protection of human rights of migrant workers and international cooperation, and to provide necessary social service through cooperation with the government and the private sector,

Cooperates with parliaments to devise a system that will provide opportunities to equal life by promoting the employment of people with disabilities who are susceptible to marginalization, to induce voluntary participation of the employers which will consolidate the system, and to expand ways for social service organizations at the private sector to take active participation,

Lastly, resolves to continuously develop the Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service, a venue not only for parliaments to consolidate international solidarity for detailed development of social service activities but also for sharing information, experience and engaging in debates among parliaments.

Proposed IPSS Business Plan

1. Aims and objectives of IPSS

- ▶ Promoting social services activities at the parliamentary level while creating a worldwide network of social services through inter-parliamentary exchange and cooperation

2. Outcomes

- 1) To advocate UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
 - Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
 - Achieve universal primary education
 - Promote gender equality and empower women
 - Reduce child mortality
 - Improve maternal health
 - Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 - Ensure environmental sustainability
 - Develop a global partnership for development
- 2) To promote MDGs in IPSS member countries
- 3) To exchange ideas through best practices through, for example, IPSS website
- 4) To recruit parliamentarians from non-IPSS member countries
- 5) To seek affiliations with international organizations such as the U.N. and the APPCED

Resolution on the addressing the kidnapping of Korean social workers in Afghanistan and peaceful international social service activities

*Proposed to the Second Plenary Session
of the Third IPSS General Assembly
on 24 August 2007*

The Third IPSS (Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service) General Assembly,

Expressing regret over the kidnapping and detention of 23 and a murder of two young Koreans who went to Afghanistan to extend their helping hand to fellow brothers and sisters in the world,

Recognizing that the kidnapping of Koreans is not a matter confined to the Republic of Korea but a matter that the entire world needs to put its mind and effort together to address it,

Calls for a prompt return of 19 Korean hostages who have been detained for more than thirty-six days while *wishes* their safe return home,

Reiterates that volunteer aid workers involved in social work and humanitarian activities should not be exposed to any action that endangers their lives or puts them in harm's way, whether those actions were taken by governments or non-state actors, *strongly condemns* any such acts against aid workers,

Asks the international community to cooperate for the safety of social workers, which is the most basic need in light of increasing international social service activities,

Recommends that parliaments around the world to give consideration, share information, and devise laws and institutions for safe social service activities.

IPSS3/GEN/2

The Third General Assembly of the IPSS

22~25, August, 2007

AGENDA

First Plenary Session

- 1. Decision on the Meeting Agenda and Conference Modalities*
- 2. Decision on Requests for Affiliation to the IPSS*
- 3. Election of IPSS President and Vice-Presidents*
- 4. Election of Executive Committee Members*
- 5. Discussion on the IPSS Business Plan*
- 6. Address by Heads of Delegations :*
Role and experience of each parliament in establishing legal and institutional infrastructure to promote social services
- 7. Discussion of Agenda*
 - a. International labor migration and protection of human rights*
 - b. Promoting the employment of the physically challenged and vocational training*
 - c. Settlement of the kidnapping of Korean social workers in Afghanistan and the promotion of peaceful international social service activities*

Second Plenary Session

- 8. Decision on the Venue, Date and Agenda of the Fourth IPSS General Assembly*
- 9. Adoption and signing of the IPSS Joint Communiqué*

First Plenary Session
Provisional Delegation Speech List
23 August, 2007

<i>No.</i>	<i>COUNTRY</i>	<i>NAME</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>Korea</i>	<i>YOO Jay-kun</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Sri Lanka</i>	<i>Ramalingam CHANDRASEKAR</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Bryon WILFERT</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Sudan</i>	<i>Osman Khalid MUDAWI</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>Thailand</i>	<i>Potjanee THANAVARANIT</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>Uzbekistan</i>	<i>Mizzayusup RUSTAMBAEV</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	<i>Usamah Mohammed ALKURDI</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>Laos</i>	<i>Somphou DOUANGSAVATH</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>Romania</i>	<i>Gheorghe BARBU</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>Yanaki STOILOV</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>Carlos M JIMENEZ</i>
<i>12</i>	<i>Indonesia</i>	<i>Lalu Misbah HIDAYAT</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>Nepal</i>	<i>Ram Chandra TIWARI</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>Zaheer-ud-Din Babar AWAN</i>
<i>15</i>	<i>Mongolia</i>	<i>Adiya GORCHINSUREN</i>
<i>16</i>	<i>Kenya</i>	<i>Mwancha OKIOMA</i>
<i>17</i>	<i>Vietnam</i>	<i>Dang Nhu LOI</i>

The 3rd IPSS General Assembly
The First Plenary Session
23 August 2007
The Shilla Hotel, Seoul, Korea

1. The kidnapping of Korean social workers in Afghanistan

- 23 Korean volunteer workers on a humanitarian mission were kidnapped by a group of Taliban militants on July 19, 2007 in Ghazni, Afghanistan.
 - The Foreign Ministry formed a task force in Seoul on July 20 and a joint task force with the Afghan government on July 22 headed by the First Deputy Foreign Minister.
- One of the hostages, Rev. BAE Hyung Gyu, was killed by the Taliban. His body was recovered on July 25 and returned to Seoul on July 30.
- Presidential Envoy Baek Jong Chun was headed for Afghanistan on July 26 to have talks with high ranking officials of the Afghan government including President Karzai.
- Another hostage, Mr. SHIM Sung Min, was killed whose body was recovered on July 31 and sent back to Korea on August 2.
- Two of the female hostages, Ms. KIM Gyung Ja and Ms. KIM Ji Na, were released on August 13 and arrived in Seoul on August 17.

2. Current situation of the captives

- The hostages are reportedly separated in small groups.
- No major health problems of the captives have been reported so far.
 - The Korean government delivered medicine and other basic needs for the hostages.

3. Negotiations over hostage release

- The Taliban is demanding a prisoner-and-hostage-swap. In the earlier stage of the negotiations, the Taliban demanded Korea to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.
- The Korean government maintains several negotiation channels with the kidnappers while closely cooperating with ISAF countries, governments having experiences in hostage talks and Islamic countries to secure a safe return of the remaining hostages.
- Leaders in Malaysia, Indonesia, Jordan and Egypt, major Islamic groups such as the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and international organizations including the UN, ARF and ASEAN +3 have released statements urging the Taliban to free the Korean hostages.

4. The Korean government will exert every possible effort for a safe and early return of the hostages by

- directly and indirectly negotiating with the Taliban;
- closely collaborating with the Afghan government and allies; and
- continuously appealing the international community for support on the release of the captives to increase pressure on the militant group.

Opening Address for the Third IPSS General Assembly

by the Honorable LEE Kyeong-Jae, President of the IPSS

Honorable delegates from around the world and distinguished guests from home and abroad, I am LEE Kyeong-Jae, President of the IPSS and a member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea.

I am very pleased to host the Third IPSS General Assembly in Seoul. On behalf of the citizens of the Republic of Korea, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation and heartfelt welcome to the delegates that have arrived here from all around the world.

I also want to give special thanks to the Hon. LEE Sang-Deuk, Vice Speaker of the National Assembly of Korea, who led the inaugural assembly, Prime Minister of Korea Han Duck-soo, Chairman-elect of the Rotary International Lee Dong-Kurn, distinguished guests, and fellow parliamentarians.

The IPSS was founded in 2003 through the assembly of the wisdom of parliamentarians around the world who have been contributing to social development, harmony among peoples and co-prosperity.

I am confident that the IPSS now stands for much more than upholding the lofty spirit of public service. It has become a forum for parliamentarians around the world to gather as members of the global village community and promote international exchanges to

truly contribute to the peace and prosperity of mankind.

I feel most grateful to all of you who have lent your steadfast support and continual efforts for the ongoing activities and development of the IPSS from the inaugural assembly through to the Third General Assembly.

Honorable delegates:

Today, throughout the world, too many people are suffering the effects of warfare, starvation, disease, environmental pollution and natural disasters.

Africa is afflicted with floods, drought and famine. Frequent disputes and civil wars are making people's lives there worse than ever. The Middle East is similarly suffering as a result of crises in Iraq and Palestine and war in Lebanon.

In Asia, recovery efforts following the tsunami in 2004 are still underway. In 2006, the region was affected by massive natural disasters, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and typhoons.

If there were 100 people in a global village, 76 would be experiencing a food shortage and 26 would be suffering extreme malnutrition. As for drinking water, 25 would have no water supply or would be drinking unsanitary water. Twenty-four people would not enjoy the benefits of electricity. Of the ten children, two would never be given the chance to be literate in their entire lives.

In order to help such people suffering in the global village, cooperation across borders and the active involvement of international organizations have become ever more imperative.

I believe that parliamentarians need to take on greater roles and responsibilities in social service activities to bear more significant fruits in today's globalized and rapidly changing world.

Domestically, we should establish legal and institutional supports for volunteering. Internationally, we should share information and build a network among countries.

Honorable delegates:

With the advancement of globalization, the term "global village" is no longer used at the international level only; it has become a common term at the domestic level as well.

The international migration of labor as well as the flow of capital continues to expand. International marriages and refugees result in a large number of migrants.

In the case of the Republic of Korea, long-term foreign residents totaled about 170,000 in 1997. In 2006, they grew to 620,000. The figure has increased more than fourfold in a decade.

As the number of foreigners increases, we need to live in harmony with people of different races and cultures.

The expression "global village," an international term, is being used

more often in cities in Korea such as Seoul, Incheon, Busan, Daejeon and Daegu.

To date, social service activities aimed at making the global village more beautiful and enjoyable were initiated at the international level. I believe it is time we paid attention to and showed an interest in global villages created at a domestic level. In this context, "International Labor Migration and the Protection of Human Rights" was included on the agenda for the Third General Assembly.

The international migration of labor is beneficial to everybody. For everyone in the global village to make a comfortable living, we need to help each other. To a country short of manpower, international labor migration will lead to economic growth. On the other hand, laborers will familiarize themselves with technology and earn foreign currency through employment. As a result, the international migration of labor is akin to killing two birds with one stone.

Moreover, if governmental and non-governmental efforts are made to protect the human rights of migrant workers, it will be akin to killing three birds with one stone.

There are also social service activities that had been limited to the domestic level, but are now expanding to the international level. Among these is international cooperation for vocational training of the disabled.

There is a Korean proverb, "If you really care about your

child, teach him how to fish instead of giving him a fish." I believe the best gift we can give the disabled is employment. When vocational training for the disabled is promoted through international cooperation, the employment of the disabled will increase significantly.

Honorable delegates:

I would like to ask you to provide input and information regarding social services and to actively participate in discussions in the Third IPSS General Assembly.

The slogan of the General Assembly is "Share the Burden, Spread the Hope."

I am confident that the seeds of sharing you plant today will be cast throughout the global village to bloom as beautiful hope.

Thank you.

"The Partnership between the IPSS and the Rotary International"

Lee Dong-Kurn (President-elect, Rotary International)

Hon. LEE Kyung-Jae, President of the IPSS,
Parliamentarians from all over the world,

Hon. LEE Sang-Deuk, Vice Speaker of the Korean National
Assembly and Members of the National Assembly, Distinguished
Guests,

It is a great honor to address all of you today as the
President-elect of Rotary International.

I am very much impressed by the activities of the
parliamentarians who have come to join us today.

This is because the spirit of the social service that many of
you are upholding internationally is in perfect alignment with the
spirit of Rotary International.

Rotary International was founded in 1905 by Paul Harris a
young lawyer from Chicago and three of his friends.

After contemplating what he could do for the American society
which was in a state of chaos in the midst of the Great Depression,
he decided to contribute to the community through social service.

In doing so, Paul Harris truly performed a 20th century
miracle.

Today, one century after its establishment, Rotary International
has expanded its coverage to over 200 countries and sovereign
territories, which house 32,715 clubs and 1.22 million members.

It was a single spark that spread into this noble organization.

Then, how was Rotary International able to achieve such
miraculous growth?

Distinguished parliamentarians,

This was possible because the spirit of the Rotary embodies the
most noble value among all human activities, which is the spirit of

It was for this reason that the activities of the Rotary were able to receive the enthusiastic support of all humanity, and create miracles.

The 100 year history of the Rotary is the evidence that the spirit of social service is instrumental in generating empathy and public response.

One of the most notable accomplishments of Rotary International has been the eradication of polio.

As a result of the polio vaccinations and other activities made possible through a sizeable budget and human resources, we have eradicated 99.7% of all polio occurrences.

It is truly heartbreaking that the remaining 0.3% of polio cases we have failed to eradicate can be found in the four countries of Nigeria, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan.

The Rotary will continue to extend its fullest efforts to eliminate all cases of polio in these regions. By doing so, we will lead to make polio the second disease in the history of mankind to be completely eradicated from this earth.

Rotary Korea was established in 1927.

Today, Rotary Korea is comprised of 1,330 clubs and 54,000 members.

Rotary Korea is an example of enthusiastic social services, as the fourth largest international chapter following the US, Japan and India, and the third largest contributor to the foundation preceded only by the US and Japan.

Rotarians of Korea are now repaying the help we received in our time of trouble by carrying out activities to help other countries that are facing difficult times.

Rotary Korea is exerting efforts to mitigate damage from the yellow dust which is plaguing China, Korea and Japan.

Rotary Korea is planting trees in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia, from where the yellow dust generates.

One of Rotarians of Korea was driving along the unpaved

roads of Mongolia on his way to plant trees in the Gobi Desert when his vehicle overturned, leaving him a paraplegic.

Nevertheless, Rotarians of Korea are continuing to do everything they can to fight against the seemingly unstoppable flow of yellow dust.

We are confident that our dedication will one day reward us with positive results.

The Rotary upholds the spirit of Service above Self.

The Rotary spirit means service that transcends my individual self.

We do not live forever.

We all strive to add fulfillment to the time we have.

What is the noblest value we can pursue in our temporary lives?

The noblest value is to live for others and to serve others.

That is what the Rotary is about.

In this respect, we feel a strong sense of brotherhood with the IPSS.

The International Rotary and the IPSS are both rooted on the spirit of humanism.

This is why we are partners, walking shoulder to shoulder for the most precious values of our times.

As the President-elect of Rotary International, I will concentrate on reducing the death rate of children under the age of five.

Developing countries suffer from high infant mortality rates.

The pain and sorrow of losing a young child to disease transcends all ethnicities.

We can no longer ignore the cries of parents who have lost their children.

I believe that lowering the infant mortality rate is a task we must solve, for the sake of protecting the dignity of mankind. This is why I have selected this challenge as a core task of Rotary International as a follow-up to the eradication of polio.

I would like to make a suggestion to the parliamentarians here who have gathered from all over the world.

That is about tax benefits for donations.

Of course, there are already countries that offer tax benefits for donations.

However, the reality is that there are still many countries that have not completely institutionalized its practice.

If tax benefits for donations are accomplished, there are so much more we can do.

Funding for Rotary International activities relies greatly on the donations of Rotarians.

This is why I would like to suggest a system for tax benefits to support the social service carried out by Rotary International.

Distinguished members of the IPSS,

As politicians, you are working for the global consolidation of social service activities.

I would like to express my highest respects for your activities, and offer the resolution of Rotary International, as a representative non-governmental organization, to keep pace with your efforts.

When our efforts begin to take fruition in various parts of the globe, we will be able to create a world more beautiful than it is now.

I wish you health and success in all your endeavors.

I also hope to see you in the social service field.

Thank you very much.

Congratulatory Remarks

for the Opening Ceremony of the third IPSS General Assembly

H.E. Han Duck-soo, Prime Minister

Mr. Lee Kyung-jae, Honorable President of the IPSS,
Distinguished members of the IPSS,
Distinguished guests from home and abroad,

Good morning, it is my great pleasure to be with you.
Allow me to wholeheartedly congratulate you for the opening of the third IPSS General Assembly.

I'd like to thank each and every parliamentarian for coming all the way to Seoul to attend this conference. Welcome to Korea.

I sincerely hope that this conference will be a great opportunity for parliamentarians to promote their cooperation and exchanges and support each member nation's social service provided at the parliamentary level, thereby living up to the IPSS's founding principle of building international networks of social services.

Distinguished guests,

The world is seeing a growing list of challenges that one nation cannot address on its own. It takes international cooperation and concerted efforts to deal with those challenges, some of which are natural disaster, hunger, and infectious diseases.

Against this backdrop, social service, a prime example of humanity transcending geographic, religious and racial differences has become a great source of hope by providing a new framework for international cooperation

and contributing to our efforts to make the world into a community brimming with love.

It is encouraging to see more and more international conferences that are being held with the theme of social services. I have great expectations for parliamentarians, who have joined us here at this meeting.

I hope that this conference with important topics including 'Role and experience of each parliament in establishing legal and institutional infrastructure to promote social services' and 'International labor migration and protection of human rights' will bear great fruits.

Distinguished guests,

I'd like to take this opportunity to ask for your support in securing the release of Koreans held captive in Afghanistan.

The Korean government and the Korean people are deeply concerned about the Korean citizens abducted while doing volunteer work there.

The Korean government is doing everything it can to resolve the issue. I'd like to ask for your support in obtaining the release of the Korean volunteers held in Afghanistan.

Allow me to point out that the abduction of the Koreans is not just an issue limited to Korea and its resolution takes international efforts.

Your continued interest and support is crucial in securing the safe return of the Koreans, who risked their own safety to help their neighbors in need.

In closing, I wish this conference a resounding success and also wish the IPSS and its members the best.

Thank you.

Yanaki Stoilov – MP, Republic of Bulgaria

The 3-rd General Assembly

Inter – Parliamentarians for Social Service

Distinguished Parliamentarians,

The organization and holding of the 3rd General Assembly of Inter-Parliamentarians for Social Service in Seoul testify to the attention of our kind hosts to this important issue and to the diverse experience in this sphere.

Poverty is the most acute social problem now and in the foreseeable future. It determines the major goal of social policies, i.e. to reduce and overcome poverty. The poverty reduction, the provision of steady employment and job creation should be central objectives of the long-term national development policies of all countries.

The creation of greater employment is one of the most important poverty reduction tools. The creation of jobs and employment security are key to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It should be noted that, side by side with the global population growth, unemployment is also on the increase. The number of unemployed in developing countries grew from 157 million in 1995 to an unprecedented above 200 million today. The pressure of unemployment on the welfare system as a whole calls for the creation of greater employment. This pressure implies the need to develop the social services for seeking and finding jobs. The growing employment, in its turn, reduces the number of people in need of welfare assistance. The reason lies in the fact that the increased employment and income level respectively release funds for welfare purposes.

This correlation makes the government in Bulgaria to change its welfare policies from welfare assistance to assistance in finding employment. This change has caused the recent lasting trend of reduction of registered unemployment (down to 7 to 8 percent), bringing it closer to the average EU standards. Programmes to provide employment are underway with financing from the government budget and the business community. These programmes are well received by local governments which are involved in their organization. It is still an open issue how to enhance the efficiency of these programmes through fostering of the motivation to work and achieving tangible long-term results. It must be recommended that priority in terms of public and foreign investment be given to labour-intensive infrastructure projects that provide massive employment for the poor and are located in poor areas.

Bulgaria has not overcome the problem with unemployment yet. However, it is another issue, that of the qualifications of manpower, that has come to the fore. We must emphasize that to stay competitive in the era of globalization, employees should have access to education and vocational training.

Bulgaria's membership of the EU ensures free movement of people, including the free movement of workers. Against the backdrop of the low levels of labour payment in Bulgaria, this still generates shortage of manpower in some professional areas. At the same time, funds could be attracted for education and training within the framework of EU programmes.

The measures to promote employment and to enhance the level of education and training are the major tools for the transformation of the passive social welfare to active social policy aimed at establishing an efficient and just social order. The countries pursuing successful policies for comprehensive education and high qualifications can rely on progress and a leading role in the transition towards a knowledge-based society.

Several changes have been introduced in the organization of the provision of social services. They include:

- introduction of criteria and standards which services should meet;
- creation of conditions to encourage non-governmental organizations to provide social services;
- removal of licensing arrangements for private providers of social services;
- decentralization of social service establishments financed by the local and/or central government budgets. These establishments should be transferred under the control of the mayor of the respective municipality who is the employer of their employees.

A wide range of social services are offered in Bulgaria: personal assistant, social assistant, home assistant, home social patronage, daycare centres, social rehabilitation and integration centres, temporary accommodation centres, foster family care, crisis centres, family-type accommodation centres, protected homes, public kitchens, orphanages. Some of these services are still underdeveloped and they are not fully geared to the needs of their users. This is a task which calls for improvement of the legal framework and the practices in the provision of social services.