

## **THE LAHORE CHARTER**

### **1st Joint CPA Asia & South-East Asia Regional Conference-2025**

*Adopted on February 8, 2025*

We, the Speakers, Presiding Officers, and Delegates from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) branches of Asia and South-East Asia, gathered in Lahore for the **1st Joint CPA Asia and South-East Asia Regional Conference**, *solemnly adopt* the **Lahore Charter** as a testament to our collective resolve to uphold parliamentary democracy, foster inclusive growth, and advance sustainable development across the region.

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**Recognising** the indispensable role of parliaments in fostering inclusive governance, ensuring accountability, and advancing the rights and aspirations of all citizens;

**Further recognising** that regional challenges such as climate change, socio-economic disparities, and rapid technological transformation require collective legislative efforts, innovative policymaking, and inter-parliamentary collaboration;

**Reaffirming** the importance of parliamentary diplomacy as a cornerstone for regional cooperation, mutual understanding, and lasting peace;

**Acknowledging** the need to empower local governance structures to ensure equitable development and the efficient delivery of public services;

**Noting with concern** the detrimental impacts of misinformation, hate speech, and digital manipulation on public trust and the democratic fabric of societies;

**Highlighting** the shared responsibility of parliaments to address socio-economic inequalities, ensure universal access to healthcare and education, and advance Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

**Emphasising** the critical need for equitable representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and minorities in legislative processes to build inclusive and just societies;

**Appreciating** the initiative of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab in hosting this historic conference, providing a vital platform for dialogue, cooperation, and legislative innovation between both CPA branches of Asia and South-East Asia.

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#### **Solemnly declare as follows:**

1. **Reaffirm** our commitment to uphold democratic norms, constitutional principles, and the supremacy of parliaments as the voice of the people.
2. **Enhance** parliamentary oversight, accountability, and transparency to rebuild public trust in institutions.

3. **Promote** constructive dialogue, mutual respect, and inclusivity in parliamentary discourse to strengthen democratic practices.
4. **Pursue** legislative frameworks that enable local governments to deliver effective services, allocate resources equitably, and maintain accountability.
5. **Share** knowledge and best practices in decentralised governance to address regional challenges and foster sustainable development.
6. **Advocate** for capacity-building programs that empower local institutions and leadership.
7. **Strengthen** legislative measures to combat climate change, reduce air pollution, and enhance urban resilience.
8. **Promote** green infrastructure, sustainable public transportation, and climate-adaptive urban planning.
9. **Advocate** for cross-border cooperation to develop and implement regional climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.
10. **Promote** ethical and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital technologies in governance.
11. **Address** misinformation, hate speech, and the spread of fake news, while safeguarding freedom of expression.
12. **Promote** regional collaboration to establish standards for digital governance and transparency.
13. **Address** disparities in healthcare and education through targeted legislative interventions, prioritising marginalised communities.
14. **Strengthen** public health systems and combat malnutrition, child labor, and educational inequities through legislations.
15. **Promote** regional initiatives to improve access to quality education and healthcare while advancing SDG-aligned reforms.
16. **Enhance** the representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and minorities in legislative bodies and policymaking processes.
17. **Address** systemic barriers to participation and foster inclusive policymaking environments.
18. **Advocate** for policies that promote diversity, equity, and social justice.
19. **Utilise** parliamentary diplomacy to address shared regional challenges and strengthen inter-parliamentary relationships.
20. **Foster** dialogue and knowledge exchange to promote peace, stability, and prosperity across Asia and South-East Asia.

21. **Encourage** participation in joint initiatives that advance regional development and legislative innovation.
  22. **Congratulate** the National Assembly of Pakistan for being declared the Regional Secretariat and Permanent Headquarter of the CPA Asia Region.
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We, the Speakers, Presiding Officers, and Delegates of CPA Asia and South-East Asia Regional Branches, *solemnly declare* to:

- **Uphold** the principles outlined in this Charter and endeavour towards integrating these principles into our legislative agendas;
  - **Encourage** continuous reviews and progress assessments of these principles;
  - **Foster** partnerships with civil society, academia, and private sectors to enhance inclusivity, transparency, and innovation in governance;
  - **Engage** in collaborative capacity-building initiatives to strengthen parliamentary institutions, ensuring resilience and adaptability to emerging challenges.
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Adopted with unity and mutual respect in Lahore on this 8th day of February, 2025, the **Lahore Charter** represents the collective resolve of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Asia and South-East Asia branches to build a future of inclusive growth, sustainable development, and regional harmony.