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**SINGAPORE'S INTERVENTION AT THE THIRD WORKING SESSION ON
"PARLIAMENTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE
ADAPTED TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE 21ST CENTURY"**

Introduction

Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, good morning.

A World at a Crossroads

2 We convene today at a pivotal moment in history to address the vital issue of global governance for the 21st century's challenges.

3 As we gather here, our world faces profound challenges – from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza to the ever-present threat of climate change.

4 Our world stands at a precarious crossroads, marked by escalating conflicts and intensifying rivalries. The international landscape has grown increasingly unpredictable and fractured, as we navigate the shift from a unipolar to a complex, multi-polar global order.

5 In this new reality, the role of parliaments in forging a robust global governance system has never been more critical.

The Role of Parliaments in Global Governance

6 As legislators, we shoulder a unique responsibility to forge a new path of global cooperation and governance, particularly by reinforcing the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We must be the architects of a new global order that can withstand the storms of the 21st century.

7 The pressing need to reform multilateral institutions, has never been more apparent. Allow me to outline several crucial considerations:

Reforming Global Institutions: Key Considerations

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- a. Reaffirming International Law: Even as we look at reform of global institutions, we must continue to reinforce the primacy of international law and the UN Charter, including key principles such as sovereign equality. They form the bedrock of a rules-based multilateral system, which is especially crucial for smaller nations like Singapore in ensuring equitable global participation.
- b. Revitalising the WTO: We must maintain the core functions of the WTO and work towards the restoration of a fully functioning Dispute Settlement System. The WTO's rules must be regularly updated to ensure it remains relevant in a rapidly changing global economy.
- c. Embracing Flexible Multilateralism: We should exercise "flexible multilateralism" and explore creative modalities that will allow Members who are ready to move forward on important issues; but in an inclusive manner that allows others to come onboard when they are ready and willing to do so. This is exemplified by the Joint Statement Initiatives (JSI) at the WTO, such as the JSI on E-Commerce that Singapore is a co-convenor of.
- d. Navigating Digital and Sustainable Revolutions: We must develop new frameworks to govern digital and sustainable economies, following models like Singapore's Digital Economy Partnership Agreement.

The Parliamentary Mandate in Global Governance

9 As parliamentarians, we carry a responsibility that extends beyond our borders. We must:

- a. Strengthen our ties with global institutions, ensuring they work for all nations.
- b. Foster networks that enable collaborative problem-solving.
- c. Advocate for legislation that supports sustainable development and human rights.
- d. Pursue economic partnerships that address global issues like climate change.

10 Our role is not only to oversee and legislate but also to serve as advocates for a more representative and responsive global governance structure.

Building a 21st Century Global Governance System

11 As legislators, we are more than observers. We are participants in shaping the global order. We are the bridge builders between the local and the global, translating the aspirations of our constituents into concrete actions on the world stage.

Conclusion: A Call to Action

12 The time has come to reinvigorate multilateralism and fortify the role of the UN, WTO, and other global institutions as vehicles for peace, sustainable growth, and shared prosperity. It is also timely to look into how these multilateral platforms can better address both current and future challenges.

13 Singapore, as a small state, but committed member of the international community, and deeply invested in the rules-based international order, stands ready to contribute to these efforts.

14 In conclusion, while the challenges we face are great, our collective potential is much greater. By working together, by reforming our institutions, and by staying true to our principles, we can build a global governance system that is more just, resilient, and prepared for the challenges of the future.

15 Thank you.