

19 – 23 October, 2025

151ST IPU ASSEMBLY – ASGP

THEME:

**“ IN THE NEWS AND INNOVATION AT
PARLIAMENT”**

Title of Presentation:

***“Designing Modern, Resilient &
Futuristic Parliaments”***

By

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Honourable President ASPG

Dr. Jose Pedro MONTERO,

Respected Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Warm greetings from the Senate of Pakistan!

It is a great honour for me to speak on the important theme of **“In the News and Innovation at Parliament”** I am delighted to share how the Senate of Pakistan has been working to make our institution more modern, resilient, and responsive to the needs of the people.

In today's world, where governance must adapt quickly to new challenges, the Senate of Pakistan has taken several steps to transform itself into a forward-looking and citizen-centric institution. I would like to briefly highlight a few key initiatives.

1. First Parliament to Go Green

In 2016, Pakistan's Parliament became the first in the world to switch entirely to solar energy for its electricity needs.

This step reflects our commitment to protecting the environment and reducing our carbon footprint. It has also shown how public institutions can lead the way in using clean, cost-effective energy. The project has served as a model for other public buildings in the country.

2. Introducing an Indigenous AI Chatbot

The Senate of Pakistan has also become the first parliamentary chamber in our region to commission the development of its own AI-powered chatbot.

This initiative, launched under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, is still in its early stages but holds great promise.

The chatbot will allow members and staff to easily access legislative records, committee reports, debates, and policy documents in real time. It uses advanced natural language processing to save time and improve efficiency in lawmaking and oversight.

Importantly, it is being developed with multilingual support and in compliance with cybersecurity standards to protect institutional data. This innovation reflects our resolve to use technology wisely to strengthen our democratic processes.

3. Pandemic-Driven Digital Transformation

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital change in the Senate of Pakistan.

We quickly adopted remote participation for committee meetings, ensuring that parliamentary business continued without interruption. Care was taken to maintain procedural integrity, cybersecurity, and inclusiveness so that all members could participate effectively.

Today, digital tools support many aspects of our work. Our official website and social media platforms provide timely updates, invite public feedback, and help counter misinformation. We have also expanded our digital archives to assist parliamentarians, researchers, and citizens in accessing reliable information.

4. Public and Inter-Parliamentary Engagement

For us, innovation is not just about technology; it is also about building stronger connections with citizens and other parliaments.

We use digital platforms to gather public input on legislation, hold consultations on policy issues, and engage with our diaspora communities. These efforts have increased transparency and strengthened public trust.

Internationally, we actively exchange experiences with other parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). We believe that sharing best practices is key to collective progress.

Looking Ahead: A Citizen-Centric Digital Parliament

The Senate of Pakistan remains committed to innovation.

We are strengthening our research capacity with data analytics, AI-based tools, and continuous training for senators and staff. We are also building partnerships with universities, private sector organizations, and international bodies to co-create solutions that reflect our country's diversity and needs.

These efforts include developing local-language AI models to make technology more inclusive and accessible — a step towards using “AI for Good” in parliamentary environments.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our journey is guided by a simple principle: we embrace innovation not for its own sake, but to make our democracy more transparent, more effective, and closer to the people we serve.

The steps we have taken — in green energy, artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and citizen engagement — are only the beginning. We see them as building blocks for a parliament that is more open, responsive, and prepared for the challenges of the future.

As parliamentary leaders and staffers, it is our duty to continue this journey — to use technology wisely, to keep the trust of our citizens, and to work together for stronger democracies.

Thank you.