



Newsletter

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on
Population and Development

Fourth Quarter: October - December 2016

Happy New Year!

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Parliamentarians and Ministers Committed to "Leave No Girls and No Women Behind" in the 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference

On November 4 - 5, AFPPD held its 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference with more than 50 Speakers and Members of Parliament and Ministers from 25 Asia-Pacific countries in attendance. **Page 8**



PLCPD and Child Rights Network Celebrate Children's Month in Congress

On November 21 - 23, the Child Rights Network (CRN), through its convener, the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD), organized a series of activities in celebration of Children's Month at the House of Representatives. **Page 16**



Central Asian Delegation Study Tour: Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Policies in Estonia

On December 1-3, AFPPD organized a study tour for the Central Asian Parliamentarian Delegation in Tallinn, Estonia in collaboration with the Estonian Sexual Health Association. **Page 20**

AFPPD Participated in UNFPA APRO Workshop for Implementing Partners



Ms. Kamma Blair, Program Officer of UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office, opening the session on Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers, Bangkok, October 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

BANGKOK, THAILAND – On October 4–5, the Asia-Pacific Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA APRO) held its Workshop for Implementing Partners. Participants included the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), the East-West Center, HelpAge International East Asia/Pacific Regional Office, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and Youth LEAD. The workshop opened with a presentation on the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2014-2017 as well as introductions from each participating organizations.

AFPPD Executive Director, Dr. Mika Marumoto, made a presentation on the activities, challenges, lessons learned, and opportunities of the organization, highlighting the critical role of parliamentarians in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) era. This presentation was followed by sessions on the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers, compliance requirements, financial management, and other related sessions. In total, seven AFPPD staff attended the workshop.



Member National Committee
Highlight: Timor-Leste

Dialogue on Women's Economic Empowerment in Timor-Leste Held on International Rural Women's Day

OECUSSE-AMBENO, TIMOR LESTE - On the occasion of International Rural Women's Day on October 13, the Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste (GMPLT of Women's Parliamentary Caucus) organized a dialogue on the "Promotion of Women's Economic Empowerment in Rural Areas" with its two sub-regional constituencies: Nitibe and Passabe in the Special Administrative of the Oecusse-Ambeno Region. GMPLT collaborated with UN Women on this initiative as well as with the Centro de Informação e Formação sobre a Igualdade de Género (CEGEN or Center of Information and Capacity Building on Gender Equality).

The primary objective of the dialogue was to reflect on the progress, challenges and future plans of the implementation of national gender commitments, including women's economic empowerment. Participants discussed women's access to economic activities, such as entrepreneurship and small businesses, thereby promoting rural economic development. The dialogue also touched on existing cooperatives in the rural areas that enable both men and women to access savings and loans. Specifically, capacity-building for women in the areas of marketing management and competition, and improvement of traditional agriculture system were cited as necessary future plans.

In total, 212 participants attended the dialogue, including representatives of the local government, village council members, grassroots leaders, local NGOs, women self-help groups, students, and community members from Nitibe and Passabe.

The Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste (GMPLT of Women's Parliamentary Caucus) is the member National Committee of AFPPD in Timor-Leste.



Hon. Ms. Florentina da Conceição Pereira Martins, President of GMPLT, speaking at the dialogue on "Promotion of Women's Economic Empowerment in Rural Areas," Oecusse-Ambeno, October 2016 (Photo: GMPLT)



Over 200 participants at the dialogue on "Promotion of Women's Economic Empowerment in Rural Areas" organized by GMPLT, Oecusse-Ambeno, October 2016 (Photo: GMPLT)

AFPPD's Country Visit to Tajikistan: Roundtable and Visits to Centers for Vocational Training, Elderly and the Disabled



AFPPD Executive Director, Dr. Mika Marumoto, participated in the roundtable on “Demographic Factors - Human and Economic Development;” on her left is Hon. Ms. Khayriniso Yusufi, Vice-Speaker of the lower house of the Parliament of Tajikistan and Co-Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth, Dushanbe, October 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN – On October 14, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) participated in a roundtable titled “*Demographic Factors - Human and Economic Development*.” It was organized under the chairmanship of Hon. Ms. Khayriniso Yusufi, Vice-Speaker of the lower house of the Parliament of Tajikistan, Chair of the National Committee on Population and Development of Tajikistan, and Co-Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth. In addition to AFPPD, other participants included members of the National Committee on Population and Development as well as representatives of ministries, State Committees and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

AFPPD Executive Director, Dr. Mika Marumoto, delivered a presentation on the role of parliamentarians in monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She also spoke about the compliance review of Tajikistan’s legislation, focusing on sexual and reproductive health and rights, adolescents and youths, gender equality, and ageing. There was also special attention given to the importance of monitoring and evaluating the national legislation.

Additionally, participants had discussions on universal birth registration, highlighting the need to strengthen national efforts to address its barriers and raise awareness on the issue. Discussions were also centered on Tajikistan’s most pressing health problems, the need to improve access and quality of available healthcare assistance, and the need to implement activities to reduce the prevalence of non-communicable diseases, such as obesity and diabetes, HIV, and tuberculosis cases in the country.

To complement the roundtable, AFPPD conducted a field visit to an elderly center called “Batush” in the city of Tursunzade with Hon. Ms. Khayriniso Yusufi and Ms. Kholova Soleha, Deputy Mayor of Tursunzade. The center currently houses 170 residents, comprising of elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and civil war veterans, and is operated by 25 staff, which includes 18 nurses and 7 doctors. Following the visit to the elderly center, AFPPD also visited the State Labor and Employment Agency. Established under the Ministry of Labor, Migration, and Employment, this agency offers vocational training on 53 professions for adults aged between 17 and 65 years old.



Hon. Ms. Khayriniso Yusufi, Vice-Speaker of the lower house of the Parliament of Tajikistan and Co-Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth, at the elderly center, Tursunzade, October 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



A cooking class at the State Labor and Employment Agency as part of AFPPD's field visit, Dushanbe, October 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



Vocational training courses are offered at the Ministry of Labour not only to Tajik citizens but also selected foreign students under the special international cooperation programme. An Afghan student is flanked by a Tajik instructor and AFPPD Executive Director, Dushanbe, October 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

NOVEMBER

AFPPD 81st Executive Committee Pays Respect to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej; Welcomes Sri Lankan National Committee and New Executive Members from Australia, Pacific-Tonga, and Vietnam



AFPPD held its 81st Executive Committee Meeting, appointing three new Executive Members and approving the establishment of a new National Committee in Sri Lanka, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

BANGKOK, THAILAND - On November 3, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) convened the 81st Executive Committee meeting. Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi, AFPPD Chairperson, first expressed his condolences to the people of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, AFPPD Secretary-General and Senator of the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand, acknowledged the significant contribution of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej to Thailand's development, highlighting the country's achievements during his reign. Following the Thai tradition, the meeting participants observed 89 seconds of silence in honor of His Majesty King who passed away at the age of 88.

The 81st Executive Committee Meeting then unanimously approved a new National Committee in Sri Lanka and the appointment of three new Executive Members for AFPPD. The newly appointed Executive Members are Hon. Ms. Ann Sudmalis, MP of Australia as AFPPD Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Lord Tu'ivakano, Speaker of Tonga as Executive Member representing the Pacific, and Hon. Mr. Nguyen Hoang Mai as Executive Member of Vietnam. The newly established

Sri Lankan National Committee on Population and Sustainable Development is led by Hon. Mr. S.B. Dissanayake, Minister of Social Empowerment and Welfare, and member of the United People's Freedom Alliance. On September 8, 2016, Minister Dissanayake was invited to participate in AFPPD's inaugural Standing Committee on Active Ageing in Hanoi. He took immediate follow-up action to establish a National Committee on October 5, with the official membership application received by AFPPD on October 28. The Sri Lankan National Committee has now 30 registered parliamentarian members.

The 81st Executive Committee continued meeting proceedings by reviewing and confirming that all AFPPD activities conducted in May-October 2016 followed AFPPD's three guiding documents: (i) AFPPD Strategic Plan's Results Chain and Accountability Framework; (ii) AFPPD Standing Committees' Strategic Priorities Framework; and (iii) AFPPD Constitution 2015. The 2017 work plan and schedule were also tentatively approved.



After the 81st Executive Committee meeting, the AFPPD Executive Members visited the Grand Palace to pay respect to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

Biographies of New Members: Sri Lanka National Committee and Executive Committee



Hon. Mr. S.B. Dissanayake
Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka
Minister of Social Empowerment and Welfare

Hon. Mr. S.B. Dissanayake is a member of the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) and Minister of Social Empowerment and Welfare. Hon. Mr. Dissanayake is a member of the Committee of Public Accounts. His political career includes being: member of the Communist Party in Sri Lanka from 1970 to 1979; President of the Inter-University Students' Federation from 1972 to 1974; President of the Student Council of the Vidyodaya University from 1972 to 1974; and President of the Lanka National Student Council from 1974 to 1976.



Hon. Ms. Ann Sudmalis
Member of Parliament, Australia

Hon. Ms. Ann Sudmalis serves as Member of Parliament, representing the Division of Gilmore in New South Wales. She is also the current Acting

Chair for the Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development. Hon. Ms. Sudmalis

has been a member of the Liberal Party since 2006 and is currently a member of the Coalition Policy Committees for Education, Defence and Veterans Affairs, Infrastructure and Regional Development. Apart from being an advocate to improve local projects, she has the parliamentary responsibilities as a Committee Member on the Parliamentary Education Office Advisory Committee, Joint Standing Committees of Education and Employment, and the Standing Health Coommittee.



Hon. Lord Tu'ivakano
Speaker of Parliament, Tonga

Hon. Lord Tu'ivakano has been the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga since 2015. He is also a member of the Finance and Public Accounts Committee, the Social Services

Committee, the Environment and Climate Change Committee, among others. He strongly supports the Non Communicable Diseases (NCD) campaign in the Pacific. Previously, Hon. Lord Tu'ivakano was elected as Prime Minister in December 2010, following a constitutional reform in which the Prime Minister was elected by the Parliament rather than appointed by the Monarch. In March 2005, he was appointed as Cabinet Minister. From 2002 to 2004, he was appointed as the Speaker of Parliament by His Majesty the King of Tonga.



Hon. Mr. Nguyen Hoang Mai
Member of Parliament, Vietnam

Hon. Mr. Nguyen Hoang Mai currently serves as Member of the National Assembly and Vice Chairperson of the Vietnam Parliamentary Committee on

Social Affairs (PCSA). Previously, he was the Director of the Department for Social Affairs (DSA) at the Vietnam National Assembly Office from 2012 to 2016, as well as the Deputy Director of the same department from 2004 to 2012. From 1991 to 1995, he was a Researcher of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Ideology.

Parliamentarians and Ministers Committed to “Leave No Girls and No Women Behind” in the 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference



Parliamentary Speakers (Cook Islands, Fiji, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga) and Vice-Speakers (Kazakhstan, India, Thailand), AFPPD Chairperson and Secretary-General, and UNFPA Representative opened the conference, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



Ms. Brooke Axtell, anti-domestic violence and anti-human trafficking activist, shared her inspiring and healing story in the session on Violence Against Women, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont (MP Thailand and Secretary-General of AFPPD) and Dr. Rinchen Chopel (Director General of the SAIEVAC) presented the signed MOU between AFPPD and SAIEVAC, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

BANGKOK, THAILAND - On November 4 - 5, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) held its 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference, under the theme *“Ensuring Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment from a Life-Cycle Approach Leaving No Girls and No Women Behind.”* Participants included 54 Speakers and Members of Parliament and Ministers from 25 Asia-Pacific countries, in which the majority are women, as well as experts from United Nations agencies and NGOs.

In the opening, Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi, Chairperson of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and Member of the House of Councillors in Japan, emphasized the role of parliamentarians and ministers in advancing gender equality. “Every time we hold a conference like this one today, we, parliamentarians and ministers, have raised the right issues, asked the right questions, and made commitments,” said Hon. Professor Takemi, “Now, the questions that need to be asked and answered are: Why haven’t we been able to eliminate the gender gap by now? How can we work together to break barriers to achieve gender equality?” Crucial insights into closing the gender gap were also provided by Hon. Professor Pornpetch Wichitcholchai, President of the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand, Hon. Mr. Adérito Hugo da Costa, President of National Parliament of Timor-Leste, Hon. Ms. Gulmira Kudaiberdieva, Vice Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, and Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of Parliament of Fiji.

Following the opening, the conference was structured by six sessions, highlighting issues within the AFPPD’s strategic priorities framework and following the principle of leaving no girls and no women behind, including the elderly and the vulnerable. The first five sessions tackled issues of violence against women, girls and women’s health, women’s political participation, women’s economic participation, and the rights of the vulnerable in the context of climate change and migration.

In the first session on violence against women, Ms. Brooke Axtell, an anti-domestic violence and anti-human trafficking activist from the United States and the Inspirational Speaker of the conference, shared her survival and healing story. She urged

policymakers to include survivor leadership in policymaking and create greater funding for comprehensive mental healthcare. Following this session, there was a brief presentation of the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) and AFPPD.

The conference concluded with the adoption of the Statement of Commitment in the sixth session by the participating Speakers, Members of Parliament and Ministers who committed themselves to “work towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and call upon our current and future governments in particular to take up the commitment to leave no women and no girls behind.” In particular, the Statement encompasses:

- providing women and girls equal access to health services;
- engaging men and boys in the fight to end gender-based violence;
- securing quotas for qualified women political candidates;
- offering young women training such as Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) skills and mentoring opportunities for their future political and economic leadership;
- protecting migrants as well as their children and the elderly left behind by migrating family members; and
- employing gender-responsive budgeting.

The 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference was organized by AFPPD, hosted by the National Legislative of Thailand and funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Japan Trust Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).



For more information, please [click here](#) to download AFPPD’s Conference Report.

Timor-Leste Parliamentarians Conducted Study Tour in Thailand: Good Practices to Address Adolescent Pregnancy



The Timor-Leste delegation at the Rajvithi Home for Girls as part of the study tour organized by AFPPD and the Ministries in Thailand, Bangkok, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

BANGKOK, THAILAND – On November 7, a Timor-Leste delegation comprised of six Members of Parliament, two parliamentary staff and two representatives of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Country Offices in Timor-Leste and Thailand, participated in a study tour organized by AFPPD in Bangkok. The study tour was requested by the Timorese parliamentarians out of increasing concerns for the high rate of adolescent pregnancy in their country and the need to explore good practices and policy approaches to address this critical issue.

The visit was organized with the assistance of the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, and the UNFPA Country Office in Timor-Leste. Among the participants were the President of the Permanent Committee on Health, Education, Culture, Veterans and Gender Equality, and the President of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste).

The first visit was the Ramathibodi Hospital, where the Timor-Leste delegation met with Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, AFPPD Secretary-General and Senator of the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand, as well as with medical professionals and experts from the Ministry of Health of Thailand and the hospitals. Several presentations were made on efforts to promote adolescent reproductive health and rights in Thailand. Hon. Dr. Sirathranont delivered a presentation on the drafting process and ratification of the Act

for Prevention and Solution of the Adolescent Pregnancy Problem. Dr. Wassana Im-Em, Assistant Representative of UNFPA Thailand, highlighted the efforts of UNFPA in this process. Additionally, Dr. Kittipong Saejeng, Director of the Bureau of Reproductive Health at the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, briefed about youth friendly health services while Dr. Komkrit Aimjirakul, Obstetrics Gynecology-Urogynecology Specialist at the Ramathibodi Hospital, presented on the obstetrics and gynecology perspective in relation to teenage pregnancy. Finally, Dr. Jiraporn Arunakul, Adolescent Medicine Specialist at the Ramathibodi Hospital, spoke about the first model of a teenage pregnancy clinic in Thailand.

In addition to the hospital, the Timor-Leste parliamentarian delegation also visited the Rajvithi Home for Girls which houses 322 girls aged 5 to 18 years-old from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The delegation was received by Ms. Dusita Choalert, Director of the Rajvithi Home for Girls, who presented an overview of the home and available services for adolescent pregnancy prevention and pregnant adolescents.

At the end of the visit, the Timor-Leste delegation expressed their thanks to the organizers. They aspire to develop a similar bill and implement similar national programs that promote reproductive health and address adolescent pregnancy issues in Timor-Leste in the near future.



Member National Committee Highlight: Australia

AFPPD Women Conference Highlighted in Australian Parliament



Hon. Ms. Ann Sudmalis, MP Australia and Vice-Chairperson of AFPPD, delivered a speech at the General Meeting of the Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, Gilmore, November 2016 (Photo: APGPD)

GILMORE, AUSTRALIA - On November 9, Hon. Ms. Ann Sudmalis, Member of Parliament from Australia and Vice-Chairperson of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), delivered a speech at the General Meeting of the Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (APGPD). This also marked her formal election as Chairperson of the APGPD. In her speech, Hon. Ms. Sudmalis shared some insights on gender equality and the role of parliamentarians as catalysts of change from AFPPD's 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference. She also chaired the session on Women's Economic Participation during this conference. The following is an excerpt from Ms. Sudmalis' speech where she spoke about her work in Australia and her work with AFPPD:

"I often sing the praises of our volunteers in Gilmore. Recently, I was able to draw some parallels and also be inspired for projects in our own region. Initially, ideas began to develop while being part of the parliamentary delegation to Papua New Guinea, and then as the Vice President of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development—AFPPD for short.

[...] The group known as CARE is delivering women's economic empowerment programs, particularly in

the coffee industry, where traditionally women were just involved in the harvesting and post-harvesting activities, and rarely with the marketing. One of the women, Selene, is an amazing coffee person, and she has connections in Canberra. Oxfam is funding programs to address gender inequality and making all sorts of matters related to domestic violence a priority.

World Vision and Save the Children Fund are making significant impacts in Papua New Guinea. However, some of the strongest insights came from the 11th Women Parliamentarians Conference, sponsored by AFPPD.

I introduced one session with these words: There is nothing greater in this world than enabling another person to become the best that they can be. Madame Curie believed that 'we must believe that we are gifted for something, and that this thing, at whatever cost, must be attained.' So each of us here gathered in this room— And also here in this House— is gifted for something. I would suggest that we are here to act as catalysts of change for our nations and our people, but most importantly for our women and our girls. Part of our journey to women's empowerment in developing nations is to reduce child marriages and domestic violence, as this all too often reduces the future economic contribution that the woman can make.

Domestic violence around the world is objectionable, whether directed to a man, a woman or a child. It is wrong, and we need to help all those who suffer at the hands of someone they once cared for and once were a part of the care system. We collectively are greater than the sum of our individual selves. I selected a quote from Malala Yousafzai:

I raise up my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. And: We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back. We as parliamentarians have that responsibility.

There were five inspirational sessions after that, with take-home messages for everyone attending, whether from a developed or a developing nation. Some can easily be adapted here and in Gilmore. I will be exploring these in a new model of opinion-swapping and discussion. They included: women's collectives, a need for financial literacy, increasing entrepreneurship enterprises and better access to training, possibly for cultural purposes or in emerging industry.

We need to encourage our youth to think up brilliant ideas; challenge them to focus on it and be encouraged to grow it as a business or a concept; look at these as achievement targets to change our outlook; to change our region and to change our nation. It was truly an inspirational trip and one that can be shared easily with others to make us feel better about ourselves and our relationship with other nations."

APGPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in Australia.

AFPPD Attended the 18th General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians' Conference on Environment and Development

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA – On November 10–11, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) attended the 18th General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians' Conference on Environment and Development (APPCED) under the theme of "UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and International Development." The conference was organized by the Korean Parliamentary League on Children,

Population and Development (CPE), the member National Committee of AFPPD in South Korea. Among the attendees were Members of Parliament from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Tonga as well as experts from United Nations agencies, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

The Conference was opened with welcoming remarks by the newly elected President of the Executive Committee of APPCED. He highlighted the role of the SDGs and reinforced that parliamentarians need to join hands with the international community in order to tackle the environmental challenges ahead. He also spoke about the interlinkages between population and environmental concerns, including rapid population growth and its implications related to increasing water demands, maternal deaths and climate change. Other presenters included the President of the Korean Population and Health Welfare Association (KoPHWA) and the Acting Vice-President of APPCED. Following the opening session, the conference continued with country presentations on the challenges and opportunities concerning the environment and policy, followed by expert presentations that occurred simultaneously with the Drafting Committee Meeting.

APPCED concluded with the adoption of the Seoul Declaration by participating parliamentarians, who committed themselves "to work together and contribute to sustainable development at the Asia-Pacific, as well as international and sub-regional levels."



Participants at the 18th General Assembly of APPCED, Seoul, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



Member National Committee Highlight: Timor-Leste

Celebration of National Women's Day in Timor-Leste Parliament



The Timor-Leste Parliament celebrated the 41st year of the Timorese National Women's Day, Dili, November 2016 (Photo: GMPLT)

DILI, TIMOR-LESTE - On 15 November 2016, the Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste (GMPLT of Women's Parliamentary Caucus) celebrated the 41st year of the Timorese National Women's Day in the Parliament under the theme "Stop Gender Inequality, Women's Economic Empowerment for the Timor-Leste Development." Among the estimated 700 participants were Members of Parliament, government members, parliamentary staff, CSOs, women entrepreneurs and students.



Hon. Mr. Aderito Hugo da Costa delivered the opening remarks of the celebratory event for the Timorese National Women's Day, Dili, November 2016 (Photo: GMPLT)

The President of National Parliament, Hon. Mr. Aderito Hugo da Costa, delivered the opening remarks, highlighting Timor-Leste's principles

and efforts in women's empowerment and gender equality since the resistance and its independence. "Promotion of women's participation in Timor-Leste is without reserve," said Hon. Mr. da Costa. "Timor-Leste's success in women's representation of 38% in the Parliament and, more recently, in the increased number of elected women village chiefs, is not only because of the law. It is also because of Timor-Leste's outright promotion of women's participation."

Hon. Ms. Florentina da Conceição Martins Smith, President of GMPLT, and H.E. Ms. Veneranda Lemos Martins, Secretary of State for the Support and Socio-Economic Promotion of Women, also delivered remarks. They highlighted Timorese women heroes who sacrificed their life in the battle for Timor-Leste's independence.

The Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste (GMPLT of Women's Parliamentary Caucus) is the member National Committee of AFPPD in Timor-Leste.

Hon. Mr. Aderito Hugo da Costa and Hon. Ms. Florentina da Conceição Martins Smith were among the participants at AFPPD 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference held in Bangkok in November 2016.

G7 Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population Follow-up Action by AFPPD Chairperson



Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi, Member of House of Councillors and Chair of AFPPD, raised questions concerning health commitments by the G7 Ise-Shima Leaders to the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, Tokyo, November 2016 (Photo: House of Councillors)

TOKYO, JAPAN - As the Chairperson of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi successfully concluded the Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development toward the 2016 G7 Ise-Shima Summit (G7 GCPPD) in Tokyo on April 26-27, 2016. The GCPPD was instrumental in soliciting the world leaders' collective commitment; the G7 Leaders Declaration reflected extensively the GCPPD Declaration and Recommendations in AFPPD's strategic priority areas, which include universal health coverage and infectious disease risk management as a part of human security.

During his most recent parliamentary inquiry to the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare, Hon. Prof. Takemi raised questions regarding the two commitments made by the G7 Ise-Shima Leaders: the need to create a global health architecture to tackle, manage, and contain infectious diseases; and to strengthen the core capacity of the International Health Regulations (IHR) of the World Health Organization (WHO) at the national level as part of health crisis preparedness, prevention, and management. Through parliamentary committee inquiries, Hon. Prof. Takemi successfully held the government accountable, ensuring budget

allocations for the commitments. The following are a few excerpts of his statement and inquiries made on 17 November 2016 at the Committee of Health, Labor and Welfare of the House of Councillors in Japan.

"Health issues were in general considered as domestic matters in the past. However, as the term 'global health' indicates, health issues have become global and diplomatic issues. For example, infectious diseases and other non-communicable diseases including cancer and strokes have started to be tackled from a global perspective. There has been an increasing awareness that global health is a diplomatic issue. The Japanese Health Minister has played a significant role in making the Ministry of Labor and Welfare open and take the initiative in global health diplomacy, and for that, I would like to express my deepest appreciation."

"The 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa was a wake-up call, reminding us that we will never know when and how such dangerous infectious diseases may spread to New York, London, Paris and Tokyo, and all over the world. The international community needs to create a global health architecture where we will have a seamless and consistent health crisis management mechanism at the community, national and global levels."

The Japanese Health Minister has played a critical role, consistently advocating for the need of such a global health architecture through the 2015 UHC International Conference, the Ise-shima G7 Summit Health Minister's Meeting, and TICAD VI to make Japan truly a rule-maker in creating such a system. In order to realize this, the Japanese Prime Minister Abe pledged USD 50 million in ensuring WHO's crisis management operational functions, of which a half will be contributed within this year. [...]

I am asking the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare to ensure that Japan will play a critical role by creating an internal system and mechanism at the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare to research and analyze issues relevant to WHO's reform process and make recommendations accordingly on how to create an effective crisis management system at WHO. It has been agreed that at the outbreak of a dangerous infectious disease, WHO should first take an action to manage and contain such a health crisis by utilizing the Contingency Fund for Emergency. And such transboundary challenges cannot be dealt by WHO alone, we will need to ensure a coordination system among UN agencies in close collaboration with OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)."

"It is also critically important to create a crisis management system to ensure so-called preparedness and prevention of infectious diseases at the national level. Currently, each member country of WHO is expected to ensure the core capacity to comply the International Health Regulations. However, the absence or lack of core capacity resulted in the outbreak of Ebola. In order to strengthen the core capacity of the International Health Regulations (IHR), Japan has made monetary contributions to provide developing countries of insufficient core capacities with technical advice to be able to take prompt actions at the outbreak of an infectious disease. ---

*The Japanese Ministry of Finance is also pushing now to ensure the fund of the World Bank's International Development Association be made available for universal health coverage as a means of crisis management of infectious diseases. ---
- The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) can also play a role in providing technical assistance to a recipient country in the area of*

strengthening public administration in establishing and implementing universal health coverage. In order to strengthen the core capacity to implement the IHR, for instance, WHO, World Bank, JICA and a recipient country can coordinate and work together. --- Japan has advocated for such a partnership and modality to be implemented as a pilot project in 6 to 7 African countries and a few selected Asian countries as well. It is important for Japan to take the lead in ensuring such endeavors will bear fruit."

Watch full (in Japanese, choose November 17, 厚生労働委員会 1.12.12 - 2.02.00)

Election of the New Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO)

"The World Health Organization (WHO) is electing its next Director-General (DG) in May 2017." Women in Global Health has created a poll to hear about your feedback for this upcoming election. Please [click here](#) to vote and for more information!

Who are the candidates?

- Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, former foreign affairs and health minister, Ethiopia
- Flavia Bustreo, WHO assistant director-general for family, women's, and children's health, Italy
- Philippe Douste-Blazy, former health and foreign minister, France
- David Nabarro, special advisor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on sustainable development, United Kingdom
- Sania Nishtar, former health minister, Pakistan
- Miklós Szócska, former health minister, Hungary



Member National Committee Highlight: Philippines

PLCPD and Child Rights Network Celebrate Children's Month in Congress



Celebration of Children's Month at the House of Representatives in the Philippines, Quezon City, November 2016 (Photo: PLCPD)

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES - The Child Rights Network (CRN), through its convenor, the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD), organized a series of activities in celebration of Children's Month at the House of Representatives (HOR) on November 21-23.

On November 21, three prominent child rights champions delivered opening remarks: Hon. Rep. Kaka Bag-ao, PLCPD Vice Chairperson for Mindanao and PLCPD Chair of the House of Representatives; Hon. Rep. Teddy Brawner Baguilat Jr, PLCPD Chairperson for the House of

Representatives and AFPPD Vice-Chairperson; and Hon. Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy, PLCPD member and Bagong Henerasyon Party-list. More than 50 children from World Vision International attended the event, including three children from Tacloban and VIDES Philippines Volunteer Foundation.

After the opening ceremonies, the children participated in an essay writing activity and a poster making contest with the theme of ending violence against children. Among the parliamentarians presented were Hon. Rep. France Castro, Hon. Rep. Nancy Catamco, Hon. Rep. Sitti Turabin Hataman, Hon. Rep. Emmeline Aglipay-Villar and Hon. Rep. Bernadette Herrera-Dy who discussed and delivered presentations on children's rights and challenges related to access and quality of education.

The closing ceremonies on the afternoon of November 23 were filled with cultural performances. Hon. Rep. Sarah Jane Elago and Hon. Rep. Malou Acosta Alba graced the event with their poetry-reading performances of pieces by Dr. Jose Rizal. The Don Bosco School Manila Choir sang while Layag, the band of PLCPD Executive Director, Romeo Dongeto, performed socially-relevant songs.

Stakeholders Call on the Philippine Government to Act on the Supreme Court Temporary Restraining Order on Contraceptives



Hon. Rep. Teddy Baguilat, PLCPD Chairperson for the House of Representatives and AFPPD Vice-Chair, raised the need to increase public discussion on the temporary restraining order, Quezon City, November 2016 (Photo: PLCPD)

The Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) facilitated a roundtable discussion on the impact of the Supreme Court's (SC) decision on the Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) on the achievement of Ambisyon 2040 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on November 29.

Hon. Rep. Teddy Baguilat, PLCPD Chairperson for the House of Representatives and AFPPD Vice-Chairperson, emphasized the importance of reaching out to spheres of influence regarding the impact of the TRO. "There are many Filipinos who don't fully realize and understand yet the

impact of the TRO on them. We should increase public discussions on the issue. Through public opinion, we may be able to pressure the Supreme Court and FDA as well as politicians to act more swiftly on the issue,” urged Hon. Rep. Baguilat.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Romeo Dongeto, Executive Director of PLCPD, presented the different action points for advocates such as: a) community mobilization and 1M signature campaign; b) call on the government to fulfill their commitment to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and SDGs; c) pursue and escalate campaign to ask SC to

lift TRO. File motion for intervention; d) Ensure appropriate funding for the RH program and prepare for the sunset review of the law; e) Campaign for full implementation of law at local level. Enact RH ordinances; f) sustained media campaign.

“Women should be empowered to make decisions about their bodies and their family. It is crucial for people to unite and convince the SC that the full implementation of the law is important,” he further added.

PLCPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in the Philippines.

AFPPD Presented in Workshop on Pacific Parliamentary Effectiveness Organized by UNDP and Cook Islands Parliamentary Services



AFPPD Presented in Workshop on Pacific Parliamentary Effectiveness Organized by UNDP and Cook Islands Parliamentary Services, Rarotonga, November 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

RARATONGA, COOK ISLANDS – On November 24–25, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized the third workshop under its Pacific Parliamentary Effectiveness Initiative Regional Programme in collaboration with the Cook Islands Parliamentary Services. Chaired by the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Ms. Niki Rattle and facilitated by Dr. John Patterson of UNDP, the workshop started with the launch of the Handbook for the Parliament of the Cook Islands – a concise guide to the way Parliament functions. Workshop participants included the Deputy Prime Minister; Ministers of Finance, Agriculture, Internal Affairs (Social Welfare, Women, Youth and Sports), Parliament, Health and Justice; Associate Ministers; Speaker and Deputy Speaker of Parliament; members of the Opposition; and Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Parliament.

Resource persons from the Central Policy and Planning Office, Office of the Prime Minister; and Secretary of Finance facilitated sessions on the Cook Islands National Sustainable Development Plan for 2016-2020. Other key sessions included discussions on the role of Parliament and Parliamentarians in implementing the Sustainable Development Plan, the Standing Orders as a vehicle for reforms, ways of enhancing the Public Accounts Committee. On the second day, Ms. Seema Gaikwad, Policy Research and Advocacy Advisor of AFPPD, presented on the programs and initiatives of AFPPD, and recommended areas that could be incorporated into the National Sustainable Development Plan for 2016-2020.

AFPPD Attended the 35th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's (CPA) Australia and Pacific Regional Conference



Participants at the 35th CPA Australia and Pacific Regional Conference including Speakers, Deputy-Speakers, Clerks, Deputy Clerks, Parliamentarians and Representatives from the Pacific, Raratonga, November 2016 (Photo: Cook Islands Parliamentary Services)

RARATONGA, COOK ISLANDS – On November 28-30, the 35th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's (CPA) Australia and Pacific Regional Conference drew together Members of Parliament from Australia, New Zealand and Pacific nations to look at the theme "Leadership Excellence for the Common Good: Share-Exchange-Act." Hon. Ms. Niki Rattle, Speaker of Parliament for the Cook Islands, and Hon. Barry House, President of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, co-chaired the conference. Speakers, Deputy-Speakers, Clerks, Deputy Clerks, Parliamentarians, and Representatives of Parliamentary Groups from the legislatures of six states and two territories of Australia, Cook Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Samoa, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga participated in the two-day conference. AFPPD Secretariat representative and Policy Research and Advocacy Advisor Ms. Seema Gaikwad was welcomed as the Observer for the conference.

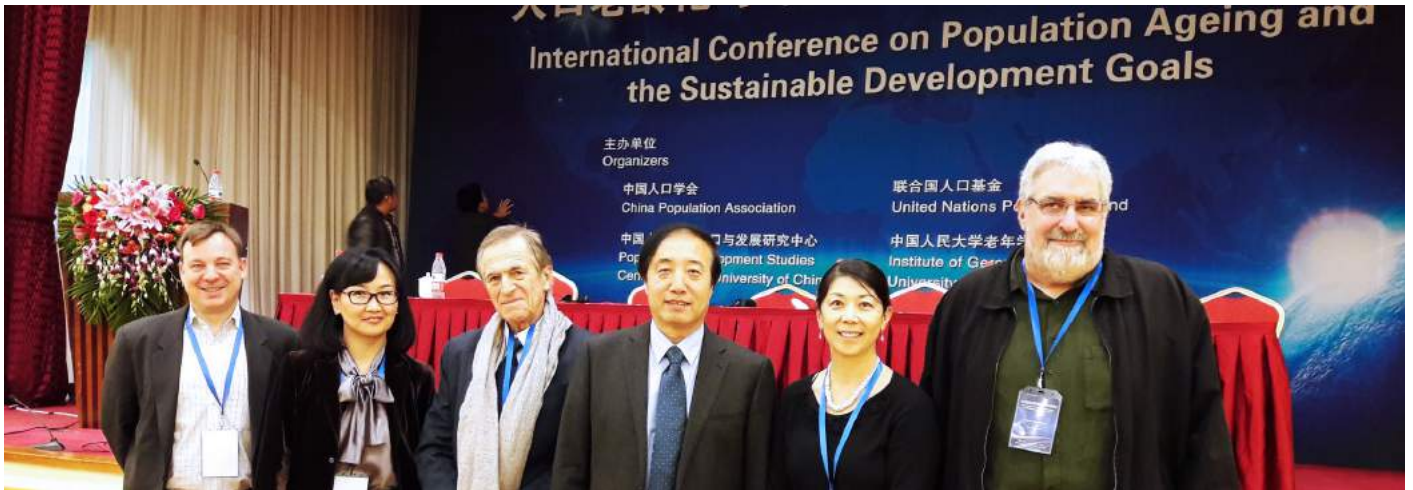
The key objectives of the conference included sharing experiences that will enable legislators to contribute to building better-informed democracies;

exchanging practical experiences that will enable legislators to engage in the best practices towards the execution of parliamentary oversight functions; advocating for legislators to act in accordance to approved processes; and leading by example through ethical governance. The discussions focused on better public engagement, and democratic and parliamentary practices. It also focused on benchmarking parliament's performance, and increasing the number of women in parliament.

Moreover, the discussions highlighted the need to increase oversight functions and procedures for parliaments by identifying standing orders that need reforming to enhance accountability, transparency and good governance. The conference also touched on the role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for creating better information management and user-friendly information infrastructures. The conference concluded with adopting recommendations that included increasing women's representation in parliament and exploring new ways to incorporate young people into the formal political process.

DECEMBER

AFPPD Attended International Conference on Population Ageing and the Sustainable Development Goals at Renmin University of China



AFPPD Executive Director, Mika Marumoto, with professors and colleagues from Renmin University, Syracuse University, HelpAge International, and UNFPA at the International Conference of Population Ageing, Beijing, December 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



As part of the International Conference of Population Ageing, participants including AFPPD Executive Director visited the Cuncaochunhui Home for the Aged, Beijing, December 2016 (Photo: Renmin University)



AFPPD Executive Director, Dr. Mika Marumoto, with an elderly resident at the Cuncaochunhui Home for the Aged, Beijing, December 2016 (Photo: Renmin University)

BEIJING, CHINA – On December 1-2, the International Conference of Population Ageing and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was co-organized by China Population Association, the United Nations Population Fund, and Renmin University of China (RUC), with over 150 participants attending. Two prominent research institutes of RUC, namely, Population Development Studies Center and Institute of Gerontology headed by Dr. Du Peng and the Chair of the Conference played a crucial role in successfully planning and implementing the two-day Conference.

The conference thematic sessions encompassed: (i) equity and ageing; (ii) healthy ageing; (iii) smart ageing; (iv) population ageing and its economic implications; (v) ageing and migration/urbanization; and (vi) policy responses to population ageing. Dr. Mika Marumoto, the Executive Director of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), was among the international participants invited to the Conference. She introduced the AFPPD and chaired Session 4 where three international experts introduced their latest research outcomes. Professor Naoko Iwasaki, Waseda University, presented on ICT and e-ageing policy measures to respond to the needs of the Japanese

elderly living independently in an urban setting, as well as those hit by natural disasters. Mr. Eduardo Klien, Regional Director of HelpAge International Asia-Pacific Regional Office analyzed a range of economic and social adaptations needed in response to the rapidly ageing population structure in Asia-Pacific (i.e., measures to improve productivity). Dr. Merrill Silverstein, Syracuse University Institute of Ageing, presented new evidence and findings of his research on the increasingly important role played by grandchildren as primary financial supporter to grandparents in rural China whose children out-migrated to the city or overseas and where no formal elderly care services and facilities are yet available.

Conference participants also conducted a field visit to Cuncaochunhui Home for the Aged, Beijing's privately-run model community elderly care center, which has integrated ICT into every aspect of their care services such as real-time health data made available to care givers and remote family members. The Center currently takes care of 100 elderly residents including those suffering from dementia.

Central Asian Delegation Study Tour: Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Policies in Estonia



Participants at the Study Tour on Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Policies included Members of Parliament from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Tallinn, December 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)



The Central Asian Parliamentary Delegation visited two youth clinics as part of the study tour organized by AFPPD, Tallinn, December 2016 (Photo: AFPPD)

TALLINN, ESTONIA – On December 1-3, AFPPD organized a study tour for the Central Asian Parliamentary Delegation in Tallinn, Estonia in collaboration with the Estonian Sexual Health Association. The delegation comprised of Members of Parliament from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, parliamentary staff, as well as representatives of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) member associations from Kazakhstan (Kazakhstan Association on Sexual and Reproductive Health) and Kyrgyzstan (Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan).

During the study tour, AFPPD Central Asian Parliamentary Delegation had a series of meetings with Estonian legislators, government officials, experts and medical professionals who play an important role in supporting youth clinics in Estonia and in implementing legislation that promote sexual and reproductive health and rights for youth. In particular, the delegation met with Hon. Ms. Helmen Kütt, MP of Estonia and Vice Chairman of the Social Democratic Party Faction, Social Affairs Committee, at the Parliament of Estonia. During this meeting, the delegation had an opportunity to hear about the structure and efforts of the Social Affairs Committee as well as their steps in the law-making process in Estonia. The delegation also learned about Estonia's mechanisms and regulations for registering medical providers and licensing medical

facilities during a meeting with the experts from the Health Board. This meeting included Mr. Mikhail Muzychin, Deputy Director-General of the Health Board, and Ms. Evi Lindmäe, Head of the Department.

Additionally, the delegation also conducted a meeting at the Health Insurance Fund with Mr. Ado Viik, Head of the Harju region, and Ms. Made Bambus, Project Coordinator of the Fund to discuss the challenges faced by the Estonian national health insurance system, along with future opportunities. To complement these meetings, the delegation participants visited two youth clinics, where they learned about the process of establishing and scaling-up a network of youth clinics in Estonia as well as its provision of sexual and reproductive health services.

At the end of the study tour, the AFPPD Central Asian Delegation expressed gratitude to AFPPD and the Estonian Sexual Health Association for the organization of this visit. The delegation members acknowledged that the experience in Estonia was useful and beneficial for improving youth clinics in their respective countries in the future.

PUBLICATION CORNER



WORKSHOP REPORT
AFPPD-NZPPD Agenda 2030 Workshop for Pacific Parliaments On Prioritizing the ICPD Agenda in the SDGs
28-29 September 2016 | Wellington, New Zealand



AFPPD-NZPPD Agenda 2030 Workshop for Pacific Parliaments
September 28 - 29, Wellington New Zealand

PARTICIPANT STATISTICS
Total: 52

Members of Parliament: 25
Male: 14
Female: 11

Resource Persons: 8
Parliamentary/National Committee/International Organization Staff: 14
AFPPD Staff: 5



CONFERENCE REPORT
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference
Ensuring Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment from a Life-Cycle Approach Leaving No Girls and No Women Behind
4 - 5 November 2016 | Bangkok, Thailand

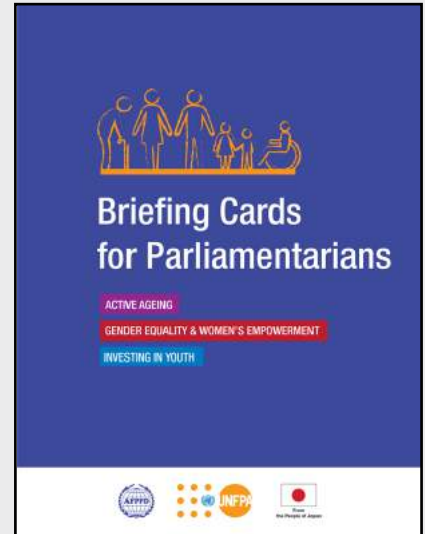


11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference
November 4 - 5, Bangkok Thailand

PARTICIPANT STATISTICS
Total: 105

Speakers and Members of Parliament/Ministers: 54
Male: 17
Female: 37

Resource Persons: 13
Parliamentary/National Committee/Embassy Staff: 23
Observers: 5
AFPPD Staff: 10



Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians

ACTIVE AGEING
GENDER EQUALITY & WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
INVESTING IN YOUTH

Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians

The briefing cards highlight evidence-based good policy practices and legislation, and support data and statistics, on issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment, investing in youth and active ageing.

Draft version: shared with 67 MPs, Ministers and Experts for comments.

Final copies: distributed to 29 National Committees and 3 Associate Members.

AFPPD's UPCOMING EVENTS

AFPPD 2017 calendar of events will be available shortly at www.afppd.org.



AFPPD would like to thank our donors, National Committees and Members of Parliament for their valuable support throughout 2016. AFPPD would also like to thank Ms. Alexandra Lamb, APGPD; Ms. Nenita B. Dalde, PLCPD; Ms. Francelina Guterres, GMPLT; for their contributions to this Fourth Quarter Newsletter.

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