



**13th**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

24 May 2021 | 13:30–15:30 (Tokyo Time)

<Online Meeting>



# PHOTO SESSEION



## Acronyms

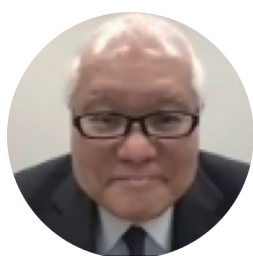
AFPPD	The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
APDA	The Asian Population and Development Association
APRO	Asia Pacific Regional Office
CAPPD	The Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
ESCPHC	Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee
GA	General Assembly
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IAPPD	Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IFPPD	Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
JFPF	Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population
JTF	Japan Trust Fund
MPs	Members of Parliament
NZPPD	New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development
PCSA	Parliamentary Committee on Social Affairs
PLCPD	Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development
PoA	Programme of Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

## OPENING



**Prof. Kiyoko Ikegami**, The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) Interim Executive Director, gracefully opened the General Assembly (GA) by extending her appreciation, on behalf of the secretariat, to the guests of the 13th General Assembly. She reminded the body that the last General Assembly happened four years ago, which makes this meeting remarkable.

## WELCOMING



**Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi**, AFFPD Chair, warmly welcomed his colleagues, honorable members of AFPPD from different parliaments in Asia and the Pacific, as well as the national committees and institutional partners who came despite the online set-up. He shared that of the 31 member-countries of AFPPD, 18 are virtually present, with at least three national committee secretariats. As such, he declared the GA in order.

Hon. Takemi hopes that everyone is kept safe from COVID-19 and added that on top of discussing exciting and urgent matters, some administrative and managerial matters are of equal import. He echoed Prof. Ikegami's reminder that AFPPD's last GA was held in October 2017, after which the organization was nearly dissolved and was only revitalized seven months ago in Tokyo, Japan. Hon. Takemi underscored that under his leadership, the executive committee and the interim AFPPD secretariat are striving to implement the planned activities gradually but steadily, such as the seminars on ageing and on gender, along with the two executive committee meetings held in 2020 and 2021.

The AFPPD Executive Committee is set to propose to the body some organizational and personal issues such as the office bearers for the new strategic period, amendments to the AFPPD Constitution and future direction of AFPPD activities, among others, lending credence to the absolute importance of the GA. He apologized for the long list of agenda because AFPPD has to compensate for the four years of silence. Unfortunately, some AFPPD members were prevented from participating by their countries' COVID-19 situation. Nevertheless, some of the said members had sent the Power-of-Attorney allowing Hon. Takemi to make the decisions for and on their behalf. Hon. Takemi encouraged the national committee secretariats present to provide their Members of Parliament (MPs) updates from the GA.



**Mr. Björn Andersson**, Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), welcomed the participants from the Asia Pacific Region. He acknowledged the meeting as a historical milestone in the revitalization of the AFPPD. He opined that the meeting is a good venue to discuss how AFPPD can best support the acceleration of the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in the region. The ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) remains relevant as a comprehensive framework in addressing the complex challenges Asia is currently facing. The policy recommendations in the ICPD PoA are underpinned by both human rights and gender equality, and the linkage between population dynamics, poverty, and patterns of production and consumption.

The ICPD PoA also outlines a comprehensive concept of reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, affirming that all individuals, and women in particular, have the right to make decisions over their own bodies—when and with whom to have children, timing, and spacing of them. What makes the ICPD PoA truly transformative is its focus on people and individual. It addresses the rights and wellbeing of individuals and its policy recommendations provide guidance on emerging issues related to community development, population ageing, low fertility, urbanization, migration, and the environment.

The ICPD Nairobi Summit in November 2019 has generated over 1250 commitments towards collective actions for achieving the goals of ICPD and the SDGs. It has secured billions of dollars in commitments. In Asia and the Pacific, 152 commitments were made by 26 governments and nearly 20 percent of all commitments in the region called for intensified efforts to implement the PoA and increase funding.

Mr. Andersson expressed that the parliamentarians' support is needed to ensure that the concrete commitments made in Nairobi in 2019 are not forgotten during these challenging times. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold, it is necessary to ensure that governments and policymakers implement their commitments. The parliamentarians can be champions to amplify the voice of the people on sexual reproductive health and rights and ensuring progressive evidence-based population policies. One example he cited is the case of Fiji in the Pacific. The Fiji Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty alleviation has been working to ensure survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) have access to safe houses amid the COVID-19 pandemic. He quoted the Minister for Women Mereseini Vuniwaqa that, "Shelters are critical component of a holistic response. The development of national regulations for women's shelters in Fiji will help ensure that GBV services that are available are of quality, properly resourced, and are properly aligned with proper guidance."

Mr. Andersson underscored that parliamentarians' use of legislative and policy influence to strengthen laws and policies on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and GBV to meet the needs of those furthest left behind are very much welcome. UNFPA conducted a review of laws and policies impacting young people's SRHR in Asia and the Pacific. UNFPA found that every year, 3.7 million girls in Asia and the Pacific age 15 to 19 give birth, of which many unplanned and impacting on each girl's future. There are an estimated 450,000 young people across the region living with HIV, yet clinics require adolescents under 18 to have parental consent before they receive contraceptives or an HIV test. There has been some progress. The Philippine HIV and AIDS Policy Act of 2018, for instance, provided that a child age 15 or over may consent to an HIV test independent of a parent. If aged under 15, the consent of a parent guardian is not required if the child is pregnant or engaged in high-risk behavior. Evidence shows that there are positive lifelong impact both for the individual and on the prosperity of communities, societies, and countries when young people are supported with information and services.

The parliamentarians support in ensuring additional funding is made available for SRHR, GBV, and population and development issues is critical, Mr. Andersson added. Evidence-based and equitable resource allocation is crucial, especially during times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has further diminished women's autonomy due to increased sexual and gender-based violence, new barriers to healthcare, unplanned pregnancies, and job and education losses. Parliamentarians and other stakeholders need to work together for societal change to ensure that the lives of women and girls are valued equally with the lives of men and boys. It is imperative to push back against the growing trend of conservatives that threaten the health and wellbeing of adolescents, youth, women, and girls.

Citing the UNFPA State of World Population Report that was launched in May 20, Mr. Andersson highlighted that globally, Asia shows that nearly half of the women are empowered to make their own decisions about whether to have sex with a partner, to use contraception, and to see a doctor.

In eight Asia Pacific countries, only 59 percent of women are fully empowered to exercise them. In South Asia, there are an estimated 285 million child brides; 59 percent of women aged 20 to 24 in Bangladesh were married under the age of 18, 40 percent in Nepal, and 27 percent in India. While the rates of child marriage are decreasing in the region, insecurity that arises during the crisis threatens to undermine this program. UNFPA and UNICEF recently conducted research on child marriage in humanitarian contexts in South Asia and the findings challenge parliamentarians and other stakeholders to do better for children and young people in humanitarian situations.

It is urgent to bolster the economic and social security in those communities that practice child marriage to prevent the increase of this practice as a result of the stresses families experience in crisis situations. Finally, he reiterated that laws and policies must be evidence-based and support adaptive and responsive programming, so that the people are empowered to shape their own futures and make their own choices. It is through networks such as AFPPD that leadership initiatives can foster and enable environment for societal change.

Ending his welcome address, Mr. Andersson expressed that he is pleased that AFPPD is back again and can support the work that many partners are doing in Asia Pacific Region. He thanked AFPPD and The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) for convening the GA. Parliamentarians are pillars in implementing the ICPD PoA and its ultimate goal is to improve quality of life of present and future generations. The accountability and responsibility to do so lies with parliamentarians and other stakeholders. Through working together more vigorously and making the crucial investments needed in people, achieving sustainable development for all can be possible.

## REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Brief Oral Report on Closure of AFPPD Office in Thailand

#### *Hon. Jetn Sirathranont, Secretary-General of AFPPD*

Hon. Jetn Sirathranont reported on the situation that happened with AFPPD in Bangkok. The case is closed already, but it took time. The staff who took a lot of money from AFPPD is now in prison and current hurdle now is with the auction. AFPPD got the money back from the bank. The first auction was held between 21 and 25 in December 2020. The second auction was held between 10 and 14 in March 2021. And the third auction will be on 14 or 15 June 2021. If there are bidders, the auction will stop. But if there are no bidders, then auction will be done again in June this year, which is hoped to raise amounting to 54,000 USD. Hence, AFPPD must wait for the result of the auction to liquidate the financial statement.

Prof. Ikegami recapped that AFPPD office was removed from Bangkok and moved to Tokyo. The management of AFPPD website has been also moved from Bangkok to Tokyo. All the documentations and necessary papers in archives will be kept in the website and will be moved from Bangkok to Tokyo very soon. Sometime in June 2021, the website's archives will be reopened. Until June, all the documentation or the necessary new information can be accessed from the Bangkok website. The financial report and the statements can be reached anytime through the website of the AFPPD later in June.



## **Confirmation of the Minutes of the 88th, 89th and 90th Executive Committee Meetings of A FPPD**

The minutes of the 88th, 89th, and 30th Executive Committee meetings were sent as attachment in advance to the members of the general assembly.

There being no questions or clarifications, the minutes were thereby approved.

### **Report AFPPD Activities: From November 2020 to May 2021**

#### ***Prof. Kiyoko Ikegami, Interim Executive Director***

The documentation report of AFPPD activities from November last year until the day of the general assembly was sent in advance to the members. The following activities were conducted:

- January 2020: AFPPD office opened in Tokyo
- May 2020: Drafted a proposal that was submitted to UNFPA
- November 2020: UNFPA approved the proposal
- November 13, 2020: 89th Executive Committee Meeting
- December 17, 2020: Online seminar on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on ageing
- January-February 2021: Translation of ageing research paper
- March 2021: Youth research paper
- April 5, 2021: Online seminar on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on gender
- April 19, 2021: 90th Executive Committee Meeting
- May 2021: Worked on the youth research paper
- May 24, 2021: General Assembly

There were no questions or clarifications raised on the reported activities.

### **Proposed Planned AFPPD Activities for June-December 2021 by Japan Trust Fund (JTF)**

#### ***Prof. Kiyoko Ikegami, Interim Executive Director***

Plans for the remaining half of the year is reflected in the document provided to the participants:

- June 7, 2021: Online meeting on ending child marriage, coordinated by the Philippine National Committee
- Summer: Capacity building on communication strategies
- July: Online seminar on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on youth (Tentative)
- November: Meeting on ICPD Follow-up Tokyo Meeting
- December 15, 2021: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) report to be submitted

The AFPPD has already conducted a seminar on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on ageing and on gender and is currently planning for a seminar on the impact of the pandemic on the youth.

Hon. Maria Lourdes Acosta-Alba, MP from Philippines, informed the members that they are preparing for an online forum on child marriage on June 7, 2021.

### **Decision on the amendment of AFPPD Constitution**

There are two points for amendment to the Constitution: a revision and an addition.

Revision of location or moving of the actual address of the AFPPD Secretariat from Bangkok. Proposed revision on 3.1 states, "The AFPPD Secretariat shall be located at a place to be decided by the General Assembly of the AFPPD. The AFPPD secretariat will function as executive agency of AFPPD Programme under the supervision of the Chair and the Secretary-General."

New proposal on 3.2 states, "Some function and role of AFPPD Secretariat can be shared by national committees' secretariat for effective implementation of activities."

Hon. Takemi, AFPPD Chair, underscored that the second one is actually being done through cooperation and coordination between and among the national committees' secretariat, but is not yet referred to in the Constitution. This addition only puts it into writing.

There are no questions or comments and the members approved the two amendments.

### **Election of office bearers of AFPPD (May 2021 to April 2025)**

This is the proposal for the executive committee members starting May 2021 for four years up to 2025 April, the next general assembly:

## Election of office bearers of AFPPD (May 2021 to April 2025)

Below is the proposed executive committee members starting from May 2021 up to April 2025:

Chair	Japan	Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi Executive Director of Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP)
Vice-Chair	Australia	
	China	Hon. Dr. Liu Qian Vice Chair of Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee (ESCPHC)
	India	Hon. Deepender Hooda Vice-Chair of Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD)
	Philippines	Hon. Edcel Lagman Chair Emeritus of Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD)
	Kazakhstan	Hon. Balaim Kessembayeva Deputy Chair of the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Secretary General	Thailand	Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont Chair of Senate Health Committee, Thailand
Treasurer	Cambodia	Hon. Lork Kheng Chairwoman of the Commission on Public Health, Social Works, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs of the National Assembly
Members	Malaysia	Hon. Dato' Kamaruddin Jaffar Chair of the AFPPD Malaysia
	Vietnam	Hon. Nguyen Hoang Mai Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Social Affairs (PCSA)
	Tonga	Hon. Lord Tu'iyakano Member of the Parliament

All the Executive and regular Committee members of the board are based on the National Committees of each nation. Japan is the chair of the AFPPD and Prof. Keizo Takemi serves as the current representative of the Japan National Committee and is now a candidate as Chair of the AFPPD.

For Vice-Chair, Australia is currently underway to rebuild their own national committee. AFPPD always welcomes one Vice-Chair from Oceania. Hon. Takemi asked the members from which country in Oceania would AFPPD welcome a Vice-Chair and asked for the authorization to finalize the representative of Oceania as Vice-Chair.

Hon. Deepender Hooda, MP from India and newly introduced Vice-Chair, thanked the Executive Committee for the opportunity and expressed that he is looking forward to working.

Hon. Lord Tu'lvakano from Tonga supported the proposal for Australia to represent Oceania.

Hon. Rumina Khursheed Alam, MP from Pakistan, requested to send an official email to express their interest to host or conduct activities in their parliament, in partnership with the AFPPD as they are currently actively working on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the creator of the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Pakistan and an SDGs Task Force Member, she assured the body of their support and active participation in the events of AFPPD. They are looking forward to working with AFPPD and to learn more about the practices and policies of other countries.

Hon. Takemi thanked the Hon. Rumina Khursheed Alam and said that AFPPD is currently planning for the next six months. Pakistan may express in writing if they are interested to host one of the subjects related to the SDGs, especially on population issues.

Hon. Jiang Lihong from China, on behalf of Dr. Liu Qian, who was unable to join the general assembly, expressed that their Chairman of ESCPH Committee would like to continue as Vice-Chair of AFPPD in behalf of People's Republic of China. They would want to continue working with AFPPD and to be better and stronger in the future.

Hon. Takemi thanked the representative of Dr. Liu and expressed that he expects that China will perform a very important role as Vice-Chair of AFPPD. Underscoring the three population problems (gender issues, youth, and active ageing), China has many experiences in the past specifically on active ageing. He hopes that in the future, China can host an event on active ageing.

Hon. Jiang Lihong reiterated their support and hopes that in the future, China can help AFPPD in those meetings.

Rep. Maria Lourdes Acosta-Alba, MP from the Philippines delivered the acceptance message of Hon. Edcel C. Lagman of the Philippines, who was unable to attend the general assembly. She read, "I have been actively associated with the AFPPD for many years now or even decades. I have been part of its enduring advocacy on the impact of population issues on sustainable human development. My involvement with AFPPD has spurred me to spearhead initiatives on the enactment of progressive legislations, like reproductive health, prevention of adolescent pregnancy, prohibition of child marriage, and institution of absolute divorce, among many others. It is both a challenge and a commitment that I accept without reservation my reelection as Vice-Chair of AFPPD. Thank you very much."

Hon. Prof. Farhod Rahimi, MP from Tajikistan, thanked everyone for their support.

Hon. Balaim Kessebayeva, MP from Kazakhstan, expressed their gratitude to the members of AFPPD.

Hon. Dr. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad, MP from Iran, responded that they believed that the ICPD in 1994 is a fundamental and agreed upon instrument in the areas of people, population, and development. It has been a turning point for the international community in order to increase people-centered and integrated approach to strengthen sustainable development. He highlighted that the population of adolescents pose highly strategic issues in any country and are the main factors in the creation of work force, as well as the main driving force for inclusive development. Therefore, parliaments and governments who attempt to ensure the growth and development of their country must include SDGs areas, such as education, health, population growth, city life, and family as the base of community. As such, empowering women and girls and supporting economically disadvantaged groups are on their agenda.

Hon. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad mentioned significant achievements in the framework of public health policy in their country by underlining advancement in health and its improvement for mothers and vulnerable population, including the elderly, and is considered a successful model in the region. The Republic of Iran has made notable progress in health-related index, including decreasing the number of diseases among pregnant women, vaccination coverage, personal health, medical services especially towards HIV patients, pregnancy care and birth in the presence of qualified and skilled medical personnel, and in consideration of the WHO standard. He informed the AFPPD that the population policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran are implemented according to national priorities and national developmental needs assessments.

Islamic Parliament of Iran in its new term processes has a specific viewpoint towards population and development. In this regard, the Islamic parliament has put the following measures on its agenda: (1) establishing a joint Commission on Population, Adolescents, and Family Support; (2) planning for population, adolescents, and family support; (3) culturalization and raising awareness in the field of child rearing, providing economic facilities, and incentives; (4) providing health-related facilities and educational welfare and occupational incentives; and, (5) allocation of necessary funds in the national annual budget for supporting and facilitating child rearing.

In the end, Hon. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad stressed the need to consider the growing elderly population in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the importance of strengthening national and organizational policies and plans, as well as calling on regional and international cooperation to achieve population and development goals. It is expected that the exchange of views with the respectable and honorable representatives and members of AFPPD will lead to further synergy to achieve the aforementioned goals. Hon. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad committed to taking notes and participating in future discussions about population issues, particularly elderly and empowering women and youth.

Hon. Takemi thanked Hon. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad and recapped AFPPD's three components of its basic framework: gender, investments on youth, and active ageing. In this framework, AFP-PD will be taking into account how to absorb the proposals laid out and to commit to prioritize family planning issues along with other proposals.

Hon. Nguyen Hoang Mai, MP from Vietnam, expressed that they cannot decide yet who will represent their country as office bearer in AFPPD. He acknowledged the list presented and said that members of the Committee for social affairs of the National Assembly of Vietnam will be deciding on the matter after the election of their national committee in July.

Hon. Takemi responded that according to the AFPPD Constitution, the term lasts for four years. The General Assembly will be the one to decide who will serve in its Executive Committee. Hon. Takemi underscored that if AFPPD will be able to establish the network in an efficient manner, then the members will discuss again where is the most suitable place for the Secretariat. But COVID-19 happened and the members cannot have a meeting in person. Under such difficult conditions, he suggested that AFPPD should not drastically change the office arrangement, including keeping the status quo of the Board composition and continue taking on the responsibility of managing the AFPPD in the coming years.

Hon. Nguyen Hoang Mai agreed with Hon. Takemi's points but reiterated that the name of the Vietnamese parliamentarian will be decided in July.

Hon. Takemi accepted this decision of Vietnam.

Hon. Dato' Kamaruddin, MP from Malaysia, concurred with the list of the new Executive Committee members and consented to the proposal that Hon. Takemi be given the mandate to decide on the Vice-Chair from Australia. He expressed that it is an honor for a Malaysian MP to be named as part of the Executive Committee for the first time. AFPPD Malaysia has been active for several years already and they are looking forward to further actively participate in the future.

Hon. Takemi is positive that AFPPD and AFPPD Malaysia will have a collaboration in future AFP-PD's activities.

Hon. Lork Kheng, MP from Cambodia, thanked the AFPPD and Hon. Takemi. They have expressed their agreement to move the office of the AFPPD and the endorsement for Vice-Chair from a country in Oceania. They are excited to work together with AFPPD for their people and the country.

Hon. Takemi concluded the session and thanked everyone for their collaboration.

#### Decide Future Strategy (May 2021 to April 2025)

The election was followed with a presentation of the AFPPD's strategic plan and it was subjected to the discussion and approval of the members. This is a move to fulfill AFPPD's population and development commitment through intensified regional collaboration and its collective contribution through policies towards achieving desirable human living conditions in Asia and the Pacific. A consultant had conducted interviews with some of the members while others were asked to fill-out a questionnaire. Interviews and the questionnaires were part of the needs assessment that would determine AFPPD's trajectory in the next four years as an organization of parliamentarians. One of the questions was the topics that members would like to be tackled and the following are the responses:

- Youth education and employment
- Children's issues, particularly on adolescent pregnancy
- Gender gap and the empowerment of women
- Ageing
- Migration
- Strengthening advocacy and desensitization
- Strengthening and capacitating National Committees

There are seven points or recommendations given by the consultant who conducted the interviews and questionnaire. Based on the needs assessment that the Secretariat submitted, the paper "Fulfilling our Population and Development Commitment through Intensified Regional Collaboration" is pending review and approval of the members.

There are three major pillars in the AFPPD's strategic framework, namely, gender equality and women's empowerment, investing in youth, and protection for ageing and aged population; these are the same three pillars in the previous cycle.

Hon. Takemi underscored the importance of discussing the basic framework that AFPPD focuses on - gender, youth, and ageing. These three pillars can cover most of the population-related issues. AFPPD and UNFPA's relationship will be helpful in advancing these issues because UNFPA focuses on the same agenda, including early, child and forced marriages. In the past, AFPPD hosted several international conferences in countries in Central Asia because several issues related to youth investments were occurring in the area. This is the reason why AFPPD will continuously focus on these issues within the next four years. Lastly, active ageing is not only about social protection, but also about how to increase the healthy ageing population. It is also about creating active healthy ageing society in Asia as a whole and to generate more occasion for the elderly population to enjoy their life in a very positive manner. Countries in Asia are having very speedy large share of elderly population beyond the national boundaries, within ten years, nearly 70 percent of the elderly population will be living in Asia. How to handle those increasing elderly population in Asia is a very serious agenda. Therefore, as a development concern, Hon. Takemi suggested to take into account those three pillars and then focus on each subject based on the situation on each AFPPD member country.

Hon. Takemi welcomed the active participation of the body in the selection process to complete the issues within the framework. Comments can be addressed to the Secretariat of the AFPPD at any moment, specifically on agenda setting. He shared that during the previous board meeting, members from the Philippines mentioned the need to talk about early and child marriage. Therefore, the AFPPD decided to organize a seminar on the issue in June. This shows that the Secretariat is always flexible to plan and accommodate new action program. However, he underscored the need for the body to decide on the basic framework for the coming years.

Hon. Rumina Khursheed Alam from Pakistan responded that it is really great to know about the three pillars that are the backbone of any society in any country. Pakistan has a high number of youth but the population of old age is also growing. As the pandemic continues to cause the increase in psychological issues and traumas in people, she requested for the Secretariat and everyone to focus consider these issues as well. She also pointed out that there is the huge gap among the healthy activities among the young and elderly people in many countries during this pandemic. She suggested for interchange programs, citing that in Pakistan, the SDGs Secretariat has started engaging the academe more. There are also universities conducting research and that they would like to share the results of the research with other countries. She thinks that other countries can learn approaches and examples from Islamic countries that can be helpful to them.

Finally, she noted that a few things can be added categorically and come-up with plans on how to work on these pillars. The goal is to make the legislation and implement them. This can be achieved by policymakers through the help of people who possess the appropriate skills who can generate evidence-based proposals in order to bring better results.

Hon. Takemi thanked Hon. Rumina Khursheed Alam and requested Pakistan to express their proposal to the Secretariat on what subject should be picked up by the AFPPD in the future as part of the three pillars and how to closely collaborate with one another.

Hon. Angie Warren-Clark, MP from New Zealand and Chair of the New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPPD), expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to be part of the General Assembly, citing that it was her first time to participate. She shared that she is interested in seeing the impact of COVID-19 across countries and determine how those affect the opportunities with regard to the agenda.

Hon. Takemi thanked Hon. Angie Warren-Clark and underscored that the COVID-19 is a real common issue beyond the national boundaries. No one country can solely overcome those issues, but New Zealand quite efficiently contained the COVID-19. He stressed that other countries can learn so much from New Zealand's experiences. In the future, AFPPD would like to host COVID-19 related issues as a part of the framework and he invited the participation of New Zealand to explain more about their experience.

Hon. Deepender Hooda, MP from India, welcomed the three pillars and the action plan. Within the framework, he suggested that there be a wide-ranging discussion. He did not get into details but said that he would submit his suggestions to the Secretariat. Similar to what New Zealand pointed out, of great interest to members would be how the COVID-19 pandemic is interfacing with all the three pillars. For example, on the question of gender equality and women empowerment, how domestic violence changed or remain unchanged during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the issue of youth, how the COVID-19 pandemic increased unemployment and pushed families back into poverty, such as the case of India and across the world, and how the wealth inequality is affecting the youth across Asia. And thirdly, on the aged population, how the limited mobility and having to live in long periods of isolation is affecting them.



Hon. Takemi acknowledged that COVID-19 is a very important common subject to AFPPD to discuss how the pandemic impacts on those three pillars. After the general assembly, the Secretariat will draft some proposal to all the member states to have the gathering on COVID-19 impact on gender, youth, and ageing.

Hon. Ermalena Hasbullah, former MP from Indonesia and current Executive Director of Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD), gave her support and wished the AFPPD good luck in tackling the issues that will be addressed in the future. These are very serious issues for Indonesia and she echoed that each country wants to learn from each other. It is necessary to know how to arrive at a solution for all the countries. On gender, youth, and ageing in Asia, they are working closely with UNFPA and have talked about person-to-person advocacy with the parliamentarians because it is imperative to have more parliamentarians who will support the program on these issues. It is easier to reach the goals through person-to-person advocacy with parliamentarians outside of AFPPD membership who may also serve as champions.

Proposed International Conference (follow up of ICPD), Tokyo, November 2021

Hon. Takemi opened the next session for the proposed international conference in Tokyo in November 2021. He hopes the members can gather in person, but it is still uncertain as of the moment whether this is possible. If not, it can be a hybrid seminar or purely virtual seminar.

The Secretariat went through the draft schedule of the November meeting. If it is a hybrid meeting, logistical arrangements for the three sessions should be considered to manage the time schedule. The agenda of the meeting will be on gender, youth, and ageing. If the members have any comments or proposal on what aspect of gender, healthy ageing, investment in youth, other strategy or topic, they are very much welcome.

### **Any other matters with the permission of the Chairperson**

Hon. Takemi opened the floor for comments on AFPPD and the Secretariat as the final session of the assembly.

Hon. Manohar Battarai, former Secretary General, Nepalese Parliament, who has been in the parliament for the last 40 years and with the Secretary General for 13 years and administrative coordinator for AFPPD activities, supported and endorsed what is being proposed by AFPPD including the opening of the headquarters and future activities. Unfortunately, there is currently no parliament in Nepal because it has been dissolved by the government due to conflict between the government and rival groups in Nepal. When the parliament is reconstituted, they will be electing a new committee and will attach itself to the AFPPD as the national committee.

Hon. Takemi acknowledged the current situation in the parliament of Nepal and welcomed Hon. Manohar as an observer to the several activities of AFPPD.

## **Draft Resolution on the Abolition of Terrorism at the AFPPD**

Hon. Takemi presented the proposed resolution of AFPPD for the countries in very difficult situation of terrorism. This is the draft resolution on the abolition of terrorism that was presented at the AFPPD General Assembly. It reads:

“The AFPPD is composed of parliamentarians in Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific, and the basis of its activity is the mandate given to it by each and every citizen. Respect for the lives of others is the foundation of human rights and the basis for the activities of the parliament members. Based on this principle and philosophy, we hereby declare that under no circumstances can we justify taking the lives of others with violence that is based on specific sentiments.”

This is the statement that the Secretariat prepared in collaboration with other countries. The Secretariat will consolidate the comments among the members of AFPPD. Hon. Takemi proposed for the adoption of this proposal as AFPPD’s public statement in the future. He asked the members if there would be opposition to the statement.

Iran mentioned that with regard to the three priorities on ageing people, investing in youth and empowerment of women, there are main obstacle in implementation of population policies in recent years in the Islamic Republic of Iran. There are unjust sanctions, which are unilaterally decided upon by the US, that serve as the main reasons for the decline in health and the achievement of the SDGs for ageing people, pregnant women and the youth in the recent years. The coexistence of these subjects with COVID-19 pandemic has created a very difficult situation for the vulnerable population in Iran. They will cooperate with AFPPD on the three agenda, but in subjects outside of these agenda including terrorism, they will not cooperate.

Indonesia agreed with the draft resolution and endorsed it.

Hon. Takemi noted that Iran’s opposition to the statement defeats the consensus. Therefore, the statement will not be publicized in the AFPPD website. As AFPPD is a parliamentarians’ network beyond national boundaries, positions of the members will always be respected.

## Closing

Hon. Takemi concluded the general assembly by thanking the participants for their wonderful collaboration. He reiterated his welcoming of the participation of AFPPD members in future activities.

### ***Messages of Parliamentarians to AFPPD***

Tajikistan

Honorable Chairman Mr. Keizo Takemi

Honorable Participants of the General Assembly of the AFPPD

Dear distinguished guests,

I have the honor to welcome all participants in this extremely important meeting aimed at the strengthening development institutions and policies for the well-being of the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region.

Nowadays the global community has been focused on addressing the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemics on the lives of the inhabitants of the region and the planet. But at the same time, pandemics opened up new opportunities and became the impetus for the introduction of new information technologies, new relationships and new approaches to public health and the health of individuals. As a co-chairman of the standing committee on investment in youth, I wish to inform you that yesterday Tajikistan widely celebrated the Youth Day in the country. As a token of the great attention and focus on to the youth development, the Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, respected Mr. Emomali Rahmon met with youth representatives. The Leader of the Nation had an open conversation with the youth and State officials, and decision-makers about the state youth policy, the growing support of youth as a reliable foundation of the state. The main purpose of the meeting was engaging with the younger generation and opening them new opportunities for creative works, mastering sciences, professions and crafts.

I would also like to inform you that the National Committee on Population and Development has undergone a structural reorganization in order to more effectively address issues on the sustainable development agenda. Today, for the first time, the committee includes deputies of high chamber of parliament, leaders of all political parties, representatives of relevant committees, leading ministries, civil society and the media. This is the evidence of the recognition of the high role and importance of the committee's activities in the Republic of Tajikistan.

In this regard, I express to you, Your Excellency, Honorable Mr. Keizo Takemi, my sincere gratitude for your continued cooperation. I am sure that under your chairmanship, open constructive discussions of the General Assembly of the AFPPD will take place, and the decisions will be made for the benefit of the peoples of the region and the world.

	Country	Parliamentarian	Observers
1	Afghanistan	Hon. Dr. Elham Khadija, Member of the Standing Committee on Health Issues of the House	
2	Australia		Ms. Roslyn Dundas, Parliamentary Advocacy Coordinator, CARE Australia
3	Bangladesh		Mr. M.A. Kamal Billah Deputy Secretary Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat
4	Cambodia	Hon. Lork Kheng, Treasurer of AFPPD	Ms. Mith Chanlinda
		Hon. Ouk Damry, Secretary General of CAPPD	Mr. Sokhan Darapy, Officer of CAPPD
5	China	Hon. Jiang Lihong, ESCPHC	Mr. Zhang Chuansheng, Division Director of Office of General Administration
6	India	Hon. Deepender Hooda, Vice-Chair of AFPPD, Vice-Chair of IAPPD	Mr. Manmohan Sharma, Executive Secretary, IAPPD
7	Indonesia	Hon. Ermalena Muslim Hasbullah, Chair of IFPPD	
8	Iran	Hon. Dr. Ruhollah Mottafaker Azad, Head of the Japan-Iran Parliamentary Friendship Group	
9	Japan	Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi, Chair of AFPPD	Mr. Yoshiharu Makino, Secretary to Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi
10	Kazakhstan	Hon. Balaim Kessembayeva, Vice-Chair of AFPD, Deputy Chair of the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan	Mr. Aray Bekenov, Chief Consultant of Dept. of International Relations and Protocol
11	Malaysia	Hon. Dato' Kamaruddin Jaffar, Member of ExeCom of AFPPD	
		Hon. Dato Noraini Ahmad, Honorary Secretary of AFPPD Malaysia	
12	Maldives	Hon. Meekail Nasym	
13	Mongolia		Ms. Majaa Otgon, Advisor, Legal Dept.
14	Nepal		Mr. Manohar Bhattarai, Secretary General (Retd.) of the Parliament of Nepal
15	New Zealand	Hon. Angela Warren-Clark, Chair of NZPPD	Ms. Anna Ravendran, International Programmes Manager, Family Planning NZ
16	Pakistan	Hon. Rumina Khursheed Alam	Mr. Syed Rahim Shah Assistant Director (IR), Deputy Speaker's office Secretariat of the National Assembly
17	Philippines	Hon. Malou Acosta-Alba, Representative, House of Representatives	Mr. Romeo C. Dongeto Executive Director, PLCPD
			Ms. Nenita Dalde, Manager, Advocacy and Partnership, PLCPD

Country		Parliamentarian	Observers
18	Tajikistan	Hon. Prof. Farhod Rahimi, Chair of Committee of Majlisi milli Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan	
19	Thailand	Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, Secretary General of AFPPD	
20	Timor Leste	Hon. Ms. Lidia Norberta dos Santos Martins, President of Timorese Women Caucus	
21	Tonga	Hon. Lord Tu'ivacano, Member of ExeCom of AFPPD	
22	Vietnam	Hon. Nguyen Hoang Mai, Member of ExeCom of AFPPD, Vice-Chair of PCSA	Ms. Vu Thi Binh Minh Department for Social Affairs, Vietnam National Assembly Office
			Ana Luiza
			Jyotirmoy Golder
International Organizations			
	UNFPA/APRO	Mr. Björn Andersson, Regional Director	
		Ms. Kamma Blair, Regional Programme Specialist (Disability, Parliamentarians, Knowledge Management, Innovation)	
AFPPD/APDA			
	AFPPD	Prof. Kiyoko Ikegami, Interim Executive Director	
		Ms. Yoko Oshima, Assistant to Interim Executive Director	
		Ms. Eri Osada, Staff	
		Ms. Nenita Dalde, Rapporteur	
	APDA	Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, Secretary-General / Executive Director	
		Ms. Hitomi Tsunekawa, Chief Manager, International Affairs	
		Dr. Farrukh Usmonov, Assistant Manager of International Affairs/Senior Researcher	