



**The Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population
NEWS LETTER**

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“Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in the Interlinkage between Population Issues and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Part II”, Ethiopia



From August 10 to 12, more than 80 representatives from 22 countries, which include parliamentarians who represent the Asian, African, Arab and European Parliamentarians’ Fora on Population and Development, representatives of international organizations as well as the media, came together in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa for the conference *“Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in the Interlinkage between Population Issues and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Part II”*.

In accordance with the invitation by the House of People’s Representatives of Ethiopia to hold the conference in Ethiopia this time, the Ethiopian Parliament and the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), which serves as JPPF secretariat, co-hosted the conference along with the support of the Japan Trust Fund (JTF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The objectives of the conference were: 1) to continue discussion to strengthen proposals for TICAD initiated at the Japan-African Parliamentarians’ Dialogue held in Tokyo in February in anticipation of TICAD VI to be held for the first time in Africa in August this year and at the Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD) that was also held in Tokyo in April to present outcome documents to the G7 Ise-Shima Summit; and 2) to further strengthen proposals for the role of parliamentarians in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) adopted last year.



In attendance from Japan were Hon. Teruhiko Mashiko, Vice-Chair of JPPF/Director of APDA; Hon. Hiroyuki Nagahama, Vice-Chair of JPPF; and Hon. Toshiko Abe, Deputy Executive Director of JPPF. Hon. Mashiko gave a welcome address on behalf of APDA and JPPF, and Hon. Nagahama delivered a keynote address indicating the direction of the conference, while Hon. Abe made farewell remarks which included a detailed proposal for TICAD VI from the standpoint of the ruling party. During the opening ceremony, H.E. Abadulla

Gemeda Dago, Speaker of the House of People's Representatives of Ethiopia, delivered the opening statement.

Session 1: Securing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Emergency Situations in the Context of UHC

Hon. Dr. Tien Van Nguyen (Vietnam) gave a presentation entitled "SRH and UHC as a Cornerstone of Tackling Infectious Diseases" and reported his experience on establishing the Vietnamese Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (VAPPD) within the Vietnamese parliament, contributing to social and economic development through the promotion of family planning, and forming a legal framework for dealing with health-related emergency situations. He also expressed the view that there is not only a need to systematically establish programmes for UHC based on conditions in each country to ensure their sustainability but also a need to incorporate into these programmes as part of people's human rights provisions to ensure that the socially vulnerable can also receive health benefits equally.

In his address "Responsibility for Implementing International Health Regulations (IHR)," Dr. Akpaka Kalu, WHO Representative to Ethiopia, reported that current implementation of IHR remains insufficient, and that the reasons for this are: 1) the lack of financial resources for governments to implement IHR in their countries; and 2) the concern that any news of disease would result in a decrease in overseas investment and visitors. Dr. Kalu also reported on various initiatives to improve conditions such as the development of a system for disseminating information via smart phone and other means to monitor disease and the training of co-medicals such as public health nurses and registered nurses who can take appropriate measures when there is an outbreak of an infectious disease. Hon. Dr. Florian Bodog (Romania) gave a presentation entitled "Establishment of a Legal Framework for Achieving UHC", and Hon. Andrew Toboso (Kenya) reported on Kenya's experience of legislating and budgeting for IHR.



Session 2: Demographic Dividend and Investing in Youth

Mr. Lucian Kouakou, Regional Director of IPPF Africa, stated that various conditions are required to create demographic dividend and that there is a need to appropriately tackle various issues including health care, infrastructure, education, leadership, and development policies. Hon. Jose Manuel Sanches Tavares (Cabo Verde) emphasized that the African economy, being resource dependent, is vulnerable to impacts of the global economy and that investment in young people is vital in achieving economic development that is not reliant on resources. Hon. Dr. Sharif Rahimzoda (Tajikistan) also pointed out that a wide range of programmes is required to enable young people to play active roles. He then proposed the need for integrated efforts in areas such as balancing populations and economies, making environmental adjustments, and resolving the poverty problem.

Session 3: Investment for Sustainability – Food Security and Women's Empowerment

Dr. Patrick Kormawa, Ethiopian FAO Representative to AU and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), pointed out that in order to achieve food security, agriculture alone is insufficient and improvement is required for society as a whole. Hon. Princess Phumelele Dlamini (Swaziland) and Hon. Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu (India) respectively gave presentations on "Building Resilience for Food Security: Empowering Communities and Women," and pointed out as emphasized in the 2030 Agenda that the role of women is very important in responding to the call for sustainability. Their overall message was that the development of agriculture not only would require conditions such as the existence of arable land, the existence of people to engage in agriculture, and necessary funds for investment but also for women to be at the core of development and for their participation to be encouraged.

Session 4: Parliamentarians' Role on Population and Development in Achieving the 2030 Agenda: Legislation, Budget Mobilization and Formulating Development Agenda



Hon. Abd Khalid bin Ibrahim (Malaysia) and Hon. Abeba Yosef (Ethiopia) respectively delivered reports on the roles of their parliamentarians as well as results and constructive lessons gained in their respective countries. A report on the same subject by the Zambia All Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (ZAPPD) was distributed. Zambia is an example of a country where the JTF-APDA project supported the activities of the participating parliamentarians by assisting them in efforts to initiate legislation on parliamentary reports on ODA, for example, and it has achieved significant results. Zambia has also demonstrated concrete changes in the area of parliamentarians' roles "from advocacy to concrete action for sustainable development" where APDA has been making efforts for the past six years.

Session 5: Establishment of Mutual Cooperation Mechanisms for Advancing the 2030 Agenda and Parliamentarian's Role on Good Governance, Transparency and Accountability

Representing the Asia-Pacific region, Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, Secretary-General of AFPPD (Thailand), introduced initiatives of AFPPD. Representing the Arab region, Hon. Tagguiche Abdelmadjid (Algeria) presented a report on the activities of the Parliamentarians on Population and Development in the Arab region, which was revived last year. On behalf of the African region, Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, Vice-President of FPA (Cameroon), presented a report on networks in the African region and the population-related legislation in the respective countries.



Session 6: Synthesis of Discussions for Parliamentarians' Policy Proposal for the TICAD and 2030 Agenda

The chairs of the respective sessions summed up and confirmed details of the sessions.

Session 7: Discussion for Policy Proposal for Global Partnership: Focusing on Legislation to Improve Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance

Among the many opinions expressed, Hon. Ibrahim (Malaysia) raised the question as to whether RH and infectious diseases were actually separate issues, and also asked about preparedness. In response to these questions, background information was provided, stating that the details reflected discussions at GCPPD, as well as an explanation of the importance and need for the promotion of preparedness, which the parliamentarian accepted. Hon. Loubna Amhair (Morocco) also indicated that food security should include the issue of environmental constraints as well as the importance of indigenous food, which was reflected in the draft of declaration. Hon. Dr. Jetn (Thailand) proposed that an amendment be made in light of discussion on the complementarity of initiatives for UHC and population issues, and this was reflected in the recommendation.



He also added that: 1) food security is the foundation of nutrition; 2) initiatives in food security are vital in realizing UHC; and 3) as activities of parliamentarians, broad-based initiatives including the establishment of food security are important in building a society where human dignity is safeguarded and guaranteed. Taking into consideration activities to date, Hon. Dr. Jetn expressed the importance for APDA-JTF activities in expanding the scope of its activities.

In addition to sharing the basic principles of parliamentarians' activities, the parliamentarians who participated in the conference confirmed the direction parliamentarians should play in the areas of population and sustainable development for the 2030 Agenda and adopted policy proposals in a friendly atmosphere.



On the final day of August 12, the participants traveled to Adama, about 70 kilometers from Addis Ababa, to visit a model clinic of the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE), a member association of IPPF, and afterwards paid a visit to the House of People's Representatives of Ethiopia.

The project was highly evaluated by the participants. The Vice-Chair of the Council of the Nation of the Parliament of Algeria and a Sudanese parliamentarian, who both serve as executives of FAPPD, also strongly requested to implement APDA-JTF projects in the Arab region by all means to promote parliamentarians' activities and their capacity building in the Arab region.

Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in the Interlinkage between Population Issues and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - Part II

Policy Proposal adopted
August 11, 2016
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Introduction: We value highly the series of projects supported by the Japan Trust Fund to date. Based on the outcomes of those projects, we welcome the broad-ranging inclusion of outcomes from the Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD) held in April into the G7 Ise-Shima Summit Leaders' Declaration, and in particular we issue a strong demand for the inclusion into TICAD VI of the recommendations from the Japan-African Parliamentarians' Dialogue held in Tokyo in February this year. Building on these outcomes, with the aim of achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in our capacity as parliamentarians in realizing sustainable development, and ahead of TICAD VI which will be held shortly, we confirm the role of parliamentarians as follows and make the following recommendations.

1 Preamble

- 1.1 Undertaking population programs will be critical for realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in order for this to happen, it will also be critical to implement in full the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA), which serves as the platform for the SDGs. Equally, the full implementation of the recently endorsed African Health Strategies which include the revised Maputo Plan of Action, is central to attaining the SDGs (in Africa).
- 1.2 Health is a fundamental factor in achieving sustainable development, and to that end achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) will be an important factor. Promoting universal access to reproductive health (RH) and services will be critical if UHC is to be achieved, and at the same time achieving UHC will also have an important role in realizing solutions to population issues. In that sense we confirm that achieving UHC and undertaking population programmes is a complementary undertaking.
- 1.3 In order to achieve sustainable development that 'leaves no one behind', all members of society, including its most vulnerable members, need to be able to benefit from population programmes and UHC that provides basic health services for various health issues to live lives with dignity; and to realize their full potential.
- 1.4 A demographic dividend can be gained from the demographic transition that results from the effect of population programmes. The good health of a country's population will be a precondition for harnessing that dividend for that country's economic development. As well as expanding a UHC system centered on primary health care, it will also be important to invest in young people on the basis of gender equality, in the form of education opportunities and employment creation.

2 Prioritizing population programmes

- 2.1 From this perspective, in order to achieve sustainable development the highest priority should be given to population programmes in a way that achieves universal access to RH services. These services include family planning services and services that ensure the health of women and girls, who tend to be relegated to a vulnerable position within societies. These population programmes are to be given a high priority in the national development plans of respective countries, and the budgetary resources are to be allocated to enable those programmes to be implemented.

3 Public health

- 3.1 As globalization advances and the world becomes increasingly interdependent, new and recurring infectious diseases are no longer a problem restricted to just one country – they have become a global issue. The lessons learned from the 2014 Ebola outbreak were that a health emergency placed even further strain on the challenged public health systems of many countries; and that as a result of the consequent broad decline in the ability of those countries' economic and administrative systems to function properly, there was a near collapse health system especially in their delivery of RH services, which hold the key to good health for those countries' most vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and girls. This only amplified the negative impact of the outbreak.
- 3.2 We underscore that health systems should be strengthened, including through the implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR) towards UHC that also contribute to better preparedness against public health emergencies. It also highlighted the importance of coordinated campaigns rooted within local communities undertaken by civil society organizations (CSOs) that aim to bring about fundamental change in people's behavior, which lies at the heart of efforts to prevent infectious diseases.
- 3.3 Working in partnership with CSOs active within local communities, health units are to be established to provide primary health care (including RH services), which can also function as a system of prevention against infectious diseases. These units can also serve as bases for collecting the accurate data that will be needed to implement the International Health Regulations (IHR), and also as first response bases to contain the spread of outbreaks of diseases.

4 Global partnerships

- 4.1 Global partnerships will be critical for achieving the SDGs. Our activities to date have made it evident that common standards will be needed for realizing these global partnerships, and that the most important element to secure for these standards is to ensure accountability and transparency to the citizens in each country.
- 4.2 We are proud that our activities have led to the enactment of legislation by Uganda and Zambia that mandates the tabling of reports on ODA projects in their national parliaments. We are calling on countries in Africa, Asia, Arab and Europe that have not yet legislated that requirement to take that step so that it can serve as one basis for global partnership.
- 4.3 For the parliamentarians of donor countries, such a legislative mechanism would ensure accountability, achieving targeted objectives and transparency for the taxpayers of their countries. The presence of such a requirement would help donor countries focus their attention when weighing up where to direct their aid.

5 Food security

- 5.1 According to estimates of the United Nations, while populations in most regions of the world will start to decline from 2070, Africa's population alone is expected to increase. This shows the urgent importance of implementing population programmes, and ensuring food security has also become an urgent issue. Simultaneously, economic growth and growing number of young population in Asia and the Arab Region increase food demand. It makes pressure for supply and demand balance for food and it will be able to create food insecurity in future.
- 5.2 In order to address these issues, together with population programmes, it will be important to raise the agricultural productivity of small-scale farmers, establish food value chains in food production, distribution and storage through agricultural extension outreach paying close attention to women's empowerment, and put small-scale farmers on a more organized footing. And to promote food processing industry that can absorb excessive production and to contribute Food Value Chain.
- 5.3 Alongside working to spread modern agricultural practices with their higher levels of productivity, it will be necessary to understand the environmental restriction and the value of indigenous crops varieties and re-evaluate scientifically the function that traditional agricultural products have fulfilled in providing food security.