

The Population and Food Security Forum Toward Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – II

The Population and Food Security Forum Toward Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – II was held on 17 April in the International Conference Room of the 1st Members' Office Building of the House of Representatives, Japan. The Forum was organized by the the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) in collaboration with the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF), with the support of Syngenta, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan. The Forum continued on from the outcomes of the launching meeting held on 24 October last year, guided by the principle that stabilizing populations and establishing food security is essential if the SDGs are to be achieved.

This Forum was held in conjunction with a seminar on the Global Nutrition Report (GNR) that was held in the morning on the same day, organized by civil society groups working in the field of nutrition: Save the Children Japan; RESULTS Japan; World Vision Japan; Network for Action against Malnutrition (NAM); and the Parliamentary Association for Improving Nutrition for Mothers and Children. As a joint event with this, the Forum identified nutrition as “food security in quality”. Views had been sought from all participants to the Forum from the time of its preparation, and Recommendations were adopted that reflected the outcomes from the Forum.



● Opening session

Hon. Chiaki Takahashi, former State Minister for Foreign Affairs and current Chair of the Japan Agricultural Products Exporters Association, acted as MC for the Forum. Hon. Yasuo Fukuda, Chair of APDA, Honorary Chair of JFPF and former Prime Minister of Japan, gave a welcome address on behalf of the organizer.



Building on the outcomes of last year's Kick-start Dialogue, Hon. Fukuda noted that this Forum aimed at promoting the Global Compact, which is a public-private mechanism to overcome global challenges, toward the achievement of the SDGs. Some of the areas to which the Global Compact is expected to contribute include nutrition as food security in quality, water resource constraints around the world, and others. Hon. Fukuda stated, “Knowledge and wisdom is what is needed to achieve our common goal of realizing sustainable development. I think that by deploying their respective expertise, the different organizations active in these areas will come up with some great ideas. I hope this Forum will serve as a platform for achieving the SDGs in this way”.

Hon. Ichiro Aisawa, Member of the House of Representatives, Member of APDA Board of Directors and Acting Chair of JFPF, was next to give an address, on behalf of JFPF and the Parliamentary Association for Improving Nutrition for Mothers and Children. Highlighting the nexus between population issues and nutrition and the importance of that interconnection, as



well as the significance of Japan's engagement in this area, he asserted, "in order to help resolve such global issues, it is important for parliamentarians to work together with civil society groups".



Hon. Teruhiko Mashiko, Member of the House of Councillors, Member of APDA Board of Directors, and Vice-Chair of JPPF, then gave an address. Hon. Mashiko represents the Fukushima constituency, which suffered major damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake, and he touched on the problems that could result from people's lack of scientific knowledge, as demonstrated by the cases of Fukushima schoolchildren being bullied at schools in the prefectures to where they had been evacuated. He asked the participants to think about the role that science and technology should play in efforts toward sustainable development, noting that "if it is a mistake to rely on science and technology too much, it is also a mistake to ignore science and technology, and in order to achieve sustainable development it is important to both have accurate scientific knowledge and to apply that appropriately".

Lastly Mr. Toshiaki Shinohara, President of Syngenta Japan K.K., which sponsored the Forum, gave an address. He spoke about the significance of providing that support for the Forum, saying that "in order for corporate activities to be sustainable, it is important for business, civil society groups, and governments to work together on achieving the SDGs". He also expressed his thanks for the efforts of the organizer and all those who helped organize this Forum.



Following the opening session H.E. Koichi Aiboshi, Director-General for Global Issues (Ambassador), MOFA, gave a keynote speech titled "*Global trends and Japan's efforts on the SDGs*". H.E. Aiboshi mentioned that the SDGs are different from its predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and it is not just developing countries that must put in the effort – developed countries must also act on these issues.

- **Session 1: Nutrition as a Basis for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Reproductive Health (RH)**

(1) Dr. Atsumasa Uchida, former President and current President Advisor of Mie University

"Nutrition and Healthy Aging – Thoughts from a Medical Perspective"

Dr. Uchida spoke about the relationship between nutrition and healthy aging and living. According to Dr. Uchida, it is evident that the most important aspects for achieving healthy aging are to eat nutritionally balanced meals, to eat in moderation, and to take proper exercise. Many people, however, consider it easier to just get a pill to treat any lifestyle-related illness they might get rather than make any actual change to their lifestyle, and this behavior is behind the expansion in the country's medical and health care costs. Dr. Uchida underscored that there are major disparities in levels of healthy aging and longevity among the prefectures in Japan. One reason for this is that whereas longevity is measured using objective data such as death notices, healthy aging is determined using more subjective measures such as questionnaires. He maintained that in order for the government to formulate appropriate policies, what constitutes "healthy" aging needs to be measured taking a more objective approach with evidence-based criteria such as levels of nursing care needed.



(2) Dr. Yasuhiko Toride, Senior Advisor, Nutrition Improvement Department of Ajinomoto Co., Inc.

"Nutrition Improvement and SDGs / Multi-stakeholder collaboration to achieve nutrition improvement in developing countries"



Dr. Toride described a project that Ajinomoto has been conducting in Ghana, in which Ajinomoto is harnessing its area of expertise, namely its knowledge of nutrition and amino acid technology. As well as develop specific measures that reduce malnutrition, Ajinomoto is creating a new market for itself, which contributes to the company's profit, and by so doing it is able to develop a business that can sustain itself. What is challenging is to manage "last mile

delivery”, because infrastructure is lacking in some regions where people lack proper nutrition. Dr. Toride explained that in order to overcome this issue, Ajinomoto has been adapting a number of efforts to local conditions, such as appointing mothers in those remote regions to act as sales agents for its products.

(3) Ms. Junko Sazaki, Director of UNFPA Tokyo Office

“Cairo Consensus, SDGs, Universal Access to RH and UHC”

Ms. Sazaki talked about the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994. She said that at this Conference a paradigm shift took place regarding population policies and programmes – it was when the world decided that the right of individuals to decide their own reproductive future was to be respected, and that population issues would be resolved by letting each individual make reproductive choices free from coercion. Universal access to RH lay at the heart of this philosophy. Turning to the SDGs, achieving UHC was newly incorporated as one of the goals, and as well as being a part of UHC, universal access to RH has also become one of the bases for achieving the SDGs. Ms. Sazaki reported that notwithstanding that strengthening RH was essential for achieving the SDGs, the present situation has become difficult in light of the U.S. Trump administration’s decision to cut its funding to UNFPA.



(4) Dr. Sylvia Szabo, Nutrition Policy and Advocacy Adviser of Save the Children U.K.

“Nutrition as a Basis for UHC”



Dr. Szabo spoke as a representative of the civil society organizations. She observed that a multi-disciplinary approach would be needed to achieve the nutrition- and health-related SDGs, and to that end clear and quantifiable methods would need to be adopted. Areas where cross-disciplinary efforts must be taken include community protection systems that give sufficient consideration to children; UHC; safe water supplies and hygiene improvement; education; women’s empowerment; strengthening resilience; and food security. There is a need for greater understanding that nutrition is essential for improving maternal and child health. Even though nutrition and UHC are inseparably linked, in Dr. Szabo’s view, current debate on the issue is not being conducted organically, and that in order to remedy this, cooperation and collaboration is vital in the numerous areas based on the well-defined relationship among them.

● Session 2: Environment and Its Impact on Food Production and Population

(1) Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, Secretary-General/Executive Director of APDA and lecturer at the Nihon University

“Population, Environment and Food Production”

After first cautioning that the views he would express were not those of APDA but the results of his personal research, Dr. Kusumoto explained that the biosphere on this planet exists in an extremely fragile and delicate state of balance, and that humans alone are ignoring this balance as they continue to ever expand their activities, which is placing an enormous burden on the natural world. Dr. Kusumoto said, “Humanity is currently blessed with levels of food production that could only be labeled as exceptional in its history – but it is a blessing being maintained only by imposing a heavy burden on the Earth. It goes without saying that if the Earth’s ecosystems can no longer be protected, our own food security will be threatened. The history of human society can be described as a history of justification of adaptation results, and no matter how wretched the events that have occurred, at base they are always justified by the survivors. If we are to prevent a miserable state of affairs from occurring in the world, we will need to put in place the relevant conditions so that such a state does not eventuate – this can be described as the responsibility of those people living today. Among other areas, addressing population issues is important, and as a specific countermeasure in that regard, ‘ensuring universal access to RH’ and preventing unwanted pregnancies is of the greatest importance”.



- (2) Dr. Taikan Oki, Professor of University of Tokyo and Senior Vice-Rector of United Nations University (UNU)

“Freshwater Resources and Food Production”



In his presentation, Dr. Oki pointed out that while water resources are scarce, famines are decreasing in scale although they have not changed in frequency. The growth in water withdrawal has slowed, as has the world population growth rate. In addition, if we consider that it takes 1,000 tonnes of water to produce a tonne of wheat, and that it takes a quantity of water tens of thousands' times greater than that to produce a tonne of beef, trade in food also represents a massive trade in water. So when food is produced in places where it is comparatively easier to acquire water resources and is exported through means such as appropriate trading, Dr. Oki indicated that the utilization of water resources was an area ripe for optimization. Lastly he noted that there is no country with a small per capita amount of water resources that is also poor, and that so long as a country has water, it can produce food. As the Earth's climate gets warmer, extreme weather events such as droughts and severe heat are becoming more common, and grain production is significantly decreasing in these climate-affected countries. Dr. Oki added that this, however, is less of a problem to those with purchasing power, pointing out its social distribution aspect of water issues within the context of food security.

- (3) Mr. Takejiro Sueyoshi, Special Advisor to UNEP Finance Initiatives in the Asia Pacific Region

“The Role of Companies and Finance in Achieving the SDGs”



Mr. Sueyoshi first described the circumstances which led to the establishment of the Global Compact, a set of action guidelines for businesses to follow in order to achieve the SDGs. Mr. Sueyoshi explained that the Global Compact came about following the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos in 1999, when UN Secretary-General at the time Mr. Kofi Annan asserted that because business benefited the most from globalization, businesses should help resolve negative legacies of globalization. Then in 2003 at the UN's Headquarters in New York, Mr. Annan issued the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) for internal and external institutional investors, proposing businesses are to incorporate into their investment analysis “ESG” issues, namely environment (E), society (S), and governance (G). Today the value of ESG investments around the world has reached US\$23 trillion, accounting for 26% of global investment. The problems that the SDGs aim to resolve affect both our planet and the people who live on it, and since they constitute the foundation for all business and financial activity, the common view is growing that there could be no healthy business or financial activity if our Earth were crumbling and our communities were ailing. Given that business and the SDGs are firmly linked, so it is only natural for business to take action on the SDGs. In this light, Mr. Sueyoshi proposed working toward the realization of the SDGs and building resilient societies supported by diversity and inclusion where no-one is left behind.

● **Session 3: Food Security: Nutrition, Food Production and Food Value Chain**

- (1) Dr. Emorn Udomkesmalee, Co-Chair of GNR Independent Expert Group

“Nutritious Food Production and Its Impact on Food Security”

On the subject of changes in people's food consumption habits, Dr. Udomkesmalee claimed that demand for high-value agricultural produce has been growing in developing countries under the impact of rising incomes, urbanization, women's increased participation in the workplace, advertising by media, and globalization. She then noted that almost all incidents of starvation and under-nourished populations were concentrated in farming villages and urban slums, so even if urban agriculture does have some kind of role, given the fact that almost all agricultural produce is produced in rural farming areas, it is important to ensure the nutrition of those people responsible for that production. In particular small-holder farmers with fewer than 10 ha account for almost all farmers around the world, and in developing countries women make up 45% of the agricultural workforce. In addition, while in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa 80% of farmland is cultivated by small-acre farmers, 50% of the world's nutrition is harvested by small-holder farmers under this diverse set of factors. Dr. Udomkesmalee therefore



issued a strong appeal for appropriate interventions in the food value chain, starting with systematic responses such as securing the rights of women to use the land that they farm.

- (2) Mr. Osamu Hashiramoto, Counsellor (Deputy Director-General for Environment and International Affairs), Minister's Secretariat, MAFF

“Japan’s Cooperation on the Development of Food Value Chain”

In his presentation, Mr. Hashiramoto mentioned that building a food value chain means adding value at every stage, from production via manufacturing/processing and distribution, to end consumption. He noted that newly industrializing countries are presently at the developmental stage of building food value chains, which represents a commercial opportunity to Japan to export its food infrastructure. Based on its Global Food Value Chain Strategy (finalized in June 2014), MAFF has started to tackle the issues present in different countries through initiatives involving public-private partnerships. Starting with its adoption of a system of global strategy promotion, Mr. Hashiramoto presented examples of the development assistance that MAFF is engaging in such as “Reducing Hunger and Poverty through Support for Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sectors”, and “Responding to Climate Change and Other Global Issues”.



- (3) Mr. Genichi Jinde, Senior Executive Vice President of ZEN-NOH

“Towards Sustainable Agricultural Production and Farm Management”

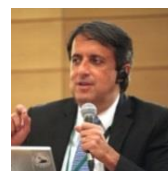
Referring to some of the basic information that ZEN-NOH keeps on Japanese farms, Mr. Jinde pointed to the general changes in recent years in the number of Japanese people engaged in agricultural work, the number of large farming entities, and the percentage of land under cultivation. From around 2000, domestic production started catching up with the import of agricultural livestock produce, leading to an increase in Japan’s food self-sufficiency ratio. Due to its aging and shrinking population, however, Japan’s domestic consumption is predicted to decline, so its agricultural producers will need to shift from a “product out” approach of “produce it and they will buy it” to a “market in” (TQM) model of “how can we make our produce attractive to consumers?” Mr. Jinde explained that ZEN-NOH flexibly deals with the diversifying needs of Japanese farmers, which includes allowing them to reduce their total costs from production through to sales. ZEN-NOH is also making every effort to develop strategies with overseas exports in mind to open up new markets and, as Japan’s farming population decreases, to maintain livestock production in Japan and to develop sustainable agricultural production and farm management practices.



- (4) Mr. Glóverson Moro, Head of Integrated R&D, Asia Pacific, Syngenta

“Impact of Agriculture Technology on Food Security”

In his presentation, Mr. Moro noted that notwithstanding the fact that the world’s area of agricultural land has not expanded all that much, yields per unit of area have increased as a result of technological advances, which has supported the increase in the human population. In line with its Good Growth Plan, which is a company commitment to make measurable contributions by 2020, Syngenta is working on developing technologies to help increase food production by improving resource efficiency, preserve farmland, promote rich biodiversity, and end poverty by realizing healthy agricultural communities. Mr. Moro also said that Syngenta would like to make a contribution by raising the agricultural productivity of small-holder farmers, who account for the overwhelming majority of the world’s farmers.



● **Closing announcement**

As part of the closing announcement, Forum moderator Mr. Sueyoshi said, “Data shows that CO₂ emitted from agriculture and food production accounts for 30% of global emissions. If action can be taken to reduce this percentage, it would greatly contribute to curbing global warming. In all likelihood it is primary industries,

which naturally include agriculture, that will be most harmed by a warmer climate, while any measures to tackle global warming will mean imposing restrictions on agricultural production”. He therefore proposed that this topic be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Turning to the adoption of suggested recommendations, Dr. Kusumoto of APDA, which acted as the secretariat for the Forum, suggested that because there had been no time to deliberate the recommendations, the secretariat would wait a week from that day for any inputs from the participants, and if there was none in particular, then the recommendations would be adopted as is. This proposal by Dr. Kusumoto was approved.

Lastly, Hon. Takahashi expressed his thanks to Syngenta for its support for the Forum and to the participants for the very significant work performed by this Forum. After expressing his hopes for further cooperation in the future, Hon. Takahashi then closed the Forum.

- Reception (held in the Multipurpose Room, 1st Members’ Office Building of the House of Representatives)

After the Forum a reception was held for the participants in the Multipurpose Room. Following a few words on the significance of cooperation by Ms. Noriko Shirasu, Executive Director of RESULTS Japan, on behalf of the civil society organizations that were part of today’s joint projects, and words of thanks to the participants from Hon. Fukuda, the reception was opened with Hon. Takashi Kosugi, former Minister of Education and former Chair of GLOBE International, getting everyone to raise their glasses in a collective toast.



Hon. Masaaki Taniyai, Member of the House of Councillors; Hon. Takeaki Matsumoto, former Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Hon. Yoshimasa Hayashi, Director of JFPF, former Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and former Minister of Defence, each gave a small speech, emphasizing the importance of action on the issues raised by the Forum. Hon Aisawa then gave the final speech, saying “from my additional role as Chair of the Japan-African (AU) Union Parliamentary Friendship League, I can state that Africa lies at the very heart of the two issues of population and nutrition, and that they have a very important role in Africa’s development”. He called for parliamentarians to work together with civil society organizations to find solutions for these global issues. In the convivial setting the participants then engaged more fully with each other.



The Population and Food Security Forum Toward Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – II 2017 Recommendations

Preamble: Based on our discussions at the Population and Food Security Forum Toward Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – II held on 17 April 2017, we make the following recommendations for specific policies to be pursued for achieving the SDGs.

1. The 2016 Recommendations were the outcomes from the 2016 Kick-Start Dialogue on Population and Food Security Toward the Achievement of the SDGs. We affirm the 2016 Recommendations for establishing food security as the world's population grows.
2. Achieving a world where “no one is left behind”, a key feature of the SDGs, aligns with achieving “human security”, one of the pillars of Japan's international cooperation, as well as with the Japanese government's policy goal of achieving “a society where all women shine”. In addition, building societies where the “dignity of individuals” is protected, another of the SDGs' key features, has from the outset been a guiding principle for the work of Japanese parliamentarians on population and development. Working to achieve the SDGs can therefore be described as an integral undertaking for Japan's government and for its legislators working on population and development issues. Action on population issues is imperative for achieving the SDGs as is action on food security, which includes ensuring nutrition, and these are issues that demand specific courses of action.
3. Issues of population, environment, food security that includes ensuring nutrition, and achieving universal health coverage (UHC) are interdependent and inextricably linked. In order therefore to achieve the SDGs, we re-affirm that the following efforts will be essential:
 - (1) In order to achieve population stability, programmes should be promoted that let individuals have initiative on population issues based on their informed choices; and in order to achieve UHC, every person should have access to reproductive health (RH) services;
 - (2) In order to achieve food security in a world where populations continue to increase, as well as promote environmentally compatible agricultural development that takes environmental factors into account such as climate change and the finite nature of the world's freshwater resources, build food value chains that reduce food loss from production through to sale;
 - (3) Re-consider the value of traditional methods of food production; make necessary investment in food production-related activities such as strengthening the capacity of local communities; and undertake education-based human resource development, particularly for women;
 - (4) Provide support for small-holder farmers; in particular enable women farmers to access resources (particularly land) equally with men; help small-holder farmers to secure rights to those resources;
 - (5) In order to achieve food security, which includes ensuring nutrition, promote the development and production of superior environment-resistant seeds based on science;
 - (6) Ensuring nutrition is not just an important element for food security – it is also a key component of UHC. For the health of future generations, ensure nutrition for a child during the first 1,000 days of its life; promote and protect breastfeeding; ensure that older persons get adequate nutrition, which is a low-cost way to achieve healthy aging; and
 - (7) Promote the development of technologies with little environmental impact; promote development that uses minimum resources; conduct fair and balanced assessments of the efforts of businesses to reduce their negative environmental impacts.
4. In order to advance these efforts, it is imperative for governments, civil society organizations and business to work together. We support the contributions to society that businesses make through their CSR programmes, and we call on companies to coordinate their activities organically with economic mechanisms and environmental financing mechanisms such as the Global Compact. We also call for the creation of a system that better balances corporate profit and the public benefit.

These Recommendations will provide some assistance in discussions toward initiatives on population issues and achieving food security.