

Advocacy Activities
for
Japanese Parliamentarians on Population and Development



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The purpose of this pamphlet is to inform the readers about the contributions and achievements that are being made by Japan in the field of global population problem by way of ODA offered to international organizations such as United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) on a quarterly basis to promote their understanding about the importance of ODA activities.

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Century of Hope IV: “Reverence for Life”

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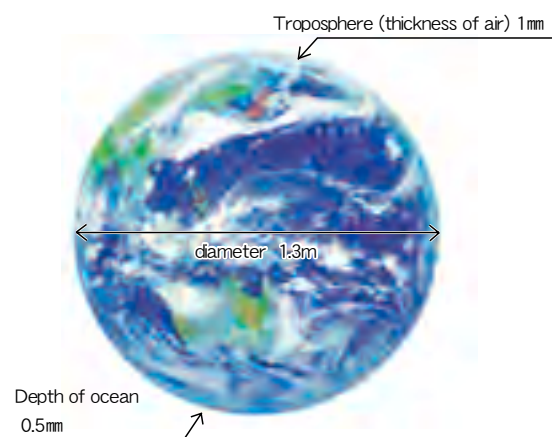
XIII. Century of Hope I :Demographic Aging and Global Population Problem

Japan's population started to decline sooner than predicted in 2005. This trend of declining population is expected to continue for a very long period of time into the future. Combined with advancement of demographic aging, it has turned into an important political issue. But how valid is the pessimistic outlook that dominates our view of the future? It may be wise to think about what we should do to turn our new age into a "Century of Hope". In this article we will review this problem.

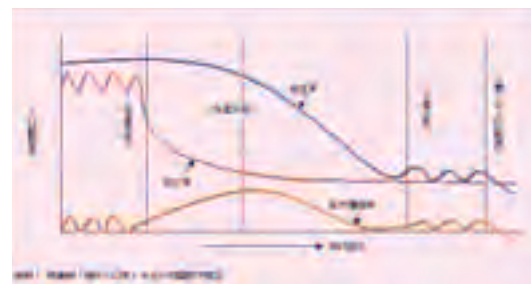
Population problem is a complex issue but can also be seen in simple terms. For instance, world population is determined by only two factors, i.e. people being born (births) and people dying (deaths). Population increases when births exceed deaths and decreases when deaths outnumber births. From a regional point of view, migration from one region to another becomes a variable that affects the population level in a particular region and serves as the third factor in determining population rates.

From a global point of view however, one can conclude that population neither increases or decreases, on the whole in the short term, even when there are cases where a drastic decrease of a local population occurs as a result of natural disaster or famine. However, in the long term population has increased due to the simultaneous increase in fertility with a decline in mortality. This explosion in the global population level was a result of an increase in food production capacity and advancement of medicine and technology that accompanied modernization. While various opinions exist concerning the details of this phenomenon, an important change in people's values and behaviour occurred with the destruction of the cultural mechanism that had kept population under control up until that time. As a result, world population increased from 1 billion in the 1800s to just 1.65 billion in 1900, and then nearly quadrupled in the following 100 years to 6.5 billion today. It is predicted that this increase will continue for the world as a whole and that population will reach 9 billion around 2050. Such a rapid increase in population scale has been placing enormous burden on the global environment and has raised an

Our Earth as one-ten millionth of its actual size



Demographic transition pattern



important question of whether humanity can continue to live on this planet amidst pressing environmental problems in connection with global warming and the loss of biodiversity, as well as problems of freshwater resources and fishery resources that are indispensable for survival and food production, respectively.

The drawing of the Earth reduced to one-ten millionth in size on the previous page depicts the Earth as a ball that is approximately 1.3 metres in diameter (which is about the length of both arms outstretched) floating in space. In this model actual thickness of the atmosphere (troposphere) is about 1mm and depth of the ocean is only 0.5mm on average. This shows us that the global environment is very thin and fragile. It is believed that, from the viewpoint of harmony with the environment, even the present population has exceeded the Earth's carrying capacity.

Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) (Chairman, Dr. Taro Nakayama MP), which is a federation of Japanese parliamentarians on population and development, and Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), an organization of Asian parliamentarians formed by encouragement from JPFP, were both established based on this awareness. Our goal of firstly stabilizing the world population is extremely valid and the importance of this problem is increasing by the minute throughout the world today. It is therefore quite natural that the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which is the central agency for population issues within the United Nations, are still focused on the stabilization of population increases in developing countries. Activities for this issue are "activities for creating a society in which people can live in a humane manner with dignity". Our efforts are extremely effective in this regard as it is not possible to realize an improvement in standard of living amidst an ever-increasing population.

1. Demographic Transition in Japan and Asia

In Asia where our activities are focused, we have attained dramatic success in addressing the population problem through measures to control population growth. For instance, total fertility rate (TFR which is the average number of children a woman gives birth to) of Vietnamese women was 3.6 in 1989, however, in just 17 years the TFR has fallen below the 2.1 replacement level. The population of India, often referred to as Asia's giant elephant, is also going through major changes. In this sense, we can clearly see the contributions made by financial and technical assistance that Japan has been offering to the international community for more than 30 years.

These examples of success can be explained by a population transition from stability to increasing population which signifies the transition from "high fertility and high mortality" to "high fertility and low mortality". As the term "population pyramid" suggests, it is a condition in which population consists predominantly of youth with the number of older people decreasing with age due to higher mortality. Once mortality decreases through the advancement of medical technology, for instance, either mortality

must increase again to levels of the past, which is not an acceptable policy option, or fertility needs to be lowered for population stabilization. Increase in population size occurs as a result of opportunities to lower mortality, which is desirable for everyone. It is imperative that society goes beyond this “high fertility/low mortality” phase and moves on to the “low fertility/low mortality” phase. This shift in population from “high fertility/high mortality” to “low fertility/low mortality” via “high fertility/low mortality” is referred to as a “demographic transition”. Japan’s demographic transition or “aging” occurred when mortality declined dramatically due to the advancement of medicine and improvement in nutrition while fertility declined greater than expected.

We must prepare ourselves for an imminent catastrophe affecting all of humanity if population continues to increase and population size continues to expand. Therefore, although this issue must still be addressed on a global level, the advancement of demographic transition in some countries in Asia is an indication of the fundamental condition for survival of humanity being confronted by people’s efforts. In other words, we can say that people have taken the first step towards the creation of a society in which people can permanently live on the Earth with dignity.

2. Focus on Japan

Historians of future generations will undoubtedly note, as a great achievement in the human history of the 20th Century, the fact that Japan took the lead in overcoming the difficult challenge of population growth and other Asian countries followed suit. The problems that occur from demographic aging need to be put aside as humanity cannot continue to live on Planet Earth unless population growth is restrained and stabilized. Demographic aging, therefore, must be considered as one of the major results of such a process.

Japan is attracting close attention from the rest of the world as a country experiencing extreme demographic aging in which the number of children decreases and the number of elderly increases after successfully solving the population problem. Demographic transition became significantly prevalent in the world after Japan became the first country in Asia to attain demographic transition — a phenomenon that had been believed to occur only in the West—and showed that it could also occur in Asia and Africa. At the same time, Japan attracted the world’s attention for the remarkable economic development attained by taking advantage of the period during demographic transition in which financial burden on the government is small due to a small number of dependency population: elderly and youth (known as a “demographic bonus”). Japan has now become one of the first countries in the world to face rapid demographic aging. However, countries such as China will be experiencing more rapid demographic aging than Japan in the near future. China is currently enjoying the demographic bonus that Japan experienced during the high-growth period and China’s leaders are well aware of the fact that the country must prepare for the coming aging society of fewer children by building up national strength before such a period arrives. China’s reform and liberalization

policy seems to make sense when seen from this viewpoint. Not only in China but the entire Asian region will be facing demographic aging in the near future. The world is now paying particular attention to Japan's challenge with anticipation of witnessing how Japan passes through this demographic aging phase and can present a new paradigm to the rest of the world.

3. Beyond Pessimism

Naturally, numerous concerns have arisen about Japan's dwindling birthrate which started two years sooner than the government prediction. The major concerns for lower fertility causing a downturn in the economy through labour shortages and a decline in consumer numbers, and that the pension system would collapse, have resulted in major policy challenges. All of Japan's institutions and systems that have been built on the premise of a society with a pyramid-shaped population must now be questioned from their core. Even if demographic aging is an inescapable trend, Japan's greatest domestic challenge in the future is to analyze its social background, remove the obstacles for couples and women that are unable to have children despite their hopes and make an effort to at least reduce the impact on society. A depopulating society is not necessarily all bad. It at least has potential in comparison to a society in which population continues to increase with the end consequence being societal collapse.

What kind of potential does such a depopulating society have? Firstly, the burden on the global environment and risks related to food security will be reduced. Secondly, there is an added merit of an increase in assets per capita. The challenge lies in how to go about utilizing this as an investment for the future. According to author Mr. Taichi Sakaiya, even in a period of declining population, such as during the Renaissance era, there can be a revival of culture and arts. Presenting pessimistic outcomes exclusively without understanding the significance of demographic transition is an attitude devoid of reason.

The arguments above clearly illustrate the fact that demographic aging is not entirely negative. Then what kind of problems are there? One thing that we know for sure is the fact that a society cannot continue to exist without its future generations. In other words, in societies in which children are not born and adults have no intention of having children there will be problems. We will examine why there is a trend towards lower fertility rates and how we can address this problem in the next issue.

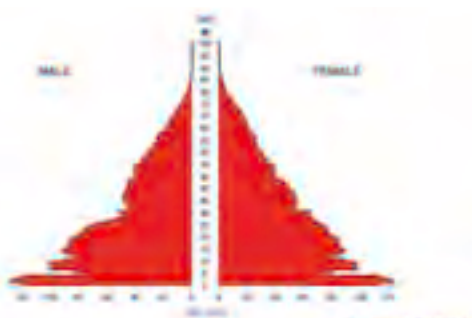
(Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, APDA)

XIV. Century of Hope II

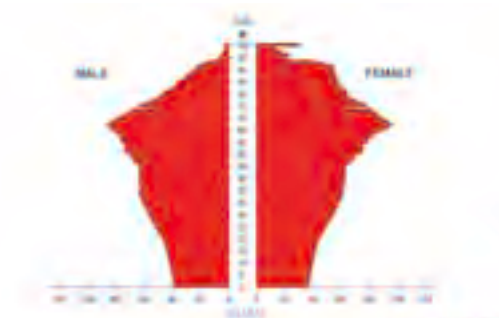
In the last issue, we said that population cannot keep increasing forever and that the aging of population is inevitable in the process of demographic transition. However, such a society has far more potential than a society with a growing population. In this sense, it is not wrong to position the upcoming century as the “Century of Hope”. That said, however, it is also true that a society with decreasing numbers of children will experience difficulties and that, considering the population momentum, such population decrease will continue for the next several decades. A philosopher named Alain is quoted to have said “pessimism comes from mood but optimism comes from will”. A strong will is therefore needed if we are to make this century a century of hope for each and every citizen.

1. Problems of an Aging Society

Many of the theories discussing the problems of an aging society are centred on issues involving social security and labour. They are problems of population structure and originate from the fact that the population pyramid changes its shape from an equilateral triangle to an inverted triangle.



Japan's population pyramid (1950)



Japan's population pyramid (2050)

Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research

Societies up to now have been built upon the premise of an equilateral-triangular population pyramid (population structure). However, this premise has been reversed 180 degrees and is placing pressure on society to significantly shift its social values and allocation of labour. The focus of discussion over the current declining birthrate revolves around such change in population structure. As analyzed in the previous issue, however, it is not possible to return the population pyramid to the equilateral triangle so long as the premise of high mortality society does not exist. Again, such society has more future potential compared to that in which population continues to increase rapidly.

The cause of this change in population structure lies in less children being born. While such a society has far more potential than that with ever-increasing population, such a society cannot be sustained over the long term. A review of the demographic transition in Asia may give us a hint for identifying the cause behind Japan becoming a society

with a low fertility rate. Let us study the demographic transition in Asia for this reason.

2. Demographic transition in Asia

As mentioned in the previous issue, population is determined solely by two factors—fertility and mortality. Mortality changes considerably due to technical factors such as medical technology. In contrast, trends of fertility are determined not by technological factors but by the mindset of the people. In other words, changes in fertility are largely affected by people's values and awareness. Thinking in this manner, one can see that modern day population increase is a phenomenon that has occurred as a result of improvement in mortality reduction through advancement in medicine and public health environment — particularly by changes in external conditions that reduce mortality including a dramatic reduction in infant mortality and improvement in nutrition — while ideas about fertility have remained unchanged.

Population will not increase if fertility declines in conjunction with a decline in mortality. But why is this combination difficult to achieve? The key for solving this question lies in the measures of people's actions in terms of customs, culture, tradition and values. It goes without saying that our daily lives are based on actions that have social significance (this is referred to as “action”). You can see through self reflection that we are not aware of the vast majority of these actions. For instance, when asked the reason for engaging in a certain action, most people give responses that do not really qualify as responses such as “That's how it has been”, or “That's just how I do it”. This is the characteristic of action. People repeatedly engage in unconscious actions. And these actions are a product of customs, culture and tradition.

In other words, fertility will not change so long as social values that serve as criteria for people's way of thinking, such as customs, culture and tradition, do not change. From this viewpoint, one can conclude that the dramatic fertility decline currently taking place in Asia is the result of modern values becoming dominant in place of traditional values. What are the modern values that gave rise to fertility decline?

3. Modern values and fertility decline

Max Weber saw modernization as a process of rationalization. He saw it as a process in which unfounded legends and myths that had been passed on from the old days were rationalized. He referred to modernization as a “release from the garden of magic”. What is modernization? In simple terms, it is calculability and predictability based on such accountability. For this reason, one of the requirements for modern capitalism is the introduction of double accounting in society. The term “accountability” which has become a popular term among international institutions is a concept that originally came from “double accounting” which is a system that enables the tracking of cash flows. However, we are not aware of this fact in our modern lives. But the fact that it is being used as behaviour criteria signifies that we are making such decisions without being

aware of it. The criteria we use when we make a choice from wide-ranging options to perform an action have literally become this prediction based on accountability. Would it surprise you to learn that such modern values are the fundamental cause of a declining birthrate?

4. Rationally-based measures for reversing the birthrate decline

It stands to reason that rationality in this case mainly refers to economic rationality and that choices are made based on economic principles. When seen as an economic choice, having children is not by any means an economically rational act in present day Japan. In reality, the cost of education, including higher education expenses, directly affects couples with children. In a society where cost has increased as a result of different social environments being integrated into an economic framework, the high income of Japanese people compared to Asian countries is not directly leading to affluence. Many have no choice but to cover the cost by cutting down on various expenses from their income which is less than sufficient. Moreover, such an investment becomes negative from an economic viewpoint under the present social condition. Meanwhile, the benefit gained from having children does not exceed the psychological and emotional satisfaction that children give to their parents. For this reason, using economic rationalistic behaviors as the central value criteria, which is one of the characteristics of modern society, will mean such psychological and emotional satisfaction will be pushed to the margins in people's criteria. It is no use lamenting over the declining birthrate under these circumstances.

Then how should we address this problem? It is difficult to change people's way of thinking abruptly. In this sense, we must create a social system in which having children is economically beneficial in the foreseeable future. There will surely be problems in the future including the inability to deal with new financial demands resulting from future increases in the elderly population for instance. However, having people understand the benefit of having children is the most important element in addressing the declining birthrate issue under the premise of the present social environment.

In the case of Japan, the percentage of children born outside of marriage is extremely low and the rise in percentage of unmarried people has become the main cause of birthrate decline. In this respect, it is necessary—even though it may appear to contradict with the present trend—to create a social system that would make it beneficial to marry. What we need now is a social system based on the spirit of an old saying, “You cannot eat when there is only one person eating from the plate but you can eat when there are two people eating from the plate”.

From a social point of view, it questions whether the future generation should be seen as individual domain (assets and liabilities) or social domain (assets and liabilities). It also means that we are pressed for a decision between the two.

Then you hear some people say, “We understand the general principle but there should

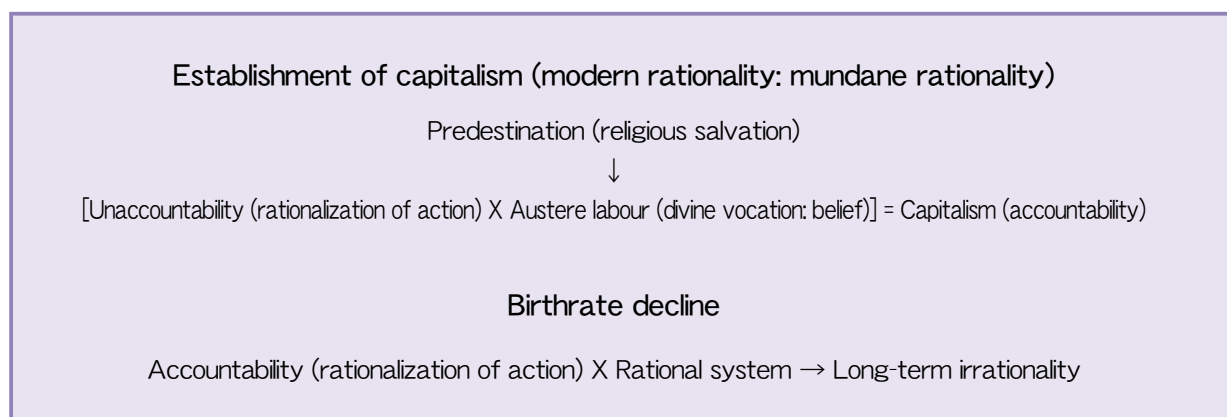
be more to it than that”. In reality, modern values do not consist solely of economic rationality. There are also cases in Asian developing countries where fertility has declined amidst a lack of such modern values. Let us again take a look at the issue of rationality and values concerning fertility decline in the next issue published in September.

(Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, APDA)

XV. Century of Hope III

In the previous issue (June), we presented a hypothesis that birthrate decline may have advanced as a result of the action of having children, i.e. birth, changing in the process of modernization and being regulated according to economic rationality. We also pointed out that this rationality is based on economic quantifiability, i.e. accountability. In a modern society, only accountability is believed to constitute rationality. But is it the only rationality?

Can it be that we are losing rationality as a result of relying excessively on rational calculation? In fact, rationality differs completely depending on the span of time, i.e. length of time spent on thinking. What we think as rational is actually seen from a very short time span and is based on a narrow context of individual people. Combining this micro level rationality does not produce rationality on a macro level. This is known as a “fallacy of composition” in the context of economics. However, this accumulation of short-term benefit may bring enormous detriment in the long run when seen in the context of population problems and environmental problems. Let us take a side trip for a moment to ponder on this issue and think about rationality.



1. Various kinds of rationality

When we hear the word “rationality”, we naturally think of “rationality in the mundane world”. However, as you can see from the fact that being “rational” literally means “quality in accordance with reason”, rationality will differ completely when based on different “reason”.

In other words, rationality will differ completely depending on what kind of “reason” you establish. For instance, we seek happiness but the form of happiness varies from one person to another. There is no religion that does not seek happiness. This is referred to as “salvation” in sociology of religion. It is for this reason that all religions have rational soteriology within its logic. The very approach for reaching salvation, as defined by a

religion, becomes the rational approach for the followers of that religion. Let us call this “religious rationality”.

For example, salvation in Islam means being admitted into heaven. Heaven is depicted in a very concrete manner as a green paradise where you are surrounded by beautiful women and can drink liquor that would not intoxicate you no matter how much you drink.

but, for the cautious a place of prosperity,
and gardens and vineyards,
curvaceous (virgins), of equal age
and an overflowing cup.
(*Quran* Chapter 78 verses 31 through 34)

Islam also clearly defines the methods for getting there. For instance, fighting bravely and sacrificing life in Jihad (holy war) is one of such methods. In this sense, one can say that losing life by Jihad is a very rational choice as it is deemed to be a sure ticket to heaven.

However, the rationality that we generally have in mind is different from such religious rationality. Rationality for us is what allows us to lead a happy life in this world. This can be referred to as “mundane rationality”.

According to Max Weber, capitalism-oriented “mundane rationality” which is sweeping the modern society emerged from “predestination”, a concept that is most distant from “mundane rationality”. “Predestination” maintains that whether one can enter the Kingdom of God (which corresponds to “salvation” in Christianity) has already been decided by God and that there is no room for intervention of human will. It is said that this has people in a single-minded pursuit of requirements for being admitted into the Kingdom of God. According to Weber, capitalism emerged as abstinence from pleasure was thoroughly encouraged and diligence became the goal of life. In other words, a build-up of pure religious rationality gave rise to “mundane rationality” centred around accountability that was never anticipated in the religion.

2. Rationality in modern society and its limit

As mentioned in the previous issue in June, it goes without saying that our activities are largely regulated by this accountability. Our pension system calculates 50 to 100 years into the future. Financial planners calculate necessary savings for retirement as well as the expenses for raising children. Such calculation reveals that children are a liability and that there is not enough money to pay for raising children if a couple is to save enough money for old age. According to this accountability, it is a rational choice not to marry and not to have children.



Viewpoint of insect

However, is it really rational? Can people’s lives be calculated by accountability of



birds-eye view

money alone? Can it be that the result of heightening rational accountability is making the entire society irrational which is in complete opposite of what occurred in the case of modern capitalism?

One can briefly ponder on this subject and come up with numerous examples. For instance, the number of unmarried couples is on the increase today. If this case is applied to the course of one's life for simulation, it shows staggering results. For instance, let us assume that someone who is the only child decides not to marry after doing a lot of thinking about various conditions. By the time that person reaches 55 years of age and realizes where his career in the company is going, he will find himself in a situation where he is the only person there to look after his parents who are still alive in their eighties but are becoming weaker due to aging. They were once called "parasite singles", i.e. bachelors that commuted to work from their parents' house and were able to spend the majority of their salary as disposable income. But this is the reality they have to face 30 years later. There are already statistics showing that disposable income of these one-time parasite singles has been significantly reduced after their parents retired from work. Swinging bachelors whose life once had been backed by a multitude of choices and abundant disposable income are now expected to become the breadwinner of the household and will miss the opportunity to marry while looking after their parents. They will never marry throughout life as a result. Cases like these are probably not by any means uncommon in today's Japan.

In this manner, accumulation of short-term gains will not benefit the public. On the contrary, there are many cases where such gains give rise to serious problems that would undermine the very premise on which its accountability is based.

Birthrate decline is a typical example of this problem. The key to solving this problem lies in going beyond an individual viewpoint of rationality and seeing it from a long-term perspective. A society with no children will not continue to exist in the long run. Children are needed to maintain the society and continue the pension system. Children should therefore be seen as an investment and an asset for the future. From this perspective, it is necessary to rise above individual accountability and position children as social assets so that we can create a social system that would prevent parents from experiencing economic difficulty as a result of having children. In this sense, the challenge lies in whether we can turn the concept of children being a social asset that requires investment into a consensus instead of seeing them as individual assets and liabilities.



Setting such logical argument aside, it should be quite natural for people to get married, have children and raise them, and create a home. The joy people get from doing so appears to be drowning in

the argument of accountability. One can argue that people today are losing joy of life as a result of their activities being tied down to short-term economic accountability and that it is causing long-term benefits to diminish.

Such argument is on the opposite end of the spectrum from the inhumane attempt to socially force childbirth. The concept of reproductive health and rights was adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 as the fundamental approach towards the population problem. It is an effort to offer choice after obtaining information on status of health and human rights for each person and stabilizing population as a result. Japan's measures against birthrate decline should also be approached from the viewpoint of realizing happiness for each and every person. As a living being, we humans must regain the joy of "getting married, giving birth to and raising children and creating a home", which, in turn, will lead to acquiring long-term rationality.

In this sense, controlling the ever-increasing population of the developing countries (vast majority of which is believed to be caused by unwanted pregnancy) should be at the base of international cooperation. Meanwhile addressing excessively rapid birthrate decline in developed countries is also very important from the viewpoint of regaining human happiness. Let us discuss the possibilities of measures for Japan in the next issue.

(Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, APDA)

XVI. Century of Hope IV: “Reverence for Life”

“Reverence for Life” are the words of Dr. Albert Schweitzer who is well-known as the Saint in the Jungle. As a medical doctor, Dr. Schweitzer opened a hospital in Lambarene in the present-day Gabonese Republic and dedicated his life to healthcare in Africa. Dr. Schweitzer was also a renowned theologian who wrote *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. The philosophy Dr. Schweitzer ultimately reached with his profound knowledge of Christian theology was awe for all living things, i.e. “reverence for life”.

Reverence for life is also at the root of our efforts to address the population problem. The purpose of addressing the population problem lies in “creating a society in which those who are born can live happily with human dignity”. Rapid population increase still continues in the least developed countries while birthrate decline is advancing in developed countries including Japan. It is for this reason that we must recall the words “reverence for life” in order to address these two problems. In this issue, we will review birthrate decline seen from the viewpoint of demographic transition and the potential measures that can be taken to conclude the analysis of birthrate decline that were addressed in the past three issues.

1. Uniqueness of the Japanese case: Are European cases universal?

The previous issues discussed 1) the possibility that pursuit of rationality which stands for mundane accountability would give rise to irrational society as a result; and 2) importance of taking a new look at rationality from a long-term viewpoint and creating a social system that could maintain rationality in the long-term in order to prevent such irrational results from being produced.

Numerous studies of precedent cases in Europe are undertaken today with the rise in the pressing need to take measures against this demographic aging. Policy recommendations also rely on the results of European case studies and attempt to apply them to Japan. However, considerable questions remain as to how valid such comparisons may be.

A comparison of cases in Japan and Europe reveals many significant differences. Firstly, demographic transition in Japan differs largely from that in Europe as demographic transition in Europe occurred over a long period of time while in the case of Japan it resulted from a rapid decline in fertility from the postwar baby-boomer generation onward and occurred over an extremely short period of time of 30 years. The percentage of elderly will increase even in demographic transition of the West that occurred over a time span of 100 to 150 years. However, the changes are gradual and demographic structure will result in a cylindrical shape population structure. In contrast, demographic transition in Japan occurred over an extremely short period of time and produced a mushroom-shaped demographic structure (with baby-boomers representing the cap of

the mushroom). This demographic structure has the consequence of causing a big surge in pension payments that must be urgently addressed.

Secondly, the percentage of marital fertility (childbirth from married couples) is overwhelmingly high in Japan at 98% compared to the West. The difference is striking considering the fact that births outside marriage account for a considerable percentage of fertility increase in the developed Western countries. De facto marriages (living with a partner of the opposite sex which does not involve a legal marital relationship) have become popular in the West. Meanwhile, marriage and childbirth are a part of the same action for Japanese couples. In Japan, babies that are born outside of marriage are inevitably raised by single mothers and women bear almost all the burden of child rearing. As a result, the majority of single mothers are busy making ends meet as a mother and do not have partners. In this sense, one can say that the whole concept of male-female relationships is different between Japan/Asia and the West.

Support for women's social advancement is often proposed as a countermeasure for birthrate decline accompanied by encouragement of independence of women from the viewpoint of Western-style independence founded on existence of partners. However, as pointed out in the "White Paper on Society with Declining Birthrate 2005" issued by the Cabinet Office, such proposals hardly qualify as theory that can be applied universally. While a certain degree of correlation is observed in Europe, it is questionable whether it can be applied directly to Japan and the Asian region. Everyone would agree to the idea of enabling competent women to demonstrate their skills. However, there is no guarantee that it would lead to more people getting married and the subsequently anticipated childbirth. Needless to say, a change in men's values and behaviour as well as an improvement of the social system concerning day-care centres are essential for couples that are working and raising children at the same time. These are basic requirements that necessitate urgent improvement, although the degree of their effectiveness is yet to be seen.

Thirdly, Western society is a society based on individualism but is a class society at the same time. Social class continues to exist rigidly by transforming itself in ethnic class stratification with low-wage labour offered to migrants supporting the domestic work of professionals. Various arguments also exist in Japan with regard to hiring foreign labour for the so-called 3D (dangerous, dirty and difficult) blue-collar jobs. It is possible that the Western social class system would not function fully if brought over to Japan.

As we can see, there are numerous problems related to transplanting European cases

2. Possibility of concrete measures

which are regarded as being ahead of times to Japan. It will be a choice of the entire Japanese population to which measures should actually be taken up or adopted from the European model. According to analyses that have been performed so far, concrete measures would be to create an environment that is not detrimental for individuals to

have children so long as we rely on mundane rationality as the criterion of its value. Hypothetically speaking, measures such as offering significant tax cuts to married couples and raising the rate of deduction after childbirth to reduce the burden of households with children may be necessary considering the overwhelmingly high percentage of marital fertility. While this may be subject to criticism as an intervention of individual life and values, it would be a reasonable rational policy if it can achieve national consensus, so long as it becomes necessary to position children as social public goods in order to take measures against birthrate decline. It can also be seen as inter-generational transfer of income in view of the mechanism of the pension system.

Many debates are in progress and it is not proper to draw any conclusions here. When discussing birthrate decline, however, it is necessary to keep in mind that Western values are merely one set of the values and that they are not universal by any means. As rapid demographic transition which started in Japan blazed a new path towards demographic transition in the developing countries of Asia and other regions, birthrate decline is a problem that Japan must deal with by taking a hard look at its reality. Experience in the West therefore, may not be very effective. It must be pointed out that strong will is needed on social and political levels to realize this as it involves a major reform of social structure that has been used as the premise up to now.

Birthrate decline up to this point has been analyzed by using keywords such as “changes

3. Reverence for life

in social norm”, “accountability”, “limit of modern rationality” and “fallacy of composition”. Society is currently filled with a pessimistic tone in regards to the lower fertility level. Discussions about birthrate decline and aging of population are reduced to topics of pension and social security and are inducing anxiety over the future from the viewpoint of accountability. “Eventual irrationality” brought about by modern rationality is leading to discrepancy in the system, forcing young people who should be opening up new possibilities to calculate their life and worry about their pension before forging the future. This insecurity about the future is amplified and gives rise to further insecurity and choice in the form of not making any choices. This can be called “choice by elimination” and this choice by elimination appears to be spreading in present day Japan. For instance, late marriage and non-marriage which are causing birthrate decline can be seen as the result of choice by elimination. Many of the reasons for not marrying are of negative nature such as “Could not find a suitable partner” and “Opportunity did not arise”. Only time passes while a person does not make a choice clearly based on his or her independent will and ends up not making any choice as a result. The life of any person belongs to no one else but that person. In this sense, how one lives his or her life is nothing but that person’s choice. However, the awareness of being the person in charge is lost in the choice by elimination. These people appear to be narrowing their choices by looking at the situation from the viewpoint of a critic rather than the interested party. It is necessary to take a new look at life to improve this situation.

Newborn babies are extremely powerless. No matter how hungry they are and how

much trouble they are in, all they can do is cry. They will lose their lives unless the parent offers a helping hand. These feeble lives are the hope for all of us. Building a society in which babies that are born can live with humane dignity is the central focus of the population problem and the means for doing so is the promotion of reproductive health. It is something that would not exist without kindness and affection for the newly born life. Babies are very vulnerable when they are just born but you feel happy just by looking at them. It is important to go beyond the pessimistic and superficial rationality of modern rationalism, nurture a positive attitude towards life and build a society that celebrates the lives that are responsible for the next generation. For that purpose, there is a need for social effort to nurture a positive attitude towards life and perceive male-female relationships from the viewpoint of “love and responsibility for life” as opposed to choice by elimination. I believe that this takes people beyond accountability based on modern rationalism and brings a sense of fulfilment and happiness in the lives of each and every individual. There is a strong need now for formation of policies that take into account “life” based on “reverence for life” and “long-term rationality” in order to transcend the economic rationality in front of our eyes and realize the Century of Hope.

(Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, APDA)

APDA

(Asian Population and Development Association)

1. First Issue: 1st March 2006

The Asian Population and Development Association has been conducting academic research under commission from government agencies including the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Labour for the past 25 years. Having witnessed the demographic transition that rapidly advanced in most Asian countries during this period, APDA has been analyzing this phenomenon while offering numerous recommendations on the subject. APDA has also been supporting Japanese parliamentarians at drafting committees in international conferences as part of its parliamentary support activities. At the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD) held in 1994 in Cairo, Egypt in conjunction with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), APDA supported policy formation as the secretariat of the drafting committee and the results were reflected in ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) which later determined the direction of global population policy. APDA also supported the Japanese parliamentarians during the Review Meeting and Parliamentary Meeting of ICPD in 1999 and exerted considerable influence on policymaking. These results were also reflected in the United Nations General Assembly documents.

APDA also continues to work effectively in the international arena by submitting the basic draft for the Ottawa Commitment at the International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action which was held in Ottawa, Canada in 2002. APDA is one of very few NGOs in Japan that are constantly engaged in these activities with significant international influence. While APDA has presented numerous recommendations mainly on the subject of controlling population increase in developing countries, APDA is also capable of offering recommendations on the declining birthrate issue from a technical point of view. We invite you to take advantage of our policymaking capacity.

2. Second Issue: 1st June 2006

The Asian Population and Development Association organized the 22nd Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development in New Delhi, India on 23rd and 24th of April under the theme of "Globalization and Population in Asia". The opening address for the conference was delivered by the Speaker of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha, followed by a discussion on "Light and Shadow Brought About by Globalization". As one of BRICs countries, India is playing a leading role in globalization. Deliberating on topics which hang over the world such as the impact of globalization on people's values,

expansion of social disparity and increased pressure on the environment, the venue became the first conference placing focus on globalization and population.

The conference was followed by the dispatch of a delegation which visited emergency obstetric centres and community health centres engaging in HIV/AIDS prevention and advocacy activities in New Delhi and the desert region of Udaipur in Rajasthan.



Mr. Yasuo Fukuda, Chairman of AFPPD delivering an address at the opening ceremony



Dialogue with volunteers engaged in a HIV/AIDS advocacy activity at a community health centre

Frequent occurrence of low-weight births amidst poverty had become the major cause of high infant mortality. Having learned that social structure, including the caste system, is contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS, the delegation became keenly aware of expansion of diversity and social disparity in Asia.

3. Third Issue: 1st September 2006

APDA will celebrate its 25th anniversary in February 2007. We have carried out a wide range of activities as the secretariat of Japanese Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF) and Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). Significant results have been attained over the past 25 years concerning the population problem in Asia through the efforts of numerous relevant authorities, governments and their people. TFR, which refers to the number of births a woman gives in her lifetime, dropped sharply from 3.67 in 1980-85 to 2.35 in 2000-05. Since the level of TFR at which population does not increase or decrease is 2.05, one can conclude that Asia's population problem is rapidly moving toward resolution. Rapid demographic transition that occurred in Japan after World War II was called a "miracle" because it occurred outside Europe and the U.S. and because it advanced at a rapid pace. However, the same phenomenon that was once called a miracle is occurring in various countries of Asia at a rate exceeding that of Japan. This is indeed a "miracle" that was not anticipated at the time of APDA's founding. The aging of population and decline of birthrate is accelerating in Japan as a result of this rapid demographic transition. This demographic aging will greatly affect our socioeconomic life. However, such a society has far more potential and hope compared to that in which population continues to increase. Considering the demographic structure, Asian countries will eventually face the same demographic aging Japan is experiencing. Asian countries are watching how Japan will address this problem with intense interest.

APDA intends to offer support for activities geared towards restraining population

growth in Asia and Africa and make recommendations for solving the birthrate decline in Japan with the aim of building a society in which all people can lead their lives in a humane manner.

4. Fourth Issue: 1st December 2006

We conducted the Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Disaster Management and Reconstruction Towards Sustainable Development Through Improvement of Reproductive Health and Community Capacity Building from September 19 to 23 by inviting 13 parliamentarians from countries that were affected by the Indian Ocean Tsunami (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives) and Pakistan which suffered enormous damage from the great earthquake that occurred in the North-West Frontier Province.



At Nakayama tunnel,
The former Yamakoshi Village

We held a conference in Tokyo on the 19th, conducted an inspection of the Hyper Rescue Team of Tokyo Fire Department on the 20th and visited Niigata Prefecture, including former Yamakoshi Village which incurred enormous damage from the Chuetsu Earthquake, from the 21st to 23rd.

The conference started with a welcome address by Mr. Yasuo Fukuda, MP, Chairperson of AFPPD, Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman of Organizing Committee, Ms. Kayoko Shimizu, Vice-Chairperson of APDA, Mr. Nobuki Sugita, Deputy Director-General of International Cooperation Bureau, and was followed by reports on damage and rehabilitation from respective countries, emergency relief efforts of JICA and Tokyo Fire Department and a report on disaster-prevention nursing by Professor Ohara of Japanese Red Cross Nursing College. The Japanese experience of traditional fire companies and women's groups being run as community volunteer organizations and working with the government in the area of disaster prevention and improvement of reproductive health was not instantly understood by the representatives of participating countries. However, they returned home with an insight into the importance of local cooperation for improvement of disaster prevention and reproductive health after visiting the disaster-affected areas of the Chuetsu Earthquake, with all the information obtained at the conference and realizing why Japanese people work so hard.

NPO 2050

1. Society in which declining birthrate, aging

and depopulation occur simultaneously

Japan has finally become a society with a decreasing population. Total population was 127.76 million according to last year's 2005 census. An estimate made by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research predicts that population will decline to 100.59 million by 2050. A population of 100 million is almost equal in scale to the country's population in 1967 when the first progressive government began in Tokyo. However, the two populations differ completely in terms of structure. The 1965 census showed that young population (ages 0-14), reproductive age population (ages 15-64) and aged population accounted for 25.6%, 68.1% and 6.3% of the entire population, respectively. Japan was then in the phase immediately before demographic aging.

However, these percentages are predicted to change to 10.8%, 53.7% and 35.6%, respectively by 2050. In other words, we are entering an era in which declining birthrate, aging and depopulation occur simultaneously. By mid-21st Century, Japan will be facing a super-demographic aging unprecedented in the history of humanity where one out of every 2.8 persons is an elderly person.

How should we deal with such a society? NPO 2050 is offering parliamentary workshops that address this question for parliamentarians. Our next event is a lecture by Specially-Appointed Professor Makoto Ato of Waseda University entitled "Japan Enters an Era of Super-Low Birthrate". It will start at 3:00 pm on Wednesday, March 22, 2006. We invite you to participate in this lecture which will be at the Special Conference Room of the Diet Members' Building.

Professor Ato argued in the Welfare Policy Seminar entitled "Challenges of Super-Aging and Depopulating Society" that "I personally think the judgment that excessively low birthrate of Japan today, society with rapidly declining population in the future and the prospect of becoming the world's greatest super-demographic aging are not favourable for social stability is sound in the light of history". We encourage discussions among you concerning future countermeasures.

2. The Day When World Population Reached 6.5 Billion

The Census Bureau of U.S. Department of Commerce has a "population clock" on its website that displays the estimated U.S. population and world population every 10 minutes. The web version of an American science journal named Live Science

announced that this population clock exceeded 6.5 billion on the evening of February 25 Eastern Standard Time (morning of February 26 in Japan).

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Population Division announces a world population estimate every two years. We had a demographer calculate the Day When World Population Reached 6.5 Billion based on the latest estimate from 2004 and found that the actual date was December 18, 2005. We were told that the calculation was made by assuming that population increased at an even rate for a year from 6,446.75 million on July 1, 2005 to 6,540,283,000 in mid-2006. The difference in the Day When World Population Reached 6.5 Billion is attributable to the fact that United Nations' estimation for years 2005 and 2006 is higher than that of Census Bureau by 14 million. The difference is caused by the difference in assumptions made in estimating the population.

July 11 is World Population Day. It was created by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) when the world population exceeded 5 billion (according to their calculation) on this day in 1987 to attract the world's attention to the population problem. Then the figure reached 6 billion on October 12, 1999. Mid-year population in 2050 is estimated at 9,076 million according to the United Nations and 9,224 million according to the Census Bureau. More than 2.5 billion people will be added on top of the current world population.

The increase is particularly conspicuous in the 50 least developed countries which are more poverty stricken than the standard developing countries. The population problem is closely interrelated with various other problems including food, poverty, environment, hygiene, education, employment, women's status and urbanization. For this reason, support towards solving this problem must be continued.

3. Aging of Asia and Japan's Population

The wave of aging of population and decline of birthrate is slowly rushing towards developing countries that follow the path of developed countries. Generally speaking, you have an "aging society" when the percentage of population aged 65 years and above reaches 7% of the entire population and an "aged society" when the same percentage doubles to 14%.

According to the United Nation's World Population Projection (The 2004 Revision, medium variant), the rate of aging in the developing regions will increase from 5.5% in 2005 to 14.6% in 2050. It shows that developing regions will enter into an aged society by mid-century and that aging on a global scale is our inevitable future.

This trend is particularly evident in East Asia. The region qualifies as an "aging society" at the current rate of aging which is 8.7% and will join the ranks of "aged society" by 2025 with the projected aging rate of 15.0%. The aging rate is predicted to rise to 24.7% by 2050. While it took France 119 years and Sweden 85 years for the aging rate to double, Japan's aging rate doubled in only 24 years. Japan is called the "top runner in

aging” for this reason.

However, the aging rate is expected to double in 18 years in Korea, 25 years in China and Southeast Asia, 16 years in Singapore, 22 years in Thailand and Indonesia and 23 years in the Philippines. Rapid advancement of aging is therefore projected as a result of a sharp decline in birthrate and increasing longevity.

Countries with low income levels must make advance preparations before entering a stable aged society. It has been indicated in the recommendations from recently-held international conferences and their reports that developing countries themselves must recognize demographic aging as a development issue and that Japan’s experience in addressing demographic aging must be conveyed to appeal the importance of preparation. Such effort must be advanced as a new genre of international cooperation.

4. Making poverty a thing of the past

This year’s Nobel Peace Prize went to Dr. Muhammad Yunus president of the Grameen Bank which has been offering unsecured microcredit to the poor farmers of Bangladesh. Since its founding in 1983, the bank has offered a total of 5.7 billion dollars to 6.6 million people and is contributing enormously to improving the livelihood of the poorest of the poor. We are also happy to learn of this news as it encourages and supports many NGOs that are working to reduce poverty.

October 17 was “International Day for the Eradication of Poverty”. Out of 6.5 billion living in the world today, 1.2 billion are living on less than a dollar a day (absolute poverty) and 840 million are suffering from starvation. The purpose of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which has been agreed to by all countries of the world, is to reduce the percentage of these people by half by 2015.

In his message for this day, Secretary General Kofi Anan mentioned the result of poverty eradication efforts in reporting that the “percentage of absolute poverty has dropped from 28% in 1990 to 19% in 2002”. Because of regional discrepancies, however, further efforts are needed to “make poverty a thing of the past”.

Microcredit is intended for the poor, particularly women, who are neglected by ordinary financial institutions. It offers small amounts of business funding without collateral to start raising livestock and open small shops. Instead of collateral, borrowers are required to form a group of 5 persons that assumes collective responsibility for repayment. As women plan their future and work hard for their children, repayment rates exceed 90%.

Microcredit has spread to more than 50 countries of the world. The Second International Microcredit Summit was held in mid-November. We would like to support this fight against poverty that promotes independence and self-help.

JOICFP

(Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning)

1. Declining birth rate in developed countries and population increase in developing countries

Let us begin by talking about Germany which, like Japan, is experiencing the problem of declining birth rate.

The following is an article from Reuters dated January 19, 2006 entitled “Are German People an Endangered Species?” According to this article, total population of ethnic Germans has decreased by 3.2 million in the past 30 years and more than 30% of those born between 1960 and 1967 in East and West Germany do not have children. Moreover, financial assistance amounting to 150 billion Euro (approximately 21 trillion yen) including monthly child benefits of 154 Euro (approximately 22,000 yen) per child has not led to an increase in fertility.

Population decline in Germany had been hidden on the surface up to now by the immigrant population. However, Germany has been unable to attract immigrants in recent years due to a deterioration in the economy and the country’s total population has turned to decline from its 2002 peak of 82,536,680 to 82,500,894 in 2004.

In response, placing higher fertility at the top of the political agenda made the news headlines for the first time since Nazi Germany. Germany had avoided population policy since 1945 after the Second World War and broke this seal for the first time in 60 years. German leaders positioned increasing fertility as a top priority political agenda under the situation where the depopulation trend cannot be halted even after including the immigrant population.

On the other hand, population growth poses a serious problem particularly in the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. More than 70 million people are still added to the world population every year. Places where women cannot practice contraception by their free will nor have access to such means exist all over the world. Supply of contraceptives has been dwindling in



Girls in Bangladesh



Pregnant women and children in Ghana

recent years partly due to fatigue among donors in offering support for population problems. In Africa, you hear news about family planning clinics being closed as a result of financial problems. The reality in which one woman dies every minute somewhere in the world due to pregnancy and child-bearing, including those who ultimately lose their lives after continuing to give birth until they have a boy, has hardly been improved.

It has been covered repeatedly in this magazine that economic development in countries with large populations, such as India and China, is profoundly affecting the world in terms of resources, energy and food. JOICFP's activities in the field are not by any means unrelated to the problems of global scale.

2. Everyday is Mother's Day

The second Sunday in May is Mother's Day. While there are several theories about the origin of Mother's Day, Mother's Day in Japan appears to have its roots in the U.S. A movement that began in the early 1900s in West Virginia led to a resolution to establish Mother's Day and was subsequently passed by the U.S. Congress. More than 90 years ago in 1914, the then President Wilson designated the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day and made it a national holiday.



Mother and child in Cambodia

In Japan, it was spread mainly by Christian groups from the Taisho Era onward under the influence of the U.S. However, it was not until after World War II that Mother's Day was commonly accepted and the second Sunday in May became Mother's Day.



Mothers and children at a village in Bangladesh

These days, Mother's Day may be celebrated on an individual level but is not mentioned to any significant degree on an official level. One can assume that it is becoming difficult to uniformly celebrate Mother's Day as the form of family becomes increasingly diverse. It is reported that the number of elementary schools that ask students to write a composition about their mothers before Mother's Day has decreased to almost nil. It is a desperate choice made amidst the diversification of families.

- **One woman is losing her life every minute somewhere in the world due to pregnancy and childbirth.** Unfortunately this does not seem to be changing. There seems to be no end to mothers losing their lives from preventable causes in the world. In reality there is very little progress in decreasing the chances of a woman losing her life every minute somewhere in the world for reasons related to pregnancy and childbirth. Feeling indignant toward such a situation, JOICFP will continue to cherish Mother's Day as we believe in the importance of a mother's life. We have committed ourselves

to saving the lives of as many mothers as possible throughout the world by using our regret of not being able to save all as our motivation.

- **JOICFP will challenge the problem as if every day were Mother's Day.**

JOICFP celebrates Mother's Day every year with this in mind. JOICFP will continue its steady activities of saving the lives of mothers in the villages and towns of Asia, Africa and Latin America. JOICFP will continue to work by telling ourselves that "Every day is Mother's Day".

"Improving maternal health", as a Millennium Development Goal. Established as the world's common development goals in the 21st Century, the MDGs cannot be attained without the participation and continuous efforts of governments, experts, NGOs and civil society. JOICFP will, to the best of its ability, play a role in such effort and strive to realize a society that places high value on the lives of mothers.

3. World with a Population of 6.5 billion and Japan with a declining population

A special symposium for the World Population Day 2006 entitled "The World with a population of 6.5 billion and Japan with a declining population" co-hosted by JOICFP and the Council on Population Education (CPE) was held on July 6 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Japan's admission to the United Nations. Organizations that supported the symposium included UNFPA, IPPF and Japan Family Planning Association. NPO 2050 and APDA also offered cooperation. The symposium held at the U Thant International Conference Hall of UN House was attended by 300 people and provided an opportunity to contemplate the many challenges faced by the world with 6.5 billion people as well as declining birthrates and increasing longevity in Japan and the role of Japan in the world through lectures and panel discussions. In this issue, we will introduce the presentation made by Professor Makoto Ato of Waseda University during the panel discussion "World with 6.5 Billion and Japan".

- **End of population explosion**

The main feature of the course of world population is that an "end of population explosion has come into view". According to a projection up to the year 2300, population will reach 9 billion in 2050 and will stop increasing from that point onward. The increase that occurred over a 100-year period from mid-20th Century was an exceptional phenomenon in human history. Increase is slowing down in Latin America and Asia but in Sub-Saharan Africa it is continuing as rapidly as ever. China, one of the two countries with the largest population, will give up its top position to India sometime between 2030 and 2040.

- **Aging will occur globally in the 21st Century**

There will be differences among developed countries as well. Japan, Southern Europe, Germany and Russia will experience dramatic declines in population, Scandinavia and France will see a marginal increase or decrease and population will



Professor Makoto Ato of Waseda University giving his presentation

continue to grow in the U.S. A thesis in demographics claims “population will inevitably age once population increase is converged”. Thus the 21st Century will be characterized by aging on a global scale. However, the degree of aging in developed regions will vary. Japan will eventually enter a “super-aging society” with the elderly accounting for some 30 percent of the population while the percentage will be 20 percent for the U.S. and range from 20 to 30 percent in other countries.



Participants listening to the panel discussion

- Is birthrate decline a product of civilization?

In the case of Japan, the term “population pyramid” may become obsolete with significant change to the population structure. Aging will advance gradually in developing regions as well but these regions will go through the period of so-called “demographic bonus” (which corresponds to demographic dividend) during the initial stage of population aging. For instance, China has attained remarkable economic growth by taking advantage of this period with the reproductive age population currently accounting for 70 percent of the entire population.

The end of population increase has come into view because the world’s fertility level is rapidly declining. Regional differences in fertility will give rise to countries with ultra-high birthrate decline and gradual birthrate decline which will manifest as the difference in degree of population aging.

The answer to the question, “Is birthrate decline a product of civilization?” is “Yes”. The answer to the question, “Is ultra-high birthrate decline a product of civilization?” is “No”. Scandinavia and the U.S. both have gradual birthrate decline despite the difference in socioeconomic systems. Therefore, countries experiencing ultra-high birthrate decline should be able to secure higher birthrates once they solve the problems and contradictions that are causing such low birthrate.

4. Specification of Reproductive Health in Millennium Development Goals

The addition of new targets to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were approved on Oct. 4, 2006 at the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly. One of the indices that was added to Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health was “to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015”. In other words, the need to provide everyone with access to reproductive health information and services was expressed clearly. It was welcomed by all parties and agencies that are promoting international cooperation in the field of health, including JOICFP which is promoting reproductive health.

Making reproductive health accessible to everyone

Established in 2000 as the development goals based on global agreement at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, MDGs were comprised of 8 goals, 18 quantifiable targets and 48 indicators. Unfortunately, however, there was no reference to reproductive health in the MDGs that were signed in the year 2000. Parties involved in reproductive health worldwide mounted a global advocacy activity for inclusion of reproductive health in MDGs in time for the 2005 World Summit that was held last year at the U.N. Headquarters to conduct a fifth-year review of the progress of MDGs.

At the 2005 World Summit, the importance of reproductive health was addressed by many representatives and progress reports on the attainment of MDGs from various countries. As a result, the addition of “achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015” to MDGs along with other targets was proposed in the Secretary General’s Report in the U.N.

General Assembly and was accepted. This decision, to officially incorporate the target of reproductive health for all, five years after the establishment of MDGs, was the goal of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

JOICFP’ s approach

In Japan, JOICFP played a leading role in filing a petition, with support from 19 NGOs, to include the need to incorporate the ICPD goal of “achieving universal access to reproductive health” in the MDGs in the address of Japanese Government representatives, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the 2005 World Summit.

Aside from the efforts of NGOs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a High-Level Forum of the Asia-Pacific Region for the promotion of health-related MDGs (reduction of infant mortality, improvement of maternal health and prevention and spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases) as part of its contribution to the 2005 World Summit. As the only NGO that participated in this conference, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) actively spoke about the significance of attaining the ICPD goal. As a result, the need to secure universal access to reproductive health was specified in the chairman’s report of the conference.

JOICFP will make further efforts towards the attainment of the new MDG target which came to fruition through the efforts of governments and NGOs so that we can save the lives of women who are losing their lives from pregnancy and childbirth throughout the world as much as we possibly can...



Young people taking action toward improving adolescent sexual health (Cambodia)



Healthcare volunteers rendering RH service to rural people (Tanzania)

UNFPA Tokyo Office

1. Japanese Government assists UNFPA's relief efforts in Pakistan with supplementary budget

Japanese government has decided to contribute supplementary budget to UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, for its relief efforts in the afflicted areas by the massive earthquake in Pakistan.

Six months have already elapsed since a major earthquake occurred in northern Pakistan on October 8 of last year. UNFPA has provided hygiene kits for women and girls in the afflicted areas in cooperation with local healthcare providers, mobile medical units, and NGOs. It is crucial to meet the needs, particular to women so that they can live with dignity even under critical situations. Moreover, UNFPA offers psychosocial care and high-quality health services for pregnant women suffering from trauma and serious complications. The contribution from Japan is utilized for these activities.



A mother and her daughter receiving UNFPA's hygiene kit at an evacuation camp in Mansehra

"Campaign for Life" launched by NPO 2050, one of UNFPA's partner NGOs raised \$10,000 by mid-December of last year, which was donated to UNFPA. We greatly appreciate the support extended to our activities. Further details about the campaign and UNFPA's relief efforts can be found at the UNFPA Tokyo Office's website (<http://www.unfpa.or.jp>).

Declining fertility rate, which is the theme of this issue of ODA Quarterly, will be featured along with other topics such as migration and gender in the *State of World Population 2006* to be released in September 2006.

2. Empowerment of Women and Population

UNFPA has mainly addressed the issues related to the rapid increase of population in developing countries. Meanwhile, fertility decline in developed countries such as Japan and Korea is also regarded as a population issue in the sense that it too represents the difference between the number of desired children and the actual number of births. It has been pointed out that population issues reinforced by the social environment prevents women and couples from having the number of children actually desired in many cases.

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is an index available for measuring women's social status. As of 2005, Japan ranks 43rd in the GEM, which is by no means high for a developed country. UNFPA believes that to promote empowerment of women, who are responsible for pregnancy and childbirth, but are often socially vulnerable and to promote gender equality would lead to a solution to population issues including birthrate decline.

July 11 is World Population Day. It was designated by the United Nations on July 11, 1987 when the world population reached 5 billion. This year a symposium is held, entitled "The world with a population of 6.5 billion and Japan with a declining population" at the UN House. In conjunction with the symposium, UNFPA will prepare a panel exhibition, using photographs and graphs in order to provide comprehensible explanations about the population issues on the first floor of the UN House from July 3. To register to attend the symposium, please visit the website of the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP) (<http://www.joicfp.or.jp>).



(Photo: Kyodo News Service)
Former UN Secretary General de Cuéllar congratulating the birth of five-billionth baby at a hospital in Zagreb, Croatia (former Yugoslavia)

3. State of the World Population 2006: Women and International Migration

UNFPA will release the *State of World Population 2006* worldwide at noon on 6 September in Greenwich Mean Time (9pm of the same day in Japan time). The title of this issue is "A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration." Today, nearly 100 million women have migrated worldwide in search of jobs in order to support their families' education, healthcare and small businesses in their own countries with their remittances, thereby contributing to the improvement of living standards for their families and communities. International migration is complexly interrelated with such issues as internally displaced persons due to conflicts, human trafficking, brain drain, migration of youth and gender. The publication analyzes international migration from such a perspective.



A woman wandering to find jobs (at a market in Hanoi)

The State of World Population 2006 can be downloaded at UNFPA Tokyo Office's website (<http://www.unfpa.or.jp/>) after 9pm of 6 September. Please contact JOICFP (phone: +81-3-3268-3150; email: info2@joicfp.or.jp) to order a printed copy.

The release will be immediately followed by a conference entitled High-Level Dialogue

on International Migration and Development on September 14 and 15 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The agenda of this conference is

- (1) Impact of international migration on socio-economic development
- (2) Human rights protection and reduction of human trafficking
- (3) Multifaceted nature of international migration and development
- (4) Coordination and capacity-building of migrants at the national and regional level

UNFPA will be actively involved in the conference from the preparation stage with other international organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO).

4. Mr. Kunio Waki, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA to retire in January 2007

It was more than 30 years ago when Mr. Kunio Waki met the Japanese parliamentarians who were interested in the field of population and development in 1973. Working for UNICEF India as the only Japanese staff at that time, Mr. Waki accommodated the so-called “Kishi Mission”, a study mission on the population situation in Asia, which was led by then Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi upon request of UNFPA. The mission members included Ms. Shizue Kato, one of the founding members of International Planned Parenthood Federation, General Draper of U.S.A, a leading figure in Japan’s postwar economic recovery and Mr. Takashi Sato, former Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the founder of the Asian Population Development Association (APDA) and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). This study mission gave birth to the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF), the world’s first parliamentarian group on population issues. JFPF laid the foundation of the development of the regional parliamentarian federations on population and development in the regions such as Asia-Pacific and Arab-Africa.



Dear Parliamentarians,

Thank you very much for the support you have kindly extended to me over the years. I will be retiring from UNFPA at the end of this coming January in 2007. Your warm support has been essential to me, which I greatly appreciate. I have been fortunate enough to be able to work without any major illness or accident during my 36 years of service. Although my successor has not been appointed yet, I sincerely request you to continue to support UNFPA. It would be great to see you all in Japan in January.

Kunio Waki

About ODA Quarterly

Contained in this publication is only a fraction of programs that have been implemented under the support from United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). We will report the summary of our activities on a quarterly basis. We welcome your input about information you would like to see on this publication and ideas you may have regarding our activities.

ODA Quarterly 2006

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