



The Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population

NEWS LETTER

No.63 November 2017

Activity Report:

- ① The Global Symposium on Ageing
- ② IPPF Africa Regional Director's Visit to Japan

① The Global Symposium on Ageing (Seoul, the Republic of Korea)

On the side of the Global Symposium on Ageing, which was co-hosted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Statistics Korea (KOSTAT), on October 23-24 in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), which serves as the secretariat for Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPPF), organized a session for parliamentarians on October 24.

Researchers, international organization experts, government officials, and NGOs gathered from around the world at the symposium to present and discuss wide-ranging issues on ageing. At APDA's parliamentarians' session, current and former parliamentarians and representatives of national committees on population and development (NCs) from 10 Asian countries exchanged opinions and views on countries' policies on ageing and on the role of parliamentarians.

Representing JPPF and APDA, Hon.Teruhiko Mashiko (Vice-Chair of JPPF and member of the Board of Directors of APDA) attended the session, delivering an opening address to welcome the participants and briefing them on the objective of the "Policy Brief on Ageing in Asia" that was distributed at the meeting.



The "Policy Brief" was compiled by APDA in collaboration with distinguished experts based on key issues identified from cumulative local surveys conducted by APDA, deliberations on the issue of ageing by parliamentarians at conferences and field visits since 2014, and the expert reviews of related literature on population and ageing. The "Policy Brief" is intended to support Asian parliamentarians develop policies on aging in respective countries.

Following the opening address, a representative from India briefed the country's measures for the elderly, including income tax relief, extra interest on savings, separate counters and travel concessions for the elderly, and free food grain distribution for poor elderly. Despite these measures, many challenges apparently remain, and what is required urgently is raising awareness of the society at large and ensuring effective implementing of these policy measures.

A parliamentarian from China explained that China has been working on establishing a social security system for the elderly, improving old-age care institutions, expanding home-based nursing care services and facility services, and enhancing the quality of services, while promoting economic development.

A Member of Parliament from Thailand described the country's "30-Baht Health Care Scheme" and the monthly allowance for the elderly, and explained that the new tax law that will raise the sin tax by 2% is expected to generate about 4 billion baht in tax revenues earmarked for providing benefits for the elderly.

A Malaysian parliamentarian observed that although Malaysia has, for all practical purposes, achieved universal health coverage (UHC), it was unclear whether the system will be sustainable in the face of the growing elderly population, and warned that other Asian countries face a similar predicament.

The presentations were followed by a very active discussion, which highlighted, in particular, the issue of securing financial resources for policy measures for the elderly. A common understanding was reached on the importance of parliamentarians to fulfil their roles by carrying out budget allocation, legislation, and government oversight and to promote partnership with the civil society and community leaders and international organizations in effectively addressing the issue of aging.

② IPPF Africa Regional Director's Visit to Japan

From 30 October to 1 November, Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Africa Regional Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Dr. Donavine Uwimana, Executive Director of IPPF Burundi (ABUBEF), and Ms. Yuri Taniguchi, Chief Resource Mobilization Officer of IPPF, visited Japan to strengthen partnership for development in Africa. During a short stay, they held talks with Hon. Ichiro Aisawa (Acting Chair of JPPF and President of the Japan-AU Parliamentary Friendship Association), Hon. Asahiko Mihara (Director of JPPF and Deputy President of the Japan-AU Parliamentary Friendship Association), Hon. Dr. Toshiko Abe (Deputy Executive Director of JPPF and Chair of Gender Issues Committee of JPPF), and Hon. Dr. Karen Makishima (Vice-Chair of Gender Issues Committee of JPPF).

During these meetings, IPPF requested support for reproductive health (RH) services in Africa, including projects in Burundi. "We are fully aware that development in Africa is the key to the success of the SDGs," Hon. Aisawa replied. "It will be important to work towards preventing infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases as well as unintended pregnancies. In this respect, the activities of IPPF are very important".

"Development in Africa must be founded on transparency, accountability and good governance (TAGG)," Hon. Mihara noted. "Without TAGG, official development assistance (ODA) will be ineffective and the taxpayers' money will be wasted. Assistance is only meaningful in countries that have made their own efforts to establish TAGG".

Mr. Kouakou agreed with this comment referring to this issue as "one of the deep-seated diseases affecting Africa". He added that "significant progress has been made in this area through projects initiated by APDA and JPPF with support from Japan Trust Fund (JTF) and which IPPF is also supporting". Mr. Kouakou went on to express appreciation for the initiative exercised by JPPF.



* * * * *



<http://www.apda.jp/en/index.html>