



The Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population

NEWS LETTER

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The 45th Anniversary of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) Part I

This year marks the 25th year since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD), which were held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994. On 1 April, moreover, the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP), which was established in 1974 as the world's first supra-partisan parliamentary group on population and development, celebrated its 45th anniversary. In this issue, we recount the history leading up to the establishment of JPFP and international activities during the 1970s based on records from those years. (Our next issue will chronicle the periods from the 1980s to 1990s.)

[History Leading Up to Establishment of JPFP]

1952 - Foundation of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

Hon. Shidzue Kato, Japan's first woman parliamentarian and a pioneer of the family planning movement in Japan who strove to improve the health and status of women in difficult circumstances, founded IPPF together with Mrs. Margaret Sanger. Hon. Shidzue Kato would later become one of the founding members of JPFP.

Together with former Prime Ministers Nobusuke Kishi and Takeo Fukuda, General William Draper, known for his work in helping Japan in its post-war recovery, provided strong support to the establishment of JPFP as an advisor to IPPF.



Around 1967 - Gen. W. Draper on a visit to Japan

1969 - Foundation of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA; today's United Nations Population Fund)

Leading Japanese parliamentarians supported Mr. Rafael M. Salas (the former Executive Secretary to the President of the Philippines), who was trying to persuade the United Nations to address the issues of population. This led to the establishment of UNFPA as a UN specialized agency dealing with the issues of population within the framework of development. Mr. Salas was appointed the first Executive Director of the agency.

October 1973 - Delegation on a tour of the situation surrounding population in Asia (India, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines)

Led by former Prime Minister Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP), the delegation consisted of Hon. Tatsuo Tanaka (HR, LDP), Hon. Sadayoshi Hatta (HR, LDP), Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), Hon. Tatsuo Yamazaki (HC, LDP), Hon. Shidzue Kato (HC, SPDJ) and Hon. Shogo Abe (HR, SPDJ). The delegation was also accompanied by General William Draper, Mr. J. Tydings, Mr. Nihachiro Hanamura, government officials and the media.



1973 - Family planning clinic in Calcutta, India

Even though Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP), Hon. Shidzue Kato (HC, SPDJ), General Draper and others in the delegation were already over the age of 70, they toured farming villages, family planning clinics and slums in four countries over 16 days despite the searing heat. The delegates, uplifted in particular by the unwavering passion of Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP), had earnest discussions with government leaders, senior officials and family planning organizations in the countries they visited. (Excerpts from Asian Population and Development Association, *Shikai No Ni Shunpu o Okosu: 2002 Nijunen no Ayumi (APDA's 20th Anniversary Book)*)

For Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), this tour became the starting point for his subsequent activities in the fields related to population, development and food issues. On a plane back to Japan, he read this haiku: "The slum, it is no fault of the smiling children". Mothers and children were malnourished and emaciated. Children, born on the street, were dying on the street. He recalls feeling that it was the role and responsibility of politics, through international cooperation, to create a world in which those children can grow up in happiness.



1973 - Debriefing on a tour of the situation surrounding population in Asia

[Establishment of JPPF]

1 April 1974 - Foundation of JPPF

With Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP), Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP) and others as founding members, the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPPF), the world's first supra-partisan parliamentarian caucus on population and development, was established. Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP) was appointed its first Chair. Supra-partisan members of the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors who joined JPPF numbered 119.

At the inaugural ceremony, Hon. Tatsuo Tanaka (HR, LDP), representing the founding members, proclaimed the purpose of founding JPPF, as follows: "In support of the basic objectives of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and the International Planned Parenthood Federation and to study population issues and other related issues such as natural resources, food and international cooperation, and to propose measures for addressing those issues, we hereby establish the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population".



1974 - JPPF inauguration ceremony

One of the missions that Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (HR, LDP) felt politics was called upon to deliver was that "world peace cannot be achieved without addressing the issues of population". As recounted by Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), there was an underlying belief that "the population issues were inseparable from human rights and humanism. It is the family that is at the core of humanity on Earth. The population issues should be addressed not simply by controlling numbers, but by enhancing the happiness of individual families. In other words, the population issues should be considered together with the issues of social and economic development".

August 1974 - The 3rd World Population Congress (Bucharest, Romania)

Unlike the last two meetings of the World Population Congress, which were more of expert meetings attended by demographers, statisticians, obstetricians/gynecologists and pediatricians, the conference in Bucharest was held to discuss intergovernmental policies on population issues. It was a watershed that promoted countries to address the world's population issues from the perspective of policy. The total number of participants was 4,500. Participating from Japan were H.E. Minister Kunikichi Saito of Health and Welfare, Hon. Sadayoshi Hatta (HR, LDP), Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), Hon. Yoshio Domori (HR, SPDJ), Hon. Yasu Kashiwabara (HC, Komeito) and Hon. Itoko Nakazawa (HC, DSP).

The world population at that time was 3.99 billion. The world population growth rate was 2% per year. This "population explosion" gave rise to concerns related to the world's food production, resources, energy and the environment, and generated a sense of crisis that it might pose a threat to world peace and prosperity.

September 1977 - Delegation on a tour of the situation surrounding family planning in Latin American countries (Mexico, Colombia and Brazil) as well as the U.S. and Canada

Headed by Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (JPFP Chair, HR, LDP), the participants included Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), Hon. Eisaku Sumi (HR, LDP), Hon. Tokichi Abiko (HC, LDP), Hon. Kousaku Wada (HR, DSP), Hon. Shogo Abe (HR, SPDJ), Hon. Yoshito Fukuoka (HR, SPDJ), Hon. Hiroshi Kodera (HR, Komeito), Dr. Saburo Okita, Mr. Nihachiro Hanamura, consultants and UNFPA. The delegation called upon parliamentarians of each country's legislature to form parliamentary groups that would address population issues.



1977 - Delegation of a tour of Latin America

December 1977 - Developed Countries Conference on Population and Development (U.K., West Germany)

In continuation from the tour of Latin America in September, the delegation made further calls on parliamentarians in each country's legislature. The delegation from Japan included Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), Hon. Kousaku Wada (HR, DSP) and Hon. Takako Doi (HR, SPDJ).

August 1979 - The International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD) co-hosted by IPU and UNFPA (Colombo, Sri Lanka)

There were in total 550 participants from 64 countries. Participating from Japan were Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (JPFP Chair, HR, LDP), Hon. Takashi Sato (HR, LDP), Hon. Shigeru Ishimoto (HC, LDP), Hon. Keiichi Nakamura (HC, LDP) and Hon. Yasu Kashiwabara (HC, Komeito). By that time, more than 25 countries had formed parliamentary groups on population issues in response to calls made by JPFP. The adoption of the Colombo Declaration at the conference, moreover, led to convocation of conferences on population in Africa, Europe and Asia in 1981. Hon. Nobusuke Kishi (JPFP Chair, HR, LDP) was also awarded the United Nations Peace Medal in 1979.

Note 1: Affiliation and office of individuals are those assumed at the time.

Note 2: All photographs courtesy of JOICFP, which served as the secretariat of JPFP since JPFP's establishment until January 1982. The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) has been serving as the secretariat of JPFP since its establishment in February 1982.

HR: House of Representatives HC: House of Councillors
LDP: Liberal Democratic Party
SDPJ: Social Democratic Party of Japan
Komeito: Komeito Party
DSP: Democratic Socialist Party



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