

The Population Challenge In Asia



Parliamentarians as Advocates and Policymakers

Jyoti Shankar Singh

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Contents

Contents	5
Preface	7
1. Building up Regional Cooperation among Asian Parliamentarians	9
UNFPA and Parliamentarians	11
Colombo and Beijing Conferences	13
Birth of AFPPD	16
First General Conference	17
Second General Conference	18
Third General Conference	20
Fourth General Conference	22
Fifth general Conference	23
Sixth General Conference	24
Seventh General Assembly	25
Eighth General Assembly	26
Building up Awareness and Influencing Policies	28
Overview	30
2. National Activities	35
Parliamentary Groups at the National Level	37
Australia	37
Bangladesh	38
Cambodia	38
China	38
Fiji	39
India	39
Indonesia	42
Iran	43
Japan	43
Korea (Republic of)	45
Lao	46
Malaysia	46
Mongolia	47
New Zealand	47
Pakistan	47
Philippines	47
Sri Lanka	49
Thailand	49
Vietnam	49
New Committees in Central Asia	50
Person-to-Person Advocacy	50
Communication Strategy	55
Overview	51

3. Inter-Regional and International Cooperation	53
Promoting Cooperation with Other Regions	55
International Conferences	56
Technical Assistance to National Groups	59
Japan Trust Fund	60
Overview	60
4. The Tasks Ahead	63
The Past and the Future	65
Reference Documents	71
Annexes	75
Beijing Declaration, 1981	77
New Delhi Declaration, 1984	87
Asian Forum Beijing Declaration, 1987	97
Bangkok Declaration, 1990	109
Kuala Lumpur Declaration, 1993	123
Canberra Statement, 1996	137
Niigata Declaration, 1999	145
Beijing Declaration, 2002	151
Jakarta Declaration, 2005	157
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	161

Preface

This monograph recounts the story of how Asian parliamentarians interested in meeting the population and development challenges in their region have built up, over a period of twenty-five years, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) as a strong and effective regional organization. The AFPPD was born at the Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Beijing, China in October 1981. Over the past years, it has acquired more than 25 national committees across Asia and the Pacific; and through its activities and programmes it has helped to define and expand the role of parliamentarians in the population and development area, both as advocates and policy makers.

The first chapter provides the history of how Rafael M. Salas, the first Executive Director of UNFPA, and Japanese leaders such as former Prime Ministers Nobusuke Kishi and Takeo Fukuda, envisioned a network, world wide and in Asia, which would focus on the interrelated population and development issues and at the same time help UNFPA mobilize increasing resources to assist population policies and programmes in developing countries, how they took the initiative in the late seventies to organize the first global conference of parliamentarians on population issues in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and how the Colombo conference was followed by a conference for Asian parliamentarians in Beijing which in turn led to the birth of AFPPD. The chapter summarizes the main results of the eight general conferences that AFPPD has held so far and looks at how through AFPPD and its national committees, parliamentarians have played an innovative role as advocates and policy makers in the population and development field.

The second chapter documents the main activities undertaken by national groups of parliamentarians affiliated to or associated with AFPPD. These national groups have full-time staff and a regular programme of activities. Finally, I have included the new groups that have emerged recently due to AFPPD efforts.

The third chapter examines the role played by AFPPD in promoting the establishment of regional networks in other regions and building strong ties of cooperation with them. AFPPD has been instrumental in the formation of the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) and more recently of the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) (formerly known as the Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEPPFD)). Since the early eighties, it has also worked closely with the Inter-American Group of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPG). This chapter also looks at the role played by AFPPD in organizing or sponsoring major international conferences, working with major UN agencies and international NGOs involved in population and development and providing technical and financial assistance to parliamentary activities around the world.

The fourth chapter takes a look at the tasks ahead – the challenges parliamentarians are expected to face in their dual role as advocates and policy makers in the years to come. The annexes contain the texts of the Declarations adopted by the Asian Confer-

ence of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in 1981 and the eight General Conferences of AFPPD that have taken place from 1984 onwards.

The idea of the monograph came from Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, in 2002. I was happy to take the assignment, given my past involvement, on UNFPA's behalf, in sponsoring and supporting parliamentary activities in Asia and other regions of the world. I am also grateful to him for reviewing various drafts of the first and the second editions and offering many valuable comments and suggestions. Akio Matsumura who played a critical and somewhat under-appreciated role in the evolution of the parliamentary movement also read the draft of the first edition and offered very useful insights. Osamu Kusumoto of the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) also looked at the draft version and offered some very useful suggestions. I would also like to thank Yunae-Yi and Sharon Sohlberg for assisting me in putting the manuscript together. Finally, I would like to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed in the monograph are my own as are all the shortcomings.

Jyoti Shankar Singh
November 2006

*BUILDING UP
REGIONAL CO-OPERATION
AMONG PARLIAMENTARIANS*

UNFPA and Parliamentarians

The development of the parliamentary movement in Asia on population and development issues can be traced to two catalysts - the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Japan. Rafael M. Salas, the first Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), saw legislators or parliamentarians as both allies and advocates for his cause - to raise the visibility of population and development issues around the world and to generate adequate national and international funding for population programmes, particularly through UNFPA. From the early seventies, he was in contact with a group of senior Japanese parliamentarians interested in population issues and it was through their efforts that he was able to get the initially small Japanese contribution to UNFPA increased year after year. In 1973, UNFPA supported the visit by a study group of senior Japanese and US leaders to India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand to take a look at the population situation in these countries. The idea of the joint US-Japanese delegation had come from General Bill Draper who was the UNFPA senior adviser on fund-raising and was helping Mr Salas raise governmental contributions for UNFPA from the United States, Japan and major European countries. The Japanese members of the delegation comprised Nobusuke Kishi, former Prime Minister of Japan, and seven Japanese MPs including Takashi Sato who was to play a leading role later among Asian parliamentarians involved in population and development issues. General Draper, former Senator Joseph Tydings and James Macdonald, Chairman of the UN Association of the United States, were the American members of the delegation. The delegation members were deeply affected by what they saw in Asia and what they learnt about the urgency of the population challenge in the developing regions of the world. The trip made them fervent supporters of UNFPA, which was trying to help developing countries deal with population and development issues. Soon after their return, Prime Minister Kishi and other members of the delegation took the initiative to form the Japanese Parliamentary Federation for Population (JPFP), with 143 members of parliament drawn from all major political parties with the exception of the Communist Party. JPFP became operational before the UN World Population Conference (Bucharest, 1974).

It may be useful to recall here that during 1972-1974, Mr Salas had the official responsibility in the United Nations to promote and coordinate activities relating to UN sponsored World Population Year (WPY), of which the World Population Conference was considered the centrepiece. As the WPY coordinator, he asked Tarzie Vittachi, Executive Secretary of WPY, and me, as Mr Vittachi's deputy, to pay special attention to parliamentarians in the information and awareness-building activities relating to WPY. Parliamentarians in developed countries, he believed, could be quite effective in helping raise more funds for UNFPA using the national budgetary processes. At the same time, he saw the need to involve parliamentarians in developing countries in the formulation of appropriate population policies and programmes in their countries. With this twin track approach, UNFPA intensified its involvement with parliamentarians in the late seventies. UNFPA sought to be represented at the semi-annual meetings of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), the oldest international organization of members of parliament from around the world and discussions began with the leadership of IPU to see how special attention could be given to population and develop-

ment issues. It was in this context that the idea of holding an international meeting of parliamentarians specifically devoted to these issues was first conceived.

Towards the end of 1977, Mr Salas hired Akio Matsumura, a young Japanese professional, to join UNFPA in New York in order to liaise with parliamentarians interested in population issues. Mr Matsumura had been involved earlier in the activities of Japanese parliamentarians in the population field and subsequently in liaison and external relations for the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) at its London headquarters. I had first met him in 1974 at the World Population Conference, which he was attending as an IPPF representative, and was delighted to hear from Mr Salas that he was to join us in New York. On arrival in New York, he was assigned by Mr. Salas to work with the Information and External Relations Division of UNFPA (IERD); and first as Deputy to Mr Vittachi and then as Director of the Division, it fell on me to promote and expand, with Mr Matsumura serving as the focal point, the UNFPA network of liaison and contacts with parliamentarians around the world. Mr Matsumura and I worked together as the coordinator and the conference secretary respectively of the two first parliamentarians' conferences primarily organized by UNFPA - Colombo (1979) and Beijing (1981).

A small task force was established by us to undertake to organize a number of study visits for parliamentarians from selected donor countries and develop the plans for the first International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in 1979. The study visits involved a number of parliamentarians from Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Nordic countries. While the parliamentarians who went on these delegations were grateful to UNFPA for organizing the visits, I recall that senior officials from some of their governments were not particularly happy with the idea that these parliamentarians might pressure them later to allocate more funds for UNFPA. Another argument that was brought forward in informal discussions was that the funds allocated to UNFPA for use in the developing countries should not be used to support travel by legislators from the developed countries. The reply from Mr Salas was that while UNFPA was primarily mandated to assist developing countries, it also had the mandate given to it by the UN Economic and Social Council to build up awareness of population, development and environmental issues around the world, including the developed world. This argument was not always accepted by the critics. It was only later that they saw the long-term positive benefits of creating a better understanding and appreciation of population and development questions among their legislators.

Subsequent task forces dealt with follow-up to the 1979 Colombo Conference, organization of the first Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in 1981 and co-ordination of UNFPA inputs into conferences of parliamentarians in other regions. IERD continued to handle these responsibilities within UNFPA, after Mr Matsumura's departure in 1982.

When I moved from IERD towards the end of 1990, Hirofumi Ando took over these responsibilities from me as the new Director. With his elevation to the position of Deputy Executive Director in UNFPA in 1993, these responsibilities were transferred to Stirling Scruggs. Mr Scruggs was, in turn, succeeded by Safiye Çağar in 2004.

Up until now, IERD has remained the focal point within UNFPA for parliamentary activities. At the top, it was Mr Salas who initiated these activities and after his death his successor Dr Nafis Sadik continued to support them. The current Executive Director Thoraya Obaid is equally supportive of and involved in these activities.

Colombo and Beijing Conferences

To return to the earlier history, the first International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, which was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1979, was the most important initiative taken by Mr Salas to bring parliamentarians from both developed and developing countries together to focus specifically on population and development issues. The Conference was organised by UNFPA in cooperation with the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) and its agenda and programme of work were developed under the direction of a steering committee of parliamentarians drawn from all the major geographical regions. The committee first met in Tokyo, Japan in March 1978. In addition to Japan, the Asian region was represented at this meeting by India and Sri Lanka. Canada, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, United Kingdom and the United States were the other members of this committee. During the preparatory process, several other countries were invited to join the committee.

A young member of the Sri Lankan parliament Ranjit Atapattu who came to the Tokyo meeting along with Neville Fernando, another Sri Lankan MP, offered to host on behalf of Sri Lanka the proposed international conference in Colombo in 1979 and this offer was gratefully accepted by the committee. The steering committee subsequently met in Tunis in October 1978 and Mexico City in March 1979 to finalize the agenda, the programme, the list of speakers and resource persons, and the list of invitations.

The International Conference took place in Colombo from 28 August to 1 September 1979 and was attended by parliamentarians from 59 countries. In recognition of his contribution to the movement of legislators on population and development, former Prime Minister Kishi was named the Honorary Chairman of the Conference. Edward Heath, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, delivered the keynote address. Kenneth Baker, who later became Education Secretary in UK, was Secretary General of the Conference, and Hans van den Broek, later the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, was one of the participants.

The Colombo conference was a landmark event in that for the first time it brought together, from around the world, a large number of parliamentarians interested in population and development issues. As a result of the conference, many of them became strong advocates of international population assistance and fervent supporters of UNFPA.

As UNFPA stated somewhat modestly in its 1979 Annual Report “the purpose of the conference was for the legislators to acquaint themselves with current demographic trends and define areas of action by which parliaments could supplement and enhance the population efforts of governments” (1). This purpose was achieved, in ample measure, by the conference.

The conference called for a doubling of the international population assistance which was then running at about \$ 500 million annually to \$ 1 billion by the year 1984 and for the strengthening of UNFPA as the multilateral channel for population assistance. UNFPA supporters in the UN General Assembly (GA) put this recommendation to good use when considering the draft GA resolution on UNFPA at the thirty-fourth GA session; and GA resolution 34/104 adopted on 14 December 1979 uses the Colombo Declaration as one of the arguments in favour of strengthening the role and functions of UNFPA.

One of the significant recommendations adopted by the Colombo conference in its final Declaration was that “it would be useful to parliamentarians to meet at the regional level to exchange information and experience gained in their countries.” Acting on this recommendation and as a follow-up to the Colombo conference, UNFPA helped set up a steering committee with India, China, Japan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka as its members. Dr. Ranjit Atapattu of Sri Lanka, who had played an important role as a representative of the host Parliament in the 1979 Colombo conference, was designated as the convenor of the Steering Committee to organise the first Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. India was represented in the committee by Sat Paul Mittal, Chairman of the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), China by Mrs He Liliang, a member of the People’s Consultative Assembly, Japan by Mr Takashi Sato, MP and Malaysia by Mrs Rahmah Osman, a member of the Malaysian Parliament. The steering committee met on three occasions – the first in February 1981 in Tokyo, the second in June 1981 in Beijing and the third just prior to the Asian Conference that was held in Beijing in November 1981, at the invitation of the National Peoples Congress of China.

Just prior to the Beijing conference, trouble arose over the question of a visa for an Indian delegate which threatened to derail the Conference. One of the members of the 20- strong Indian delegation was T. L. Rajkumar, Speaker of the State Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh, a north eastern Indian state bordering on China. The Chinese authorities indicated that they were unwilling to issue a visa for him and we in UNFPA were informed by Mr Sat Paul Mittal, the head of the Indian delegation, that the delegation would withdraw from the conference if the visa was not granted. This led to a flurry of phone calls between New York, Tokyo, Beijing and Delhi. Mr Salas spoke to his high-level contacts in Beijing and we advised the Indian delegation to be patient while attempts were made to resolve the difficulty. In a conversation with me, Tsuguo Hirose, past Secretary-General of APDA, recalled that on the instructions of former Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, Mr Sato flew to Beijing on 14 October 1981 to meet with Huang Hua, Foreign Minister and Mrs He Liliang, the spouse of the Foreign Minister and a member of the conference steering committee. I may add that Mr Matsumura accompanied Mr Sato on this trip. Mr Sato’s appeal to the Chinese authorities to find a pragmatic solution to the visa question, given the importance of the conference for the Asian region as a whole resulted in an understanding to authorize a visa for Mr Rajkumar. Mr Sato was back in Tokyo the next day and in New Delhi, Mr Mittal and all members of the Indian delegation were able to receive their visas in time.

About 200 delegates from 19 countries attended the Beijing conference. Representatives from several non-governmental organisations were also present at the conference. UNFPA sent a small team of seven staff members to serve as the conference secretariat, with Mr Matsumura serving as the Conference Co-ordinator and I serving as the Conference Secretary. Given the importance he attached to the Conference, Mr Salas came himself to Beijing and attended the entire conference. The UNFPA team in Beijing worked with a group of Chinese officials and volunteers under the leadership of Mrs He Liliang to organize the conference in the Great Hall of the People. Amazing as it may sound today, the Asian conference was the first major UN sponsored conference in China after the Great Leap Forward. To mark the occasion, China issued a set of special postage stamps and an entire issue of China Daily (the only English newspaper in China at that time) was devoted to the conference.

The Beijing Declaration adopted by the conference recognizes the inextricable relationships between population, resources and environment in the efforts to manage issues of poverty, employment and development, and affirms the need for closer cooperation among countries of Asia in their endeavours to accelerate and advance the social and economic well-being of their peoples while respecting the national sovereignty of each country. In order to promote cooperation and collaboration amongst parliamentarians of the countries of Asia through greater and continuing international exchange of experience and knowledge in population and development, the conference addressed specific recommendations to 1) the Parliaments in Asia, 2) the Governments in Asia, 3) all Governments, 4) the United Nations, 5) NGOs, 6) press and other media and 7) religious leaders.

The Beijing conference called on all Asian Parliaments to encourage the formation of national groups of parliamentarians concerned with population and development issues which would seek to bring about greater awareness and understanding of population and development issues amongst parliamentarians, initiate, promote and support exchange programmes among parliamentarians of the Asian region and other regions of the world and to promote continuing dialogue between parliamentarians and planners and programme managers at various levels.

The Beijing conference addressed a large number of recommendations to the Governments of the region in regard to formulation, implementation of population and development programmes. Among these are the recommendations to establish national coordinating bodies on population, to provide higher allocations for family planning and population programmes and to promote and support the role of non-governmental organisations, to widen the opportunities of women for equal participation in all development activities and to pay special attention to youth. The over-all objective of all these activities would be to contribute to the reduction of the population growth for the Asian region to one per cent by the year 2000.

The conference recommended the convening of a UN world population conference in 1984. Such a proposal had the support of UNFPA and the UN Population Division; however, it was still under consideration by the UN Economic and Social Council, when the Beijing conference made its recommendation in October 1981. The Beijing recommendation was brought to the attention of the Council, and the Asian members of the Council indicated full support for holding the conference. In November 1981,

the Council authorized the convening of such a conference as part of the series of world population conferences.

Another recommendation to the United Nations was to declare an annual world population day 'as a measure to increase awareness and enhance the understanding of the population problems as they relate to development' (2). UNFPA, again, was interested in the idea, but it took somewhat longer to implement. According to demographic estimates, the world population was expected to reach five billion toward the middle of 1987 and UNFPA in consultation with the UN Population Division chose 11 July 1987 symbolically as the Day of Five Billion when a series of activities at national, regional and international levels would be undertaken throughout the world to focus public attention on population issues. These activities including posters, films, radio and television programmes and conferences and meetings, were immensely successful and with the support of a number of countries, 11 July was endorsed as the annual World Population Day first by the UNDP/UNFPA Governing Council and subsequently by the UN General Assembly.

The birth of AFPPD

The United Nations was also urged to follow up the Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development by supporting the organisation of similar conferences 'at least once in every three years' (3) and 'to support the continuing efforts of parliamentarians at Asian and sub-regional levels to effectively co-ordinate the activities of national groups of parliamentarians on population and development' (4) The Beijing Declaration itself did not refer to the proposal for the establishment of an Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. But the parliamentarians participating in the conference were keenly interested in establishing some kind of a regular regional structure for organising a parliamentarians' conference every three years as envisaged in paragraph 28 of the declaration and for promoting and co-ordinating the efforts of national groups of parliamentarians on population and development issues as envisaged in paragraph 30. It was therefore decided separately that "in order to maintain and sustain this interest, a pro tem committee consisting of Asian parliamentarians be established to form an Asian forum of parliamentarians on population and development in order to promote cooperation and involvement of Asian parliamentarians in the area of population and development." The steering committee of parliamentarians which had organised the Beijing conference was authorized to serve as the pro tem committee and to undertake, together with UNFPA, the necessary preparatory work for the Asian Forum, serving as its pro tem committee. The Steering Committee met in Beijing on 30 October 1981 to start functioning in this new capacity and elect new officers. The new arrangements were announced at a press conference that was held in the Great Hall of People on conclusion of the Beijing conference.

Mr Takashi Sato (Japan) was named as Chairman of the Asian Forum, and Sat Paul Mittal (India) as its Secretary General. Mrs He Liliang (China) and Dr. Ranjt Atapattu (Sri Lanka) were elected as Vice-Chairmen. Mr Mittal set up a small secretariat in New Delhi to help him carry out the tasks assigned to him as Secretary-General. At his end, Mr Sato together with several of his parliamentary colleagues set up a Japa-

nese organization known as the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) to undertake research and fund-raising for AFPPD, and it was agreed that APDA would also serve as the AFPPD chairman's office. Mr. Akio Matsumura who, having worked with us at UNFPA between 1978 and 1982 on the organization of Colombo and Beijing conferences, was planning to leave UNFPA to establish the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD)) was named Executive Coordinator of the newly emerging Asian body as well. He was expected to play a coordinating role between the Global Committee and the Asian Forum and to provide liaison services for the Asian Forum in New York. Under this triangular arrangement, "the headquarters of the Asian Forum shall be in Tokyo, with a regional office in New Delhi. The forum shall also maintain a liaison office in New York." Complicated as it seemed, the arrangement worked out reasonably well in practice.

First General Conference

On 8-9 March 1982, the steering committee met in New Delhi, India and decided formally to establish the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). The AFPPD constitution was approved at this meeting and though a few amendments have been made to it during the course of the years, the basic structure of AFPPD remains unchanged. Another meeting of the committee that took place in Manila, the Philippines on 2-3 August 1982 decided to convene the first General Conference of the Asian Forum in New Delhi.

The conference took place in New Delhi from 17 to 20 February 1984. It was inaugurated by Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India and addressed by several distinguished speakers including Huang Hua, former Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Helmut Schimdt, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Rafael M. Salas, Executive Director of UNFPA, James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF and Bradford Morse, Administrator of UNDP. The conference brought together parliamentarians from 24 Asian countries and parliamentary observers from eight countries from other regions. A large number of UN agencies and NGOs were also represented at the conference.

The conference considered nine major themes: population trends and prospects in Asia; enhancement of human resources in population and development; population and issues of development; migration and urbanization in Asia; contraceptive research; delivery of programmes in Asia; community participation in family planning; and the future role of parliamentarians in the movement on population and development.

The Asian Forum conference adopted a declaration known as the New Delhi Declaration. Mr Mittal, AFPPD Secretary General, summarized the specific goals of the declaration as follows:

(a) A decrease of population growth in the Asian region as a whole, in order to attain growth rate of 1 per cent by the year 2000;

(b) A decrease in mortality rates throughout Asia and specifically the rate of infant mortality in the region by 50 per cent by the year 2000;

(c) A balanced distribution of population in Asian countries through policies to accommodate planned urban growth together with efforts to retain populations in rural areas” (5).

Second General Conference

For its second conference, AFPPD returned to Beijing. The conference was held in Beijing from 23 to 27 September 1987. Its agenda and programme were considered and finalized at a meeting of AFPPD officers in Jakarta, Indonesia on 17-18 October 1986 and subsequently at another meeting in Bangkok, Thailand on 25 February 1987.

The Beijing conference was attended by parliamentarians from 23 countries: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand and Vietnam. There were parliamentary observers from 5 countries: Bhutan, Cyprus, Indonesia, Kiribati and Tonga. Several UN agencies as well as regional parliamentary groups from Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe that had been formed following the Colombo conference were also in attendance. The conference was addressed by Zhao Ziyang, Prime Minister of China; Takeo Fukuda, former Prime minister of Japan and Chairman of the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development; Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA who had succeeded Mr Salas after his untimely death in March 1987 and Avabai Wadia, President of IPPF. The conference considered the following major themes: 1. Present situation and prospects of Asian population and development, 2. Basic health services and family planning, 3. Urbanization, 4. Population and food 5. Aging. While the first three themes were essentially carry-overs from the previous conferences, population and food was brought in at the request of Mr Sato who was especially interested in that theme. Aging was made a theme because of the growing interest in it in countries such as Japan and China.

The conference adopted what was called the Asian Forum Beijing Declaration to distinguish it from the previous Beijing Declaration (1981). In its preambular part, the Declaration set the following specific goals for the Asian parliamentarians:

1. Decrease the annual population growth rate in the Asian region as a whole to 1 per cent by the year 2000;
2. Decrease mortality rates, and specifically infant mortality, throughout the region by 50 per cent by the year 2000;
3. Effect a balance distribution of population in Asian countries through policies designed to accommodate urban growth and stem rural-urban migration;

4. Devise mechanisms that can serve as alternatives for the extended family in providing social, economic and psychological security for Asia's aging population;
5. Improve the status of women, particularly in areas of health, education and employment, and create public awareness and acceptance of the changing role of women in Asia and of its social, political and cultural implications;
6. Observe an appropriate day in 1988 as the "Day of Three Billion" with a view to informing every Asian family of the necessity, urgency and significance of the population issues in the region " (6).

The Programme of Action that follows the Preamble recommends a series of activities to achieve these objectives. The last part comprises Call to Action, calling upon parliamentarians, governments, non-governmental organizations and the international community to undertake advocacy, social, economic and political actions as appropriate in support of population policies and programmes,

Both Mr Sato and Mr Mittal were re-elected to their respective offices at Beijing. Soon after arriving in Beijing, Mr Mittal suffered a stroke and was admitted to the emergency ward of a hospital. He was therefore not able to attend most of the Beijing Conference. The Conference however showed its confidence in him by re-electing him while he was in the hospital; and after recovering from the stroke Mr Mittal was able to function effectively as Secretary-General for another three years.

In addition to working energetically to promote and strengthen the Asian network of parliamentarians through the Asian Forum, Mr. Mittal also became actively involved in several global networks being created by Mr Matsumura. One of these, which has already been mentioned, was the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. Another was the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival in which Mr Mittal served as Co-Chairman (the other Co-Chairman was Dean Morton of the St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York). The inaugural meeting of this forum took place in Terrytown, New York in October 1985. Its first major conference took place in Oxford, U.K. in April 1988; and the second in Moscow, USSR in January 1990. Both of these were large events; but the event in Moscow assumed special significance because of the involvement of President Mikhael Gorbachev. Along with Dr Sadik, I participated in the Moscow event as it had a major programme component on population, environment and development. Mr. Mittal placed a significant role in all of these events; and he delivered a concluding address at the Moscow conference.

One of the special activities he organized on behalf of AFPPD was the Asian Women Parliamentarians Conference on Population and the Status of Women in New Delhi, India from 12 to 15 March 1990. The conference which was attended by parliamentarians from 26 countries, adopted a Declaration and a Programme of Action, calling upon parliamentarians, governments, non-governmental organizations, the media, the international community and the Asian Forum to undertake effective action to eliminate all traces of discrimination against women and to facilitate full and equal participation of women in all aspects of economic and social development. Regional confer-

ences on empowerment of women have now become a regular feature of the AFPPD programme of activities.

During 1987-1990, the Executive Committee of AFPPD held several meetings. At its meeting held in Tokyo in September 1989, the committee accepted an invitation from Thailand to convene the third AFPPD conference in Bangkok. Details of conference preparations were reviewed and finalized at another meeting of the Executive Committee which took place in Jakarta, Indonesia in March 1990.

Third General Conference

The Third conference of the Asian Forum took place in Bangkok, Thailand from 15 to 18 October 1990. Parliamentarians from 21 countries participated in the Conference: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Vietnam, Western Samoa, Yemen. Several UN agencies and NGOs were also represented at the conference.

The conference, which was chaired by Mr Takashi Sato, was addressed, among others, by Mr Takeo Fukuda, Chairman of the Global Committee of Parliamentarians and Dr Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA. The four main themes that were discussed by the conference were: 1. Population, environment and sustainable development, 2. Population and health, 3. Role and status of women, and 4. New population problem in Japan- aging and dependency. In its Declaration and Programme of Action, the Bangkok Conference emphasized that action aimed at addressing the complex issues of population and development must, by definition, be rooted in three basic principles: 1) that population, resources and the environment are inextricably linked 2) that development cannot be sustained without due regard to each of these factors and 3) that economic growth must be balanced with population growth, concern for the environment and social progress (7).

While reiterating their 'strong resolve to help achieve an annual population growth rate of 1 per cent for the Asian region by the year 2000'(8), the parliamentarians laid out a programme of action that sought to reduce population growth, balance population distribution, protect the environment, ensure adequate food supply to all sectors of society, in particular those most disadvantaged, and eliminate poverty. It also proposed measures to reduce infant and maternal mortality, improve the role and status of women, provide for the security of the aged, address the special needs of youth and enhance health care and family planning services.

Many of the recommendations made at Bangkok were based on those adopted at earlier conferences. However, given the special attention paid to the topics relating to the role and status of women by the New Delhi conference held earlier in the year, the recommendations in this regard were much more detailed and more specific. Here is a full list of these recommendations:

“Investing in programmes for women, means widening their choices and reducing

their dependence on children for status and support. It means taking women's abilities, rights and needs into account at every stage of development planning, so that women's status and security are derived from their contribution to society rather than solely from childbearing. Family planning is one of the most important investments a society can make, since it represents a freedom from which other freedoms flow. The same is true of investments in women's health and education. Specific measures needed include:

- Ensuring that women are consulted and involved at every level in the organization of family planning services;
- Identifying problems, developing a legislative agenda and mobilizing governmental and public support with a view to improving the status of women, in particular destitute and migrant women, abolishing discriminatory practices in marriage, and reducing maternal mortality;
- Repealing all laws and practices preventing or restricting women from owning or administering productive services;
- Expanding educational and training opportunities for women on an equal basis with men, including special attention to the needs of illiterate women;
- Documenting and publicizing women's vital contribution to development;
- Ensuring that national statistics are desegregated by sex;
- Providing the widest possible audience with accurate and full information on women's productive and reproductive rights and responsibilities;
- Ensuring that women have access to credit, where possible, without collateral and improving their access to markets in the agricultural and informal sector;
- Establishing and enforcing laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and equal pay for work of equal value;
- Providing adequate support services so that there would be no barriers to women entering the workforce"(9).

Mr Sato was re-elected chairman of the Asian Forum, Dr Prasop Ratnakorn, a member of the upper house of Thai Parliament, who had been active in the Forum since its inception, was elected as the new Secretary General. Mr Mittal became the senior Vice Chairman of the Forum. With the appointment of Dr. Prasop, the offices of the forum secretariat moved to Bangkok. Shiv Khare, former Executive Coordinator of the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) and former Secretary General of World Assembly of Youth (WAY), was appointed

the first full-time Executive Director of AFPPD, supported by a small group of full-time clerical and secretarial staff members. The offices were located at the Neurological Foundation Building in Phayathai, Bangkok.

To the profound sorrow of his friends and colleagues, Mr Takashi Sato, who had not been keeping well for some time, passed away suddenly on 17 April 1991 in Tokyo at the age of 63. Mr Mittal replaced him as Acting Chairman; but on 12 January 1992, he too died suddenly from a heart attack in Ludhiana, India. Shin Sakurai, a member of parliament from Japan, succeeded him as Acting Chairman. With the passing away of Mr Sato and Mr Mittal- the two stalwarts of the Asian parliamentary movement on population and development, the first phase of the Asian Forum's history came to a close. During their stewardship, AFPPD consolidated its membership in Asia and established a clear agenda for action by parliamentarians at national and regional levels. In the next phase, AFPPD would expand its contacts in the Pacific and Central Asia, establish a full-time secretariat and increasingly undertake the responsibility to organize international activities beyond the Asian region.

Fourth General Conference

The Fourth general conference of the Asian Forum took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, at the invitation of the Malaysian Parliamentarians Committee on Population and Development, from 26 to 28 October 1993. The Conference was organized by the newly established Forum secretariat in Bangkok in close co-operation with UNFPA. The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) were the other co-operating organizations. The agenda, programme of work and other aspects of the conference preparations were discussed and finalized at the fifth AFPPD executive committee meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in September 1992 and the sixth executive committee meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam in February 1993.

Parliamentarians from 22 countries participated in the Kuala Lumpur conference: Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, and Vietnam as members and Fiji, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, New Zealand, Singapore, Tonga and Yemen as associate members. Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kiribati, Nauru, Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, and Western Samoa sent parliamentary observers. Several UN agencies and NGOs, including IPPF, were also present at the meeting.

The Kuala Lumpur conference, which was chaired by Mr Shin Sakurai, addressed two major topics in the plenary session-1. the Asian challenge in population and development, introduced by Dr Taro Nakayama, former Foreign Minister of Japan and Chairman, Japan Parliamentary Federation for Population and 2. Improving the status and health of Asian women, which was introduced by Dr Leticia Ramos Shahani, President Pro Tempore of the Senate in the Philippines and Co-Chairman, Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development. The working groups covered several other topics 1. Family planning, maternal and child health in Thailand 2. The role of women in national development: a case study of the Philippines 3. Population

growth, aging and youth and 4. Population, environment and food.

The Kuala Lumpur Declaration reiterates the major themes and conclusions of previous declarations and takes note of the Bali Declaration on Population and Development which was adopted by the Asian and Pacific Population Conference (Bali, Indonesia, August 1992) as part of the preparatory process for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Programme of Action, which formed part of the Declaration, proposes action in four major areas:

- Increasing attention toward the social sectors, in particular to efforts to encourage slower population growth and to improve women's reproductive health;
- A direct and all-out attack on poverty itself;
- A shift to a more balanced rural and urban development;
- A decisive improvement in the status of girls and women, with particular attention to education (10).

Fifth General Conference

At the invitation of the Australian Parliament, the Fifth general conference of AFPPD took place in Canberra, Australia from 25 to 27 September 1996. It was attended by parliamentarians from 29 countries of the region: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao Democratic People's Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vietnam and Western Samoa. Representatives from the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) and the Inter American Group of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPG) attended the meeting, as did observers from IPPF.

As the World Food Summit sponsored by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was scheduled to take place in Rome in November 1996, the parliamentarians at Canberra decided to pay special attention to the interrelationship of food and population issues. The statement they issued was titled Canberra Statement on Food Security, Population and Development. Prior to the Canberra Conference, the AFPPD Executive Committee, at the request of Mr Sakurai, had already adopted a statement on food security and population at its meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 2 May 1996 and the Canberra statement reflects the substance of this previous statement. It also takes into account the Statement of Parliamentarians on Food Security, Population and Development adopted by the Pacific Regional Meeting of Parliamentarians held in Coral Coast, Fiji on 14 August 1996. The statement presents the thesis that while the rate of food production has exceeded that of the population increase due to scientific and technological progress and, in particular, the success of the green revolution, "there are going to be limitations to the availability of new cultivable land, and the shortage

of fresh water resources is a serious concern which appears to be worsening” (11). The statement therefore emphasises the point that “measures to limit population increase as much as possible are essential if humanity is to continue to survive on the planet”(12). Recognizing the importance of increases in food production, the statement calls for equal emphasis to be placed on the issues of food access and use, especially amongst the most disadvantaged communities and individual producers. Other topics covered in the statement include the impact of international agreements on agricultural production, environmental limits on food production, community development, and promotion of food security at the global level by expanding regional and international co-operation.

Sixth General Conference

The Sixth general conference of the Asian Forum took place in Niigata, Japan from 4 to 6 October 1999, with Asian Population in the Next Millennium as its theme. The meeting was hosted by the Japanese Parliamentary Federation on Population (JPPF) and was organized by the Forum Secretariat in close co-operation with APDA, UNFPA and IPPF.

Parliamentarians from 25 countries participated in the conference: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Lao people’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. Parliamentary observers from Canada, Ghana and Zambia and representatives from a number of UN agencies and NGOs were also present.

The conference, which was chaired by Mr Shin Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD, heard major addresses from Soichiro Ito, Speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives, Dr. Taro Nakayama, and Chairman of the Japanese Parliamentary Federation for Population, and Dr Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA.

The Niigata conference focussed on four major topics: population in the next millennium; socio-economic impact on Asia (introduced by Prof. Toshio Kuroda); food security, water and environment in the 21st Century (introduced by Dr Lester Brown and Prof Hiroshi Tsuji); resource mobilization for population and reproductive health issues (Inga Brueggemann and Jean Augustine, MP from Canada); and progress in gender equity in Asia with reference to the role of parliamentarians (Patricia Sarenas from the Philippines and Rinchin Narangerel from Mongolia).

As the Niigata conference took place a few months after the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on ICPD+5, its Declaration takes note of the results of the ICPD+5 process and reaffirms the parliamentarians’ commitment to the ICPD Programme of Action. In their Call for Action, the parliamentarians “urge all Governments to implement the ICPD Programme of Action in close partnership with civil society, to develop long-term perspectives and strategies addressing the interrelationships between water, food, natural resources, environment and population. We also urge all Governments to address the factors hindering gender equity and male partici-

pation; access to quality reproductive health information and services, especially for youth; as well as those factors contributing to high abortion rates, the spread of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, and high infant and maternal mortality rates. We urge our fellow parliamentarians to put these issues on their national agendas, take concerted action on them and monitor progress on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action” (13).

Seventh General Assembly

The nomenclature of the general meeting of AFPPD changed when it met, for the seventh time, in Beijing, China on 17-18 October 2002. The event was now called General Assembly. The Seventh General Assembly was hosted by the National People’s Congress of China with support from the Government of Japan, UNFPA and IPPF. Members of parliament who attended the assembly comprised those from Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Turkmenistan and Vietnam. Several UN agencies and NGOs, including IPPF and regional parliamentary groups were also represented at the assembly.

The AFPPD secretariat invited several former members of parliament and UNFPA officials who were instrumental in the establishment of AFPPD to attend the seventh general assembly as special guests. These included Mr Huang Hua (former foreign minister of China), He Liliang (Mr Huang Hua’s spouse who was a member of the People’s Consultative Assembly and one of the main Chinese organizers of the Founding meeting in Beijing in 1981), and several other distinguished Chinese participants. Dr Ranjit Atapattu (former health minister of Sri Lanka who served as the Secretary General of the 1981 Beijing conference) came, as did Dr Prasop Ratnakorn of Thailand (former Secretary General of AFPPD), Mr Colin Hollis (former Secretary General of AFPPD), Mr Akio Matsumura (Executive Director of Global Forum of Spiritual Leaders and Parliamentarians), and Mrs Nguen Thi Than (former treasurer, AFPPD). Mr Hiro Ando and I were present there as former officials of UNFPA who had helped organize the 1981 meeting. The first edition of this book- *The Population Challenge in Asia*- was launched at this meeting.

Four major topics were discussed at the substantive sessions of the seventh general assembly –1. Population and Sustainable Development, with presentations by Li Honggui, MP, China, Shuyun Xu, Director, Asia and Pacific Division, UNFPA and Jyoti Singh 2. Political Commitment Towards Fighting HIV/AIDS, with presentations by Siri Tellier, UNFPA Representative, China, Tony Bates, UNAIDS, Bangkok, and Senator Juan Flavier, the Philippines 3. Gender Partnership and Gender Equality, with presentations by Liu Bohong, Director Research Institute, All China Women’s Federation, Rosa Linda Miranda, Regional Programme Director, UNIFEM, and Kelly Hoare, MP, Australia; and 4. Good Governance for Population and Development Programmes, with presentations by Dr Jagannath, MP, India, Senator Rodolfo Blazon, the Philippines, Masatoshi Wakabayashi, MP, Japan, Chobae Sook, MP, Republic of Korea, and Senator Jokpeci Koroi, Fiji.

Mr Yoshio Yatsu of Japan, who chaired the seventh general assembly was re-elected Chairperson of AFPPD. Other officers who re-elected or elected were: Vice Chairpersons- Zhang Huaixi, MP, China; Lakshman Singh, MP, India; Ratu Epeili Nailatikau, Fiji, MP; Beksultan, Tulkeshov, MP, Kazakhstan, and Nugyen Thi Hoai Thu, MP, Vietnam; Secretary General- Malinee Sukavejvorakit, Thailand; Deputy Secretary General- Acosta, Philippines; Treasurer- Napsiah Omar, Malaysia; Chairperson, Standing Committee on Women- Kelly Hoare, MP. Australia.

The Beijing Declaration adopted by the Seventh General Assembly reaffirmed the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and the Key Actions for Further Implementation of the ICPD programme adopted by the Twenty-first Special session of the UN General Assembly in 1999. It urged governments to clearly integrate poverty reduction strategies into population and development programmes and called for energetic action on issues relating to population and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, rights of women, and the aging. Finally, while celebrating the twentieth anniversary of AFPPD, it recorded the pledge of parliamentarians “to recognise AFPPD as an important forum for exchanges among the parliaments and parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific region. It also serves as an important channel to increase among the people of the region to gain more mutual understanding, confidence and cooperation. We believe that with the common efforts of parliamentarians from various countries, the Asian Forum will continuously develop and make greater contribution to the realization of population growth in harmony with socio-economic development, resource utilization and environmental protection for the sake of sustainable development and food security in the Asia-Pacific Region”(14).

Eighth General Assembly

The eighth general assembly of AFPPD took place in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2005. It was jointly organized by AFPPD, the Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and the Parliament of Indonesia in cooperation with UNFPA and the Government of Japan. The assembly, whose main theme was population and Reproductive Health: Culture and religion Matter, attracted the participation of parliamentarians from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Tajikistan, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as representatives of several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as observers.

The 8th general assembly was inaugurated by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia. I believe this was the first time ever that a general conference or assembly of the Asian Forum was opened by a head of state. As one of the world leaders who had participated in the UN World Summit in September 2005, Mr Yudhoyono emphasized the pivotal role of parliamentarians on maintaining the worldwide focus and commitment to attaining the Millennium development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. He also noted the relevance of the ICPD Programme of Action to the attainment of these goals and importance of AFPPD continuing to provide a forum where progress on population and development was discussed in this context.

The President also stated his conviction that population and development strategy must be rooted in the social and cultural values of the community. “That is why I believe, no matter what our political system or economic model is, no matter what kind of natural resources we have, no matter what our historical background is, the most important thing we can do is to invest in health and education. It is a very simple and proven formula for progress- investing in people. You cannot go wrong with this.”

Another major speaker at the opening ceremony was Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director, UNFPA. She referred to the commitment of the world leaders at the Summit to achieving universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out in the ICPD Programme of Action and called on parliamentarians to integrate this goal into national strategies aimed at obtaining all the Millennium goals, including those relating to elimination of gender discrimination violence against women and promotion of women’s rights. She supported the view expressed by the President of Indonesia that culture and religion had an important role to play in understanding the MDGs and implementing the MDGs, as reproductive health, women’s empowerment and gender equality were culturally sensitive issues. “We need to identify the positive cultural values and religious interpretations which would facilitate moving forward in the promotion of human rights, including the right to reproductive health.”

Other speakers at the inaugural session included Yoshio Yatsu, Chairperson, AFPPD, Agung Laksono, Speaker, Indonesian Parliament, and Tosari Widjaya, Chief, Organizing Committee. In subsequent sessions, Sultan Aziz, Director, Asia and Pacific Division, UNFPA, spoke on the relevance of parliamentary advocacy to population and Development, Jyoti Singh on MDG+5 and its future implications, Terisita Marie P. Bgasao on HIV/AIDS in Asia-Pacific, John Ungphakorn, Senator, Thailand, on HIV/AIDS and political commitment and Smite Notosusanto, Professor, University of Indonesia, on women’s participation in political life.

At the Jakarta assembly, Mr Yatsu gave up his position as chairperson of AFPPD and was succeeded by Yasuo Fukuda, MP, Japan. In his acceptance speech, Mr Fukuda recalled his previous association with AFPPD, as secretary to his father- former Prime Minister Mr Takeo Fukuda, and pledged his full support to efforts to solve population problems through tackling reproductive health and women’s empowerment issues.

Other officers who were elected at the Jakarta assembly were: Vice Chairpersons - Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP, Fiji, Guowei Sang, MP, China, Lakshman Singh, MP, India. Nguyen Thi Hoai Thu, MP, Vietnam, and Aisyah Hamid Baidlowi, MP, Malaysia; Secretary General - Malini Sukavejworakit, Senator, Thailand, Deputy Secretary General -Beksultan S. Tukulshv, MP, Kazakstan, Treasurer - Gilbert Caesar, MP, the Philippines, Chair, Standing Committee on Women- Steve Chadwick, MP, New Zealand, and Chair, Standing Committee on Food Security- Shin Sakurai, MP, Japan. On his appointment to an ambassadorial position Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau was replaced in 2006 by Hon. Pita Nacura.

The Jakarta Declaration of Commitment recognizes that “the Millennium Development Goals and related targets, in particular the eradication of poverty and hunger, can only be achieved through strong political commitment of heads of state and government, with full support of all stakeholders including parliamentarians, civil society

and the private sector.” It then goes on to “reaffirm the call made in the World Summit Outcome document to achieve universal access to reproductive health as set out by the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal in the strategies to achieve international development goals including those contained in the Millennium Declaration aiming at improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty” (15).

The declaration commits the parliamentarians to achieving these goals “by developing and enacting supportive legislation, advocating for allocation of adequate resources, mobilizing support at the national and local levels, and monitoring the progress in the implementation of related policies and programme.” In response to the evaluation report presented to the Jakarta Assembly, the Declaration urges the development of a longer-term strategy and establishment of goals and priorities by AFPPD and the national committees, and calls upon AFPPD and its secretariat to augment efforts to strengthen national committees, in particular those that are newly established.

Building up Awareness and Influencing Policies

The area where AFPPD has been most successful is building up of awareness and understanding of population and development issues among parliamentarians and other influential leaders of public opinion in Asian countries. Its general conferences have obviously provided major opportunities in this regard. But AFPPD has also used other opportunities in between Conferences. These consist of national, sub-regional and regional parliamentary advocacy programmes, many of which were supported by AFPPD under its small grants programme. These programmes have helped to strengthen the national parliamentary committees and brought about the participation of larger numbers of parliamentarians in the work of the committees. The topics covered by these events have included: the status of women, elimination of violence against women, HIV/AIDS vaccine development, migration, MDG’s and other ICPD related issues.

The Day of Three Billion in 1988 organized by AFPPD in 1988 was a striking success in awareness creation. The Day was authorized by the Second General Conference of AFPPD in 1987 which decided to “Observe an appropriate day in 1988 as the “Day of Three Billion” with a view to informing every Asian family of the necessity, urgency and significance of the population issues in the region.” The parliamentarians present at Beijing knew of the enormous success of the worldwide information campaign undertaken by UNFPA on the occasion of the Day of Five Billion (11 July 1987), and had also been told by demographers that some time in the middle of 1998, the population of Asia (which is generally estimated at 60 per cent of the world population) would cross the three billion mark. Hence the decision to mark this occasion through an information campaign.

UNFPA was asked by Mr. Sato to consult with the UN Population Division approximately when the Asian population was expected to reach three billion. Statistically, it

was clearly impossible to fix a precise date for this purpose. However, the Division came up with the suggestion that according to most recent data and estimates, 10 August 1988 could be considered a likely date.

10 August 1988 as The Day of Three Billion was announced by Mr. Sato at a press conference, well-attended by both Japanese and foreign journalists, in Tokyo on 1 July 1988. What he said on that occasion makes forceful reading even today:

“The Asian population is increasing by 54.5 million people a year, 4,540,000 people on the average every month or 150,000 people every day. Seven babies are born every second on the average in the Asian region. In that same second, two Asians die, one of whom could conceivably be the 2 billionth baby.

However, what I would like to speak to you about on behalf of the Asian Forum here today is not when and where our population will reach 3 billion. I would rather like you to think again whether Asian people will be able to live happily when the population reaches 3 billion, whether the sufficient measures to enable people to do so are taken or what kind of further measures are required.

Asia shows the lowest population growth rate among the three continents of the third world. Population growth in Asia is still huge not because the population growth rate is high, but rather because the population base is massive. We consider that Asian countries have been successful in lowering their population growth rates due to their recognition of and efforts directed towards population problems and great success in promoting family planning programmes.

However, the world population is estimated to reach 6.2 billion at the end of the 20th century and 8.5 billion in 2025, from the 5.2 billion at present....By the end of this century, 92% of world population growth is estimated to take place in developing countries.

The excessive population growth will result in shortages of food, resources and energy which are limited on earth and environmental destruction beyond national boundaries. These will not only threaten the living base of the human beings who are and will be surviving on this earth, but also have the power to cancel out civilised society and even the technological innovations and economic development which should be useful for human beings.

Today, the interests of the developed and developing countries are the same. Without global level responses to the issues of population, food, environment and development, it would be difficult for the world to welcome a peaceful 21st century. And it is the Asian region that has the population base which represents 60% of these issues. It is no exaggeration to say that solving the Asian population problems could lead to a solution of the world population problems.

Asian countries have to build up their base of socio-economic development to facilitate the absorption of a young labour force, improvement of agricultural productivity, and further industrialization, diffusion of education, and improvement of health and medical standards, and allow people to lead peaceful and happy lives.

The solution of the population problems lies in the improvement of welfare and the quality of life of all the people”(16).

Writing in the International Herald Tribune a few days later, I reflected the same sentiments:

“If we are to have a peaceful and prosperous world, population growth will have to be brought into balance with the resource base. This means that governments will have to develop or continue sound economic policies and effective population programs”(17).

The Day of Three Billion received enormous media coverage not only in Asia but also in Europe and North America and provided the occasion for the holding of national conferences and symposia throughout Asia.

AFPPD has regularly publicised the annual World Population Day (11 July), and its committees participate actively in the information and communication activities sponsored by Governments, NGOs and the UNFPA field offices at the national level. The launching of the annual State of World Population Report (which is issued by UNFPA) provides another important occasion for AFPPD affiliates to focus public and media attention on population and development issues.

The influence that AFPPD and its national groups have exercised on policy making is somewhat more difficult to measure. In the Philippines, legislative bodies are similar to those in the United States, and individual lawmakers play a direct role in proposing and shepherding legislation on a wide variety of issues, including population and status of women. The reports of the Philippines Legislators Committee on Population and Development cite many instances in which the proposals it has provided to individual legislators or groups of legislators, backed by research, have been adopted as legal measures. On the other hand, in countries such as India and Malaysia whose legislative bodies are similar to those of the United Kingdom, practically all the legislation is proposed by the government. However, the legislators in these countries have the opportunity to influence policy making through submission of questions to various ministries, participation in the work of relevant parliamentary committees, and formulation and presentation of specific proposals to the government. In varying degrees, parliamentarians in many of the AFPPD member countries undertake these tasks. AFPPD through the documentation submitted to various meetings and the distribution of the outcomes of these meetings among senior policy makers also seeks to influence policies on major population issues. Exchange of information through the modalities provided by AFPPD on what is happening on a given issue in various countries can also prove extremely valuable.

Overview

Since the constitution of the Asian Forum was approved in New Delhi in 1982, eight General Conferences of the forum have taken place (New Delhi, India; Beijing, China; Bangkok, Thailand; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Canberra, Australia; Niigata, Japan, Beijing, China; and Jakarta, Indonesia). As AFPPD was established at the first

Beijing Conference in 1981, it completes 25 years of activities in 2006.

Several important trends can be discerned in the outcomes of all the AFPPD conferences as well as other meetings organized or sponsored by AFPPD:

1. The declarations adopted by the Asian Forum have consistently emphasized the integral interrelationship between population and development issues. At the same time, they have stressed, in the Asian context, the need for countries to deal urgently and effectively with the issues of population growth. They have also given increasing attention to problems of urbanization.
2. The Forum conferences and other AFPPD meetings have helped to incorporate emerging issues on the Forum agenda for action. These include aging, urbanization, food security, water, gender issues, HIV/AIDS and violence against women. Because of the interest shown by Japanese demographers such as Prof. Toshio Kuroda as well as parliamentarians from Japan and China, the subject of aging was brought up very early on, for discussion at AFPPD Conferences. Food security was of particular interest and concern first to Mr Sato and then to Mr Sakurai and a Standing Committee on Food Security under the chairmanship of Mr Sakurai keeps the theme under regular focus. Among environmental issues, water has been of particular interest to several national parliamentary groups such as China and India. Gender issues have received attention, since the beginning, in the AFPPD documents; however, Cairo and Beijing Conferences have exercised a great deal of influence on all subsequent AFPPD Declarations on issues relating to the role and status of women; and the AFPPD Standing Committee on Women (currently under the chairmanship of Ms Steve Chadwick, M.P., New Zealand) has helped sharpen AFPPD's focus on issues such as violence against women.
3. AFPPD has fully supported all major UN events on population and development. The 1981 Beijing Declaration supported the convening of the International Conference on Population in 1984 and the First Conference of AFPPD in New Delhi in 1984 issued an appeal to Asian parliamentarians to participate actively in the International Conference on Population which was coming up a few months later. The 1990 Bangkok Declaration supported the organization of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994; and AFPPD was the organization mainly responsible for the holding of the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD), just prior to the ICPD. AFPPD has played similar role in the organization of parliamentary conferences prior to the United Nations global conferences in Copenhagen, Beijing and Rome and the UNFPA-sponsored forum in The Hague. In preparation for ICPD +10, AFPPD organized the Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on Population and Development in Bangkok on 12-13 December 2002. AFPPD participated actively in several meetings prior to the World Leaders Summit organized by the United Nations in September 2005 and, at its Jakarta Assembly, took note of the implications of their Declaration

for its own future programme. AFPPD has also been actively involved in the series of recent UNFPA-sponsored international conferences of parliamentarians on population and development –in Ottawa, Canada, Strasbourg, France and Bangkok, Thailand.

4. In its declarations and resolutions, the Forum has always given strong support to UNFPA as the principal multilateral channel for international population assistance. In this context, it has also consistently argued for a substantial increase in ODA allocations for population and development activities and increasing support for UNFPA. As for the choice of priority themes or issues, AFPPD and UNFPA share a common agenda.
5. The Forum declarations encourage and promote the establishment and strengthening of national groups or committees of parliamentarians on population and development issues throughout Asia. As a result of the encouragement and support provided by AFPPD, several new national committees have come up in recent years, including those in Central Asia.
6. These declarations also support the organization of national seminars or conferences, to focus on population and development issues of interest and concern to the parliamentarians in the countries concerned. Through its small grants programme, AFPPD has supported the organization of many such national events. Nevertheless, in recent years, National committees have been increasingly able to organize national events on their own.
7. The Forum declarations have encouraged and promoted resource mobilization both within developing countries and through the international community. Through these declarations, AFPPD has extended full support to the goals articulated by UN international conferences, particularly Cairo, on resource mobilization. More recently, it has also given full support to the efforts of the international community to mobilize resources for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), having consistently taken the view that universal reproductive health services are essential to achieving the MDGs.

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*NATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF
PARLIAMENTARIANS*

Parliamentary Groups at the National Level

The Japan Parliamentary Federation for Population (JFPF) can claim the distinction of being the first national parliamentary group in the world devoted to population issues. The organization of the 1979 International Conference of Parliamentarians was in no small measure made possible by the enthusiastic encouragement and effective support given to the preparatory process by the Japanese group. The Colombo Conference was followed by the establishment of a number of other national parliamentarians groups on population and development issues and this trend accelerated in Asia with the holding of the 1981 Asian Conference in Beijing. Prior to the 1981 Asian Conference, groups had been formed in India, Malaysia, China, and the Philippines. In the 20-year period since AFPPD came into existence, more than 25 such national groups have come into existence in the Asian region.

The national groups of parliamentarians that deal with population and development issues fall into two broad categories. The first includes those such as the Japan Parliamentary Federation and the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development that were especially created to focus on these issues. In other cases (such as that of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress in China), standing committees of the Parliament have been given the task of dealing with population and development issues and also serve as national affiliates or associates of AFPPD.

What follows here is a selective review of the activities of some of these national groups. More detailed information on the programmes and activities of these groups is to be found in their national reports submitted to the AFPPD conferences.

Australia

The Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (PGPD, formerly known as the All Party Group on Population and Development (APGPD)) in Australia is one of AFPPD committees particularly concerned with the issues of resource mobilization. Australia has been active in AFPPD since the beginning and it was represented in its executive committee first by Bruce Goodluck and then by Colin Hollis who also served as Secretary General of AFPPD for several years. Australia hosted the fifth General Conference of AFPPD in Canberra in 1996 and the Asia-Pacific Women Ministers' and Parliamentarians' conference in Canberra in 2004.

The Australian group organizes regular briefings and seminars for parliamentarians, and has exchanged delegations with other countries. It has also campaigned actively, with some degree of success, for increased allocation of aid funding to the population sector.

Ms. Kelly Hoare, an M.P. from Australia who chaired the Standing Committee on Women of AFPPD, organized the second Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference on "A Woman's Perspective: Population, Development and Reproduc-

tive Health in the Asia-Pacific Region” in Canberra, Australia in 2004.

One of the specific achievements of the Australian group is the approval by the parliament of a bill which removes the veto of the Minister of Health over the registration and importation of the abortion pill (Bill RU 486), against the wishes of the government.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a National Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. The local office of UNFPA has provided support to the committee for advocacy activities among parliamentarians, and has also funded a study visit by selected parliamentarians to India, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand.

In recent years, the national committee has focussed on HIV/AIDS related issues and has organized local seminars in this context.

Cambodia

The Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD) is one of the new members of AFPPD. It participates regularly in AFPPD events and activities. During 2002-2004, it undertook a survey under the Hewlett project, in two stages 1) covering 131 parliamentarians and 992 members of commune councils in 2002-2004 and 2) covering 52 new members of parliament and 80 newly elected members of the commune council in the latter part of 2004.

The report of the project provides transcripts of selected interviews. In general, parliamentarians support reproductive health activities. They are particularly concerned with HIV/AIDS and are supportive of information and advocacy campaigns, and efforts aimed at providing widespread access to HIV/AIDS related services. They have also argued for and supported legislation on violence against women.

China

China is one of the founders of AFPPD. The Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development which led to the establishment of AFPPD was held in Beijing in 1981. Mrs He Liliang was an active member of the Steering Committee for this conference and was subsequently a member of AFPPD Executive Committee. The Second General Conference of AFPPD took place in Beijing in 1987 and the Seventh General Conference took place in Beijing in 2002.

The Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) that deals with population issues serves as the AFPPD national committee in China. From time to time, it has organized national seminars and briefings, including a UNDP-funded HIV/AIDS advocacy project and a national seminar

for parliamentarians on population and water issues. In August 2005, the NPC, through the efforts of the committee, passed an amendment to the law on protection of women's rights.

The committee has also received and exchanged parliamentary delegations on a regular basis. China has always been represented on the AFPPD executive committee and in all of AFPPD major activities.

Fiji

The Fiji National Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development is led by the Speaker of the House. For several years this position was held by Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, and at his initiative several meetings covering the Pacific region were organized, including the Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on HIV/AIDS in Suva in October 2004. He also served as one of the vice-presidents of AFPPD until August 2006 when he resigned his position in the parliament to take up an ambassadorial assignment. He has been replaced in AFPPD by Hon. Pita Nacura.

Together with AFPPD, Fiji promoted and sponsored, at the sub-regional level, the formation of the Pacific Parliamentarians Assembly on Population and Development.

India

A group of Indian parliamentarians led by Ramlal Parikh, who was a member of the upper house of the Indian Parliament, was set up in 1979 in the context of the 1979 International Conference of Parliamentarians held in Colombo that year. The group operated with the assistance of Mr Shiv Khare who was named Executive Coordinator of the Group. When Mr. Parikh's term in the Parliament came to an end, he persuaded Mr Sat Paul Mittal, another member of the upper house, to head the IAPPD. Under Mr Mittal's energetic leadership, IAPPD established a network of parliamentarians, cutting across party lines, who were interested in exchanging information, views and opinions on urgent population issues. In May 1981, IAPPD organized a well-attended national conference of parliamentarians in New Delhi. The conference was inaugurated by Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India. Mrs Gandhi's previous administration had been criticized during the 1975-1977 emergency period for permitting forced or involuntary sterilizations and having come back to power in 1980, she chose the occasion of the national conference in 1981 to declare her government's total commitment to voluntary family planning. This is what she said:

“I reiterate my Government's total commitment to voluntary family planning. We have been and are firmly against compulsion. Family planning must become a people's movement—of the people, by the people, for the people—only then can our hopes be realized. While the provision of infrastructure and services must be the responsibility of the government; the work of motivation and spreading the message cannot be confined to officials. The responsibility must be

borne by community organizations, local institutions, trade unions, mahila mandals [women's groups] and political parties. In activating these organizations, Members of Parliament and State Assemblies can contribute greatly" (1).

While the Indian Government was committed then and remains committed now to avoiding coercion in any form, the usefulness of incentives and disincentives in the family planning programmes was a subject of hot discussion at the national conference; and it continues to be debated today among parliamentarians and other leaders of public opinion in India. Mr Mittal had his own views on the topic:

"...the question was raised on the desirability of having a discussion and agreement on incentives and disincentives necessary to strengthen and speed up the implementation of the programme of action. Is it not the opportune time now for a national debate on this subject in order to decide once for all whether the situation is grave enough to warrant agreement by all political parties on the issue of incentives and disincentives? My submission is that the whole system of incentives and disincentives can be evolved whereby the parents become fully conscious of their responsibilities not only to their own children but also to the larger society to which they belong. There are countries in which parents are punished if they do not send their children to school. We have not come to that stage in the journey of our progress. But no one has a right to set his own house on fire. It is criminal. Worst still is to set the houses of neighbours ablaze. Whether we do it intentionally or unintentionally, the harsh fact is that it is happening. How do we prevent it? How do we arrest this phenomenon? How do we build up pressure within man himself in order to guide and encourage him to move along the correct path? Nothing could be further from my mind than the idea of exercising any compulsion or pressure of any sort in order to implement the family planning programme. I am totally against it. As you all know, we in India have ruled out compulsion for all time to come. We have to carry the people forward with us. We have to attract them and motivate them from the stage of apathy to the stage of acceptance" (2).

The debate on the value of incentives and disincentives remains open twenty years later. But the continuing importance of adequate education and information in family planning and now reproductive health programmes cannot be denied.

As mentioned earlier, Mr Mittal was appointed Secretary General of the Asian Forum at the end of 1981 Beijing conference and continued in this capacity until the Bangkok conference in 1990. During this period, he was also instrumental in strengthening and expanding the work of IAPPD as its Chairman. IAPPD organized a series of national and state level conferences involving not only parliamentarians but also state and local elected officials. It also issued a regular newsletter and special publications, sponsored exchange visits between India and other Asian countries such as China and Japan, and hosted a number of international events in India.

One of Mr Mittal's dreams was the establishment of a national centre for Indian parliamentarians on population and development. Through his efforts, a piece of land was allotted for the centre in New Delhi and funding was secured through bank loans and grants from donor agencies for the construction of the centre's premises. Mr Matsumura helped obtain a Japanese grant of \$ 100,000 for the centre; and UNFPA provided another grant for its library. A five-story building for the centre was built during 1987-1988, and the centre was formally inaugurated in 1988 by Shankar Dayal Sharma, then Vice President of India (who was subsequently elected President of India). Apart from serving as the offices of IAPPD, the centre, called the Sat Paul Mittal Centre, provides a full range of documentation and conference facilities for parliamentarians on population issues.

I recall that Mr. Salas, given his support for parliamentary activities on population and development and his personal equation with Mr. Mittal, participated in many parliamentary events in India. In one of these events, he pinpointed the twin roles of parliamentarians as advocates and policy makers:

“The importance of parliamentarians in the process of refining and shaping India's population programmes, whether at national, state or district level, cannot be overestimated. As lawmakers and representatives of the people, you translate the popular will into policy and transmit policy to your communities. The Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, under the energetic leadership of Mr Sat Paul Mittal, has already given an effective demonstration of the part which parliamentarians and state legislators can play in increasing awareness and understanding of population issues”(3).

These words of Mr. Salas summarize succinctly the role expected of parliamentarians in solving population and development issues and apply to those in India as indeed to all other Asian countries.

Today IAPPD, with a small full-time staff, carries on the legacy of Mr Mittal. It has regularly organized national, state level and local meetings and conferences of parliamentarians and legislators on population and development issues. From time to time, some of the facilities of the Sat Paul Mittal Centre are rented out to other organizations for their programmes; and this has enabled the Centre to cover most of its basic costs. For specific projects, IAPPD raises funds from the government, UNFPA, AFPPD and other organizations.

One of its unique contributions to the parliamentarians' activities is the involvement of legislators and elected officials at all levels of political and administrative structures in its activities. In a vast country like India, this is no mean achievement. Many of these activities involve AFPPD and have been carried out in co-operation with government officials, including those in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the UNFPA field office in India.

IAPPD was involved in the second phase of the Person-to Person advocacy project and hosted one of the sub-regional meetings under the project in 2005. In total, 250

members of parliament including 157 from the lower house and 93 from the upper house, responded to the survey carried out under the project. Of the 250 members of parliament, 225 were male and 25 female.

The findings of the survey have been published by IAPPD and focus on major themes and issues relating to population and development, family welfare, maternal and child health awareness, knowledge of RTI/STI and HIV/AIDS, violence against women and role and involvement of elected representatives in population programmes.

The findings indicate that the parliamentarians accept the relationship between population and development issues and the critical importance of family planning in implementing the small family norm. However, they were of the view that the small family norm was still to be accepted by the individuals belonging to many in the low-income groups. For them, children were economic assets and guarantors of old age security. Most members of parliament knew of RTI/STI and HIV/AIDS but did not know of a relationship between the two areas. Many of them were also unsure as to how HIV/AIDS was transmitted. Most of them regarded violence against women as a major social and human rights issue and recognized the urgent need for transformation of attitudes and behaviour of males in this area.

The findings of the survey have received extensive coverage by the media in India, especially because they were launched at a major public event by the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh; and it is to be hoped that they will be used extensively in future advocacy efforts focussing on parliamentarians and other legislators.

In 2005, IAPPD, with support from UNFPA and the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, produced and distributed, among members of parliament and other elected representatives at state and local levels, a Briefing Kit on Population and Development. The Kit includes data and information on such themes as Millennium Development Goals, ICPD and Reproductive Health Issues, National Health Policy, National Population Policy, Gender Concerns, Violence against Women, Maternal Health, Adolescence, and Ageing. The Kit also was launched by the Prime Minister of India Mr Manmohan Singh at a special ceremony and has received a great deal of praise for the succinct and up-to-date information it provides on various issues and themes.

In 1995, IAPPD organized an inter-university debating competition on a population related theme, with the participation of more than 20 universities from North India. The debate was hugely successful and has become an annual event, with many more universities being invited to participate. The initiative to organize this series of events is to be applauded as an innovative outreach programme to bring legislators in touch with university students. IAPPD also sponsors a regular series of lectures by eminent individuals at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and another series of lectures in Ludhiana, Punjab – the hometown of Mr Mittal.

Indonesia

Primarily through the efforts of AFPPD, the Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on

Population and Development (IFPPD) was established in May 2002. IFPPD participates regularly in AFPPD activities and hosted its General Assembly in 2005.

IFPPD has been actively involved in several legislative activities and has promoted or supported the adoption or revision of major legislative measures on population policies, health, violence against women, protection of children and migrant workers. It has also undertaken advocacy efforts among parliamentarians on issues relating to HIV/AIDS, tobacco control and adolescent reproductive health.

In 2002-2003, IFPPD undertook an extensive survey under the Hewlett project, covering 404 out of 500 members of parliament. The topics included in the survey were similar to those covered under other national surveys. There is general support for family planning but on HIV/AIDS there were a number of misconceptions. Interestingly, sex education in schools received the support of three out of four parliamentarians surveyed. Most also emphasized the role of religious leaders in the area of population.

As a follow up to the survey, IFPPD has already produced several major reports and publications and has undertaken advocacy activities including those relating to increasing the knowledge and understanding among parliamentarians of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and safe abortion and changes and revisions in the legislation in the area of population policy.

The Indonesian group serves as the joint forum for three parliamentary commissions. It has contributed to the passage or revision of several laws and organized advocacy events around them. These include amendments to the law on health, and the law on population and development. It has also organized specific programmes aimed at creating awareness of macro economics and health, gender budgeting, prevention of tobacco use and HIV/AIDS.

The Indonesian group has received support from UNFPA and AFPPD for many of its activities. It is now working on increasing its outreach by forming provincial committee of legislators..

Iran

Iran is represented at AFPPD meetings by the Population and Development Committee of the Iranian Parliament.

In recent years, the committee has given special attention to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and has participated in several events focusing on MDGs. The Committee has also sought to focus public attention on specific national issues, for example, drinking water supply and rural transportation.

Japan

The Japanese Parliamentary Federation for Population (JPFP) is the oldest group of its kind in Asia and, as a matter of fact, in the world. It was established as a multi-party group in order to muster maximum consensus among parliamentarians on population and development issues. Its leaders have included former Prime Minister Kishi, former Prime Minister Fukuda, former Cabinet Secretary Shintaro Abe, former Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama, former Agriculture Minister Mr Sato and former Environment Minister Mr. Sakurai. Also, Junichiro Koizumi, the former Prime Minister and Yasio Fukuda, the former Cabinet Secretary (and the son of former Minister Fukuda) were actively involved in JPFP in earlier years and Mr Fukuda has now become the Chairperson of AFPPD. Since its inception, JPFP has played a leading role in AFPPD. Mr Sato was the first Chairman of AFPPD, followed by Mr Sakurai, Mr Yatsu and Mr Fukuda.

In a statement to the steering committee for AFPPD which met in New Delhi in March 1982, Mr Sato provided a brief historical perspective of the Japanese involvement in the Asian Forum which is worth quoting:

“We in Asia have 57 per cent of the world population of 4.6 billion. The countries of the steering committee members who have assembled here today themselves have a population of two billion. Therefore, the population of Asia is, above all, the most serious problem for us.

In Asia, the fulfilment of basic human needs such as health, food and education is still delayed and the people’s welfare is sacrificed for the attainment of prosperity. It is, therefore, necessary to think of a more humanitarian and well-balanced development. The Asian Forum will also be required to undertake such discussion from the view of long-term perspectives.

I spent three days in the city of New Delhi as a member of the Asian population Study Team. The team was composed of Former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi and the late General Draper and seven Japanese MPs.

Following this team’s study, in 1974 the Japanese Parliament Federation on Population was organized in Japan with 143 supra-partisan MP’s, except members of the Japan Communist Party, by the initiative of Mr. Kishi. Incidentally, this is the world’s first federation on population.

Since then, I have been calling for the formation of such parliamentary groups in other countries and have attended meetings for that purpose in Asia, North and South America, Europe and Asia.

Thus Parliamentarian groups were formed in seven countries, namely, the U.S.A, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Canada, the U.K. and West Germany in 1977. By the time the IPOPOP conference was held in Colombo,

Sri Lanka in 1979, such groups were formed in 25 countries with assistance from UNFPA.

In 1980, I attended, as an observer, the meeting of the ASEAN Parliamentarians in Kuala Lumpur and proposed holding the Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and development in Beijing. It is still fresh in our memory that the Beijing Conference was very successful and historical, thanks to efforts and co-operation of all those who attended the Conference.

On February 1 this year, the Asian Population and Development Association was established in Japan with Mr Tasuo Tanaka, Vice President of the Japanese Parliament Federation on Population, as Chairman. This Association will try its best efforts for the sound development of the Asian Forum” (4).

Mr Sato’s vision of the role of Asian parliamentarians and AFPPD remains as true today as it was in 1982.

JFPF has hosted a large number of international and regional meetings in Japan, including the sixth General Conference of AFPPD in Niigata in 1999 and several executive committee meetings of AFPPD. Working in close cooperation with APDA and AFPPD, it has sent Japanese parliamentary missions abroad and received parliamentary delegations from other countries.

A major concern of the JFPF, since its inception, has been resource mobilization for UNFPA and IPPF. For many years, the Japanese contribution to IPPF was folded into the contribution to UNFPA and the consultations and negotiations that took place annually between members of JFPF and senior government officials on allocation of resources for population covered both UNFPA and IPPF. The two contributions have been separated now.

As I have mentioned before, the Japanese contribution grew up steadily in the seventies and eighties due to the intervention of the parliamentarians belonging to JFPF. In recent years, the Japanese contribution did not grow at the same pace because of a decline in the over-all Japanese ODA and an increase in bilateral activities; in the last couple of years it has in fact gone down and the fear is that it may go down further in future. However, the parliamentary group continues to press the case for larger allocations to population activities in general and UNFPA in particular.

Korea (Republic of)

The parliamentary group in Korea organizes an annual Asia-Pacific parliamentarians' conference on the environment. As the Republic of Korea increases its official development assistance (ODA), Korean parliamentarians may play a more active role in seeking larger allocations in the budgetary process for population, environment and development programmes. The Korean Parliamentary League on Children, Population and Environment (CPE) is expected to play a crucial role in this regard.

Two chairpersons of this committee have gone on to become Prime Ministers of Korea, Lee Hea Chan in 2004 and Mrs. Han Myeong Sook in 2006.

Lao

The Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development is another new member of AFPPD. Under the Hewlett project, it undertook a survey in 2005 covering 78 out of 100 members of parliament. In general, a majority of parliamentarians interviewed agreed that the current population growth rate in Lao is high and has an impact on the socio-economic development of the country. They also agreed that the ideal age of marriage is 18 years or above, that the ideal number of children is two and that men should be actively involved in family planning activities. Based on the findings of the survey, the committee plans to undertake further information and advocacy activities.

Malaysia

Malaysian parliamentarians have been involved in AFPPD since its inception; and the national group in Malaysia affiliated to AFFPD, which is located at the parliament buildings and has a small full-time staff, organizes regular briefings and meetings for its members. Mrs Rahmah Osman served as the Deputy Secretary General of AFPPD during 1984-1987 and as its Executive Director since then has remained active at national and regional levels. Many others who were active in the Malaysian group as well as AFPPD have gone on to assume senior responsibilities in the government. Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the current Prime Minister, was a Malaysian delegate to the 1981 Beijing conference and an active participant in the activities of the Malaysian group for many years. The current chairman of the group Zainal Abidin Zin is now a minister in the Prime Minister's office.

The survey carried out by the Malaysian committee under the Hewlett project in 2005 covered 60 out of the total of 134 members of parliament, 61 out of 51 members of the senate and 102 out of 375 members of the state assemblies. Compared to some of the other national surveys, the Malaysian survey sought to gauge the opinions of the respondents on a wider range of topics including the question on how to balance population growth with level of economic development. A majority felt that the population growth rate was just about right, while about one third felt that the growth rate was too low and about 10 percent felt that the growth rate was too high. A majority was also supportive of family planning, and while supporting efforts to control HIV/AIDS, most of them felt that the use of condoms to prevent sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS should be confined to married individuals. On introduction of sex education in schools, there was a wide divergence of opinions. Violence against women and child abuse were recognized as serious problems requiring urgent measures.

The AFPPD Malaysia has hosted several major regional events, including the 4th General Conference of AFPPD in 1993. From 12-14 December 2004, it co-hosted

along with AFPPD, IMPO and the Malaysian Senate an International Medical Parliamentarians Conference with an Asian Focus in Kuala Lumpur.

Mongolia

Since 1998, the Standing Committee on Social Policy in the Mongolian Parliament serves the AFPPD affiliate in Mongolia.

The committee has given special attention to gender issues. In 2003, it sponsored a parliamentary workshop on gender mainstreaming in education and health and in 2004 it organized, with AFPPD support, a national workshop on gender issues in the educational sector.

The committee has also been active at regional level. In 1999, it organized a parliamentary meeting for members of parliament from Central and East Asia.

New Zealand

New Zealand was represented in the past by individual MPs in AFPPD activities; but in 1999, a regular group of parliamentarians was formed in New Zealand and its members have participated in most of AFPPD activities since The New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population seeks to increase debate and information about global population issues, including reproductive and sexual health, especially in the Pacific Island nations, and to increase New Zealand's contribution to reproductive health-related projects in Asia and the Pacific. Over the past five years, New Zealand has substantially increased its contribution to UNFPA and the parliamentary group in New Zealand has played an important role in this regard.

Ms Steve Chadwick, a member of New Zealand parliament serves as the chairwoman of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Women. In June 2006, the New Zealand group hosted the Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference on Gender Responsive Governance – the Key to the Population and Development Agenda in Wellington, with participation of more than 70 members of parliament and ministers from the Asia-Pacific region.

Pakistan

The committee in Pakistan has participated in many of AFPPD meetings. It organizes briefings for parliamentarians on population and development issues, working in cooperation with the Ministry of Population Welfare, Government of Pakistan.

In 2005, it supported the organization of a sub-regional seminar on HIV/AIDS, sponsored by the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA).

Philippines

The Philippines Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) was set up soon after the 1981 Beijing conference. Mrs Leticia Ramos Shahani, a former senior UN official and a Philippines Senator, was its first President and served in that capacity for several years. With support from UNFPA and several other donor agencies, the Committee was able to raise enough resources to set up a full-time office in the parliament premises. The Committee has undertaken a number of research projects and surveys for parliamentarians, provided regular briefings to parliamentarians on population and related issues and hosted a number of regional events in Manila.

PLCPD provides regular briefings to legislators on population issues and its leadership has sponsored or supported legislative action on specific population and related issues in order to revise and update the laws in the Philippines in order to incorporate international norms and standards. Senator Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Co-Chairman of the group, was a co-author of the landmark anti-rape law in 1997. The law expanded the definition of rape and reclassified rape as a crime against persons rather than a crime against chastity.

The Philippines Legislators Committee has also been an active participant in the work of AFPPD. Mrs Shahani was one of AFPPD Vice-Presidents in the early nineties and led a standing committee of parliamentarians on women during that period. A few years ago, her contribution to the population field was recognized internationally by the decision of the United Nations to award her the UN Population Award.

In 2005, the committee carried out a Person-to-Person Advocacy Project (PPAP) within the framework of the Hewlett grant to AFPPD. Its research team gathered data on the members of the Philippines Congress, followed by interviews with 163 members of the Congress. In its final report, the committee lists the following major findings:

- Among the legislators, there appears to be a high degree of awareness of population and development issues;
- A high number of legislators are supportive, in varying degrees, of integration of population issues in development planning;
- Most legislators have heard of the debate on reproductive health, but according to the Report prepared by the Committee, there are strong indications that knowledge about this issue is still superficial and confused. The top concerns enjoying a wide margin of support include prevention of HIV/AIDS (98%), provision of safe motherhood service (97%), and male involvement (95%). The most contentious reproductive health concerns include contraceptive use (19%) and sex education (10%).
- Most legislators highly favour measures installing local structures to provide reproductive health information and services to poor communities; They are concerned about the impact of servicing costs on allocation of resources for social services,
- Legislators highly support a debt audit measure to address the debt problem.

Other favourable debt management options include a cap on borrowings, debt service reduction, debt conversion, and the creation of a debt management council. The least popular option is debt cancellation or write-off.

- Most legislators favour settling priorities for land use, especially areas to be protected for environmental purposes and food security.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka was the host of the first ever International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development cosponsored by UNFPA and IPU in 1979, Dr Ranjit Atapattu who played a major role in bringing that conference to Sri Lanka also served as the Secretary General of the Asian Conference on Population and Development held in Beijing, China in 1981. As I have mentioned before, it was the 1981 Asian Conference which decided to establish AFPPD.

During budgetary debates in the parliament, members of the Sri Lanka committee have argued regularly for strengthening of family planning and reproductive health programmes. In 2004, the national group organized, with UNFPA support, 10 seminars on population and reproductive health issues for local elected officials; and in 2005 the committee hosted the Third Asian Conference of Women Parliamentarians and Ministers on Population and Development on Engendering MDGs: A Challenge.

Thailand

Thailand's Senate Committee on Public Health is a member of AFPPD since the formation of AFPPD. In 1990, the secretariat of AFPPD moved from New Delhi to Bangkok. The Senate of Thailand and AFPPD signed a formal memorandum of understanding to facilitate the establishment of the secretariat in Bangkok.

Thai parliamentarians have conducted a village level (Tambon) programme for elected representatives on HIV/AIDS. They have also supported legislation on the elimination of violence against women and reproductive health issues.

Thai parliamentarians, at the request of the AFPPD secretariat, have represented AFPPD in a large number of international and regional events

Vietnam

The Chair and members of the Vietnam Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (VAPPD) are drawn from the Social Affairs Committee of the Parliament. Over the last several years, they have developed a series of major activities on population and development themes. The parliamentary group has organized national seminars on several topics such as population and safe water, internal migration, social policy for the elderly, population and sex education in schools..

VAPPD issues regular newsletters and publications on population and development issues and has an ongoing project for elected officials on advocacy on population, reproductive health and development right down to the village level. It has been actively involved in the formulation and promulgation of national policies and laws on water resources, disability and poverty elimination. In its activities, VAPPD has received a great deal of support from the UNFPA field office in Vietnam.

Most recently, VAPPD was involved in soliciting the views of parliamentarians on the promulgation of legislation on population policy. VAPPD receives support from UNDP for many of its activities

New Committees in Central Asia

In the last several years, through the efforts of AFPPD, three national groups have come up in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) while the remaining two countries in the sub-region (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) have become associate members. The new groups in Central Asia have participated in many of the recent activities of AFPPD and the AFPPD Secretariat has begun issuing a new newsletter in Russian, for use by parliamentarians and senior officials in Central Asia. Parliamentarians from this region are increasingly active in population and reproductive health issues. Every year, a Central Asian parliamentary Conference is organized to generate and sustain undertaking a suitable environment for population and development programmes.

Person-to-Person Advocacy

An interesting and innovative AFPPD initiative, which was funded by the Hewlett Foundation to assess and enhance the awareness, understanding and commitment of individual parliamentarians on family planning and reproductive health issues, came to a conclusion in 2006. Parliamentarians from four countries – Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines – were initially involved in the programme. It was subsequently extended to Lao, and India was added to the project by AFPPD utilizing its own resources. The outcomes of survey undertaken in these six countries have been mentioned earlier under country profiles.

The Person-to-Person Advocacy Project succeeded in involving very large numbers of legislators not only at the central level but also at local and state levels and seems to have been quite successful in bringing about a better understanding among them of a variety of population and development issues. It has also helped to identify specific themes and issues relevant to national situations. According to the latest AFPPD evaluation, “PPAP, as an approach for parliamentary advocacy, shows great promise as it provides a unique opportunity to engage large numbers of the legislators, who are often busy, in discussions of issues such as maternal health, HIV/AIDS, adolescent reproductive health, linkages between population, poverty and the environment, violence against women, and to seek their support in policy development, increase in the resource allocation for social sector, and in monitoring and advocating for related programmes at the constituency/Local levels.” (5)

With the holding of several sub-regional workshops, the project has come to an end now. If funding were available, it would be very useful for AFPPD to implement a new phase of this project, monitoring the results in the countries included in the first phase and extending the project to another set of countries.

Communication Strategy

Under its communication strategy, AFPPD has published and distributed since 1990 a regular newsletter which aims at providing information on parliamentary activities on population and development issues. It also provides a forum for exchange of views and opinions on such issues.

AFPPD's monthly e-news is an additional source of information on parliamentary activities at national regional and international levels. It is sent to around 3500 subscribers by e-mail.

AFPPD also publishes and distributes regularly reports on all its events as well as comprehensive reports on its programmes and activities on specific themes.

Overview

At this stage, Asia and the Pacific region has a large number of well-organized national groups of parliamentarians interested and involved in population and development issues. Those in Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam are staffed by full-time personnel and undertake on a regular basis organization of briefings and meetings for parliamentarians, receiving and sending of delegations, issuance of newsletters and other publications, and participation in regional and international events. Many such activities are undertaken by national groups in other countries as well, using the facilities provided by parliamentary standing committees or the parliaments themselves. Irregularity or cancellation of elections has hindered or hampered the work of some of these groups; but they all seem to bounce back after brief periods of time.

Strengthening of the secretariats of the national committees through core training and refresher courses will certainly increase the effectiveness and outreach of the AFPPD national committees. AFPPD has organized a training programme for selected staff members of national committees on an annual basis since 2003. The programme does not, however, have earmarked funding and has therefore been organized on an ad hoc basis. The training programme requires a well prepared curriculum and could involve in future as resource persons not only AFPPD staff but also staff members from some of the stronger committees.

One principle that AFPPD has always held on to is that its officers and Executive Committee members must be current members of parliament. On a couple of occasions, strict adherence to this principle has disrupted some of the work of AFPPD; but on the whole this has enabled AFPPD to maintain its credibility as a genuine organi-

zation of parliamentarians themselves.

Through their conferences and meetings, press and media activities, and parliamentary interventions and statements, AFPPD and its national committees have had considerable success in focussing public attention in their countries and in the region as a whole on major population and development issues. They have also helped to generate public debate on some of the emerging issues through various forums. It is somewhat more difficult to quantify the exact amount of influence AFPPD and its national groups have had on the national legislative processes. However, we know that several of the national groups have regularly researched and compiled materials for their members on specific population issues, to be used for parliamentary questions and debates. Parliamentarians regularly report to their parliaments on return from UN and AFPPD conferences and it can be said with some degree of confidence that individual parliamentarians associated with AFPPD and their national groups have played a decisive role in influencing national policy decisions and legislative actions on several of the major recommendations made by international UN conferences, particularly Cairo and Beijing, on reproductive health, family planning and status of women issues. More recently, AFPPD national committees in Cambodia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam have sponsored successful legislative initiatives on HIV/AIDS and violence against women.

Throughout this period of 25 years, the parliamentary group in Japan has played an unparalleled role in persuading the Japanese Government to allocate more funds for population activities to be channelled through UNFPA and IPPF. This role will become even more crucial, given the current crisis in Japanese ODA allocations and the need to set priorities within the reduced budgets. It is to be hoped that parliamentarians in Australia, New Zealand, Korea and other countries in a position to do so will take similar action in favour of larger allocations for population assistance.

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*INTER-REGIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION*

Promoting Cooperation with Other Regions

The Asian Forum was the first regional organization of parliamentarians on population and development to emerge out of the recommendations of the Colombo conference. The second one was the Inter-American Group of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPG), which was established at the Western Hemisphere Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development held in Brasilia, Brazil in 1982. The Secretariat of IAPG was set up at the IPPF, Western Hemisphere Regional Office in New York and for many years the head of the IPPF regional office in New York also served as the Executive Director of IAPG. IAPG has now set up its own offices and has a full-time Executive Director. AFPPD and IAPG have been represented at each other's meetings and have a long history of collaboration in jointly organizing interregional conferences.

A couple of years after the Colombo conference, an African Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development was sponsored by IPU in cooperation with UNFPA in Nairobi, Kenya in 1982. Another parliamentary conference for Africa, organized by the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD) took place in Harare, Zimbabwe in May 1986. But, following these conferences, attempts to set up a regional structure for cooperation among parliamentarians in Africa were only partially successful. GCPPD also organized a separate meeting for Arab parliamentarians in Tunis in 1984. However, it was only in 1994 when, taking advantage of the presence of a large number of African and Arab parliamentarians in Cairo for ICPD and the related parliamentarians conference, a Steering Committee was set up to establish a regular framework of networking and cooperation among African and Arab parliamentarians on population and development issues. The Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) which exists today comes out of the efforts of this steering committee. AFPPD provided the technical services of its Executive Director throughout the entire preparatory process leading to the establishment of FAAPPD, with UNFPA support, in 1997. A joint Meeting of African and Asian Parliamentarians on Population, Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS was organized in Tokyo on 29-30 November 2001, by AFPPD in cooperation with FAAPPD, and with the support of UNFPA, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Trust Fund for Parliamentarians. The Meeting was attended by 51 parliamentarians from 29 African and Asian countries. Proposals for action on such as issues as reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, food security and water management were presented, immediately after the joint meeting, to the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III) by Mr Yoshio Yatsu, Chairman of AFPPD.

The European region is the latest to establish a regional network of parliamentarians. A small group of European parliamentarians started the process in Cairo and at a formal meeting held at the time of The Hague Forum, a decision was taken to form the European Forum. The Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEPPFD) came into existence in 2001. It has 16 member groups, and has a small secretariat based in Brussels. Its 2001 annual report acknowledges its debt to AFPPD by stating that "The AFPPD, as the oldest parliamentary forum, has been a constant source of support and an example for the development of IEPPFD. It is

thanks to the AFPPD that the IEPFPD has been able to launch an initiative to create all party parliamentary groups in Central and East European countries” (1).

International Conferences

AFPPD was listed as one of the organizations sponsoring the International Conference of Parliamentarians that took place in Mexico City subsequent to the International Population Conference in 1984. However, the main responsibility for the organization and management of this Conference was undertaken by the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD), under the direction of Mr Akio Matsumura. The Parliamentarians’ Conference was hosted by the Parliament of Mexico and was addressed by former Prime Minister Fukuda, Mr Salas and Antonio Carrillo Flores Secretary-general of the 1974 World Population Conference. The Conference endorsed the recommendations of the UN Conference and called upon parliamentarians to work towards further realization of the goals set by UN Conferences in Bucharest (1974) and Mexico City (1984).

The first international meeting for which the Asian Forum had the major organizational responsibility was the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, held in conjunction with the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Conference was organized by AFPPD, along with the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD), the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG), the International Medical Parliamentarian Organization (IMPO) and the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA). The Conference was provided technical and financial support by UNFPA and IPPF.

The International Conference of Parliamentarians that took place in Cairo on 2-3 September 1994 just prior to ICPD was organized by AFPPD, in cooperation with several other parliamentary groups. It was inaugurated by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, and attended by 300 parliamentarians from 107 countries around the world. The Cairo Declaration adopted by consensus at the Parliamentarians Conference made several specific recommendations on population and sustainable development, reproductive health and family planning, gender equality and empowerment of women, health and mortality, and resource mobilization, called upon the parliamentarians everywhere to work towards the early implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, once adopted. In all of these areas, the recommendations made by the parliamentarians mirror the positions taken subsequently by the main conference. For example, the parliamentarians “welcome the approach that places family planning in the broader framework of reproductive health care” (2) Further on, they “acknowledge the fact that abortions constitute a major health concern for women all over the world. Since the use of family planning methods may prevent the prevalence of unwanted pregnancies, we call upon all national Governments to reduce the need for abortion by providing universal access to family planning information and services”(3).

In a formal address to ICPD, Mr Shin Sakurai presented the Cairo Declaration to ICPD on 8 September, expressing the hope that its essence would be reflected the

ICPD Programme of Action (as turned out to be the case). Many of the parliamentarians who participated in the ICPPD also attended the ICPD, very often serving as members of their national delegations. As mentioned earlier, one of the by-products of ICPPD was the agreement in principle to establish the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD).

Two international meetings were organized by AFPPD in 1995, to coincide with the Copenhagen Social Summit and the Beijing Conference on Women. The Copenhagen Conference which had the same sponsors and supporters as the one in Cairo was held on 4-5 March at the Danish Parliament. It brought together 73 parliamentarians from 53 countries sharing a commitment to solving the problems associated with population and development pressures. A Statement issued by the parliamentarians at the end of the Copenhagen meeting supported a clear linkage between the outcomes of Cairo and Copenhagen Conferences and called upon parliamentarians to redouble their efforts to secure the necessary resources for the implementation of the activities set forth in the two programmes of action. Most of the parliamentarians stayed on to participate in the UN World Summit on Social Development.

The second event in 1995 was the International Meeting of Parliamentarians on Gender, Population and Development that took place in Tokyo, Japan on 31 August-1 September 1995, prior to the Beijing Conference on Women (Beijing, 4-15 September 1995) and was attended by 91 parliamentarians from 57 countries. The main topics discussed at this meeting were those on the agenda of the Beijing Conference and the meeting enabled the participants planning to attend the Beijing Conference and the associated NGO events to prepare themselves better for the discussions there. The Tokyo Declaration reiterated the recommendations on gender issues adopted at Cairo and proposed their inclusion in the outcome of the Beijing Conference.

On 10-11 November 1996, AFPPD, in cooperation with various regional and international groups, organized in Geneva, Switzerland an International Meeting on Food Security, Population and Development. The meeting took place just before the World Food Summit organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome. The Declaration adopted in Geneva identifies food as a basic human need and as a fundamental human right and suggests that food security and related social development programmes should be given the highest priority on development agenda. It also notes the need to eradicate poverty, to improve access to food and to consider early stabilization of population as a primary condition for realizing sustainable food security.

When UNFPA began preparing for The Hague Forum on ICPD+5, AFPPD was asked to take the responsibility of organizing an International Forum for Parliamentarians on ICPD+5, as an associated event, also in The Hague. Probably the biggest event of its kind in many years, the International Forum was held on 4-6 February 1999 and brought together 210 parliamentarians from 103 countries. A large number of organizations cooperated with AFPPD in organizing this impressive global event. In the conference brochures FAAPPD, IAPG, the Working Group on Population, Sustainable Development and Reproductive Health in the European Parliament, GCPPD, IMPO and GPA were listed as cooperating organizations, IPPF, the All Party Parliamentarians Group on Population and Development of UK, and the World Population

Foundation (WPF) of the Netherlands as collaborating organizations, and UNFPA as a supporting organization. UNFPA provided a major part of the financing for the event, and also staff support, including several reports officers.

The Conference Declaration noted some progress “in implementing key areas of the ICPD Programme of Action through policy formulation, programme redesign, increased partnerships and collaboration, and increased resource allocation; However, many challenges still remain”(4). The declaration went on to suggest specific actions in the areas of reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender and population, adolescents, youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities, population, environment and food security, resource mobilization, and economic crisis. The declaration emphasized the importance of parliamentarians’ networks and welcomed the contribution of a large variety of national, regional and international groups.

The declaration was submitted by Mr Shin Sakurai to the UNFPA-sponsored International Forum for the Operational Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (8-12 February 1999). Later, Mr. Sakurai also presented it to the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on ICPD+5 Review.

AFPPD was actively involved in the recent international parliamentary meetings organized by UNFPA (Ottawa, Canada and Strasbourg, France) and its chairman Mr Yatsu chaired the drafting committee at both Ottawa and Strasbourg conferences. AFPPD also organized the third meeting in this series (Bangkok, November 2006).

In recent years, AFPPD has cosponsored a number of regional and international events with the International Medical Parliamentarians Organization (IMPO), which shares many common interests and concerns with AFPPD and many of whose leaders including Dr Taro Nakayama of Japan and Dr Prasop Ratnakorn of Thailand have also been actively involved in AFPPD. The first International Conference of Medical Parliamentarians which was organized by IMPO in Bangkok from 6 to 8 February 1994, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) was provided extensive technical and logistical support by the AFPPD Secretariat. IMPO has been granted observer status by the World Health Organization (WHO). Since then, the AFPPD Secretariat has served as the organizing secretariat for subsequent conferences of IMPO, including the IMPO Conference with an Asian focus on MDGs, Poverty and Health, in Bangkok on 13-14 December 2004.

AFPPD has cooperated with the UNFPA Country Support Team (CST) based in Bangkok in the organization of special events. For example, AFPPD and the UNFPA CST Team for East and South-East Asia organized an Inter-Country Workshop on Parliamentary Advocacy for the Elimination of Violence against Women in Bangkok, Thailand on 19-21 June 2001. The purpose was to inform and sensitise the participants on key issues such as domestic/family violence; rape; trafficking in women; prostitution; violence in armed conflict; violence against refugees, minority groups, women migrants and those in institutions or under detention. The action plan drawn up by the participants seeks to obtain the support of policy and decision makers to develop appropriate legislation and policies and to encourage them to campaign in support of elimination of violence against women in all forms.

As mentioned before, AFPPD has organized several women ministers' and parliamentarians' conferences as well as national activities on gender issues, including legislation on violence against women.

The AFPPD secretariat has also worked with the UNFPA CST team for South Asia based in Kathmandu, Nepal in the organization of several events with focus on South Asia. Furthermore, it has worked closely with the UN Joint Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) in organizing seminars and conferences focussing on HIV/AIDS. In 1999, an Inter-Country Meeting of Parliamentarians and Specialists on HIV/AIDS and STDs in East and South-East Asia (Bangkok, 12-14 November 1999) was organized jointly by AFPPD, the UNFPA Country Support Team and the UNAIDS Asia-Pacific Inter-country team. Another recent example was the Inter-country Workshop on Networking and Partnership between Young People and Governments on HIV/AIDS Prevention in East and South-East Asia (Bangkok, 18-22 March 2002) involving UNAIDS and UNFPA regional teams, the AFPPD Secretariat, the Japanese Ministry of Health and the Japan International Cooperation Agency on Health and Welfare. As a follow-up to HIV/AIDS related events, national committees in several countries have promoted or supported legislative measures on HIV/AIDS.

The AFPPD secretariat has clearly gained a great deal of experience and expertise over the last decade in organizing international events in cooperation with other international organizations and this will enable it to organize such events in the future with increasing efficiency and effectiveness. AFPPD has already demonstrated its ability to organize these events on the most economical basis possible. Borrowing from UNFPA and other relevant organizations, it is in a position to put together the staff needed for administration, financial management, reporting, and conference services. And finally, its staff has acquired sufficient political sensitivity to deal with difficult issues that are bound to arise at any international gathering these days.

Technical Assistance to National Groups

The AFPPD secretariat has regularly provided technical assistance, and depending on the availability of resources, funding to its national committees for the organization of specific national activities. Since 2002, it has also organized capacity building workshops and training courses for staff members of national committees.

However, what is not so well known is the fact that it has also provided technical assistance to national parliamentary groups outside the Asian region. The Secretariat was consulted on the formation of a new Canadian group of parliamentarians-the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and development (CAPPD) and provided it both technical and financial support. In 1998, it organized a study visit to Vietnam and Japan by eight Canadian parliamentarians in cooperation with CAPPD. The visit was supported by UNFPA and involved visits to health and family planning centres and meetings with health workers and policy makers and programme managers in Vietnam. In Japan, the delegation members met with members of Japanese parliament who are active on population and development issues.

Japan Trust Fund

Japanese parliamentarians associated with JPFP and AFPPD were able to persuade the Government of Japan to establish a Trust Fund to promote the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action by providing financial support for parliamentary activities on population and development, including those sponsored by AFPPD. The Trust Fund has provided substantial financial support to the regional parliamentarians' groups in Africa and Latin America. It has also given some support to the activities of the regional group in Europe.

The AFPPD also provides technical appraisal of the projects submitted by its national groups for funding to the Japan Trust Fund. The trust fund which receives \$ 1 million a year from the Government of Japan is administered by UNFPA. By now, all the national groups that form part of AFPPD have received small grants from the trust fund for training and awareness creation projects, and this has been quite useful to them in expanding their activities.

Overview

Over the past 25 years, AFPPD has actively supported other regional groups of parliamentarians and organized or sponsored an increasing number of international events for parliamentarians. It is seen as a credible and reliable partner by intergovernmental organizations (such as UNFPA, WHO, the World Bank, ADB, OECD and Global Health Fund Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS) as well as NGOs in the planning and implementation of a variety of activities aimed at increasing the awareness and understanding among parliamentarians on population and development issues and promoting networking among them. Many of these activities have also received a great deal of support from the Japan Trust Fund and various regional divisions and CST teams of UNFPA.

Donors may wish to consider building up the technical capacity of the AFPPD secretariat so that it is able to provide not only logistical support for the organization of international activities as well as activities in other regions but also substantive and technical support. The leadership of AFPPD is already considering longer term strategic planning so as to determine, inter alia, the role it wants to play both within the region and outside the region and it needs to be encouraged and supported in this endeavour.

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THE TASKS AHEAD

The Past and the Future

When attempting to see the future, it is always wise to look at the past first. When the Asian Forum was set up in 1982, its founders had carefully defined for it a number of objectives. These are listed in the constitution of AFPPD. The broad objectives of the Forum were “to contribute to the establishment of lasting world peace, to encourage and promote parliamentary activities which are aimed at facilitating population and development policies designed to improve the living standard and welfare of the people in Asia as well as those parliamentary activities aimed at obtaining the support of the government and people toward this cause” (1)

The constitution then enumerates the specific activities to be undertaken by AFPPD:

“More specifically, the activities may include the following:

- a.) To establish and promote collaboration amongst parliamentarians, their associates and institutions in all the countries in Asia in the development, utilization and sharing of data, information, research findings, expertise and experience pertaining to population and development;
- b) To facilitate the dissemination and utilization of information and resources to promote solutions to the problems of population and Development;
- c) To facilitate, support, sponsor and organize meetings and conferences of parliamentarians as well as expert meetings, seminars, workshops and training programmes in population and development;
- d) To facilitate, support and sponsor new and continuing research toward a better understanding of and solutions to the problems in population and development, especially as they apply to the countries of Asia;
- e) To facilitate, support, sponsor, produce and disseminate and circulate documentation, translations, publications, scientific and research findings, newsletters and promotional materials relating to population and development;
- f) To establish and augment the financial resources needed to render the Forum capable of fulfilling its functions and responsibilities;
- g) To formulate and implement relevant projects and programmes and to serve as a channel of communication and collaboration amongst parliamentarians;
- h) To encourage and promote the formation of national groups of parliamentarians on population and development in those countries of Asia in which national groups have not yet been formed and to support such national groups of parliamentarians so as
 1. To increase awareness and promote the understanding of the interrelationships between population and development;

2. To initiate, promote and support exchanges and exchange programmes amongst parliamentarians in Asia- and amongst them and parliamentarians in other countries of the world- to encourage new and effective ideas and approaches to population and development issues;
3. To promote a continuing dialogue between parliamentarians, on the one hand, and social economic and population planners and implementers at local, national, regional and global levels, on the other;” (2)

The review of the work of the AFPPD in previous pages presents a positive picture of accomplishments towards these objectives. Through its reports and publications and more recently through its website, AFPPD has provided updated information and a variety of views on current and emerging population and development issues and has drawn attention to the experience of governments, NGOs and the international community in seeking solutions. It has a vast amount of experience and expertise in organizing and sponsoring national, regional and international conferences and meetings; and it has sponsored a number of training programmes on population and development issues. It has helped the formation and functioning of more than 25 national parliamentary groups on population and development. Many of these committees have full-time staff members and are able to raise funds for their activities from both local and international donors. . It has promoted and supported exchanges among parliamentarians within the region and between parliamentarians in Asia and the Pacific and major geographical regions. The technical support and expertise it has provided to two other regions of the world in building up their own regional networks has been praised in a fulsome manner by the leaders of those networks. And finally, it has begun to diversify its sources of funding, receiving support from a number of foundations, while continuing to receive grants from UNFPA, IPPF and a number of bilateral aid agencies.

At the 8th AFPPD General Assembly in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2005, Mrs. Thoraya Obaid pinpointed several specific tasks that Asian parliamentarians can undertake in future and that are also relevant to the future work programme of AFPPD:

1. Help policy makers understand that a healthy population is the greatest asset that a country can have;
2. Enact laws and policies to support women’s empowerment and put mechanisms in place to monitor the implementation of these laws;
3. Bridge the gap between the sensitivity of cultural practices, religious interpretations and issues of population and reproductive health through legislation and the budgets you allocate;
4. Create an enabling environment for the promotion and implementation of reproductive health legislation by your capacity to understand and mobilize the positive forces of our cultures and beliefs (3).

In 2004, AFPPD published a compilation of interviews with selected parliamentarians from its member countries setting out their views and opinions on population and development issues of importance in the national context and on the role AFPPD has played and should continue to play in future. Titled *Parliamentarians Perspectives*, the

publication demonstrates support and appreciation for the contribution AFPPD has made to understanding of and action on these issues and offers several specific suggestions on how the activities of AFPPD and its national committees could be strengthened in future. These include provision of accurate and updated data and information, reporting on successful programmes and projects, and encouraging and supporting the participation of additional members of parliament from various political parties in the work of AFPPD and its national committees.

A review and evaluation undertaken by a consultant of the activities of AFPPD and its national committees, which essentially covers the period of 2001-2005, identifies several areas where these activities could be strengthened and made more effective (4).

Almost all of these – building up of the technical capacity within AFPPD and its national committees, monitoring and follow of activities, particularly at the national level, and planning and implementation of longer term strategies – ultimately come down to availability and sustainability of funding. UNFPA has supported the core activities of AFPPD since the beginning, and in recent years the Japan Trust Fund has provided support for several of the activities of AFPPD as also of other regional groups. AFPPD has received support from the Hewlett Foundation for a four -year project; but it is not clear whether this project will continue in future. UNFPA and the Japan Trust Fund are the two funding sources that are likely to continue providing regular support to AFPPD in the foreseeable future. Whether they can also provide support for some or all of the activities highlighted in the evaluation report needs to be explored fully. Awareness creation among parliamentarians must be seen by the donor agencies as a continuous exercise, as membership of the parliaments changes often and new generations of parliamentarians need to receive briefings and updates on current and emerging issues and trends in population and development.

The national committees of parliamentarians should, of course, explore possibilities for further support within their own countries, particularly from the relevant government departments, parliaments and the private sector. In some countries, this is already happening. But given the rapid economic growth of many Asian countries, more funding may become available from all three sectors in future and the national committees must work energetically to seek such funding.

One area which should receive greater attention in the work of AFPPD in the future is the compilation and dissemination of information on basic data, operational research findings and national legislative action on major issues of concern to its membership. Most of this information is already available in one form or another. However, it needs to be brought to the attention of parliamentarians on a regular basis as hard copy and through its website; and AFPPD may have to consider expanding and reorganizing its staff capacity to undertake this critical task.

When the Asian Forum was established, the population of Asia was estimated at 2.6 billion. In 25 years it has grown to more than 3.95 billion. It is fair to ask if the work of the Asian Forum, its national committees or indeed of the Asian parliamentarians as policy advocates and legislators has made any difference.

The annual rate of population growth in Asia has declined from around 1.8 per cent annually to 1.1 per cent annually (5). The goal, promoted by the founders of AFPPD, of reducing annual population growth rate to 1 per cent has thus not been fully reached; but there has been a significant decline in fertility rates in most of the countries and all indications are that except for a few countries, the population growth rate in Asia will continue to slow down further. AFPPD and its national groups can take some of the credit for much greater awareness and knowledge, in the Asian countries, of the interrelationship between population and development issues and of the commitments and agreements reached by the international community towards the solution of these issues. This in turn has led to more effective action by governments and NGOs on education, provision of better and more comprehensive health services, including reproductive health, and improvements in the role and status of women- all of which have been instrumental in achieving substantial declines in levels of fertility and annual population growth rates.

Infant and maternal mortality rates have also gone down in the region; though in many countries they still remain extremely high by international standards. More couples are practising family planning, but there are disadvantaged and poor populations that still do not have adequate access to family planning and reproductive health services. Literacy has spread, and increasing numbers of children, including girl children, are going to school. Yet a large number of adults remain illiterate. The numbers and percentage of the middle class have increased in many countries; but poverty still remains endemic in South and South-East Asia.

The progress on the population front we see today remains mixed and uneven. There have also been considerable improvements in the legal, economic and social conditions of women; but there are countries where the situation in this regard has not changed much.

Much, therefore, remains to be done in the area of population and development. In so many ways, the tasks before the parliamentarians remain as urgent as they were twenty-five years ago. The Asian Forum and its members and associates face the challenge and the responsibility to continue striving towards the achievement of those goals they set for themselves 25 years ago.

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ANNEXES

BEIJING DECLARATION
30 October 1981

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Parliamentarians from nineteen countries of Asia attending the first Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Beijing from 27th October to 30th October 1981 in addressing ourselves to the interrelationship between Population and Development:
 - Note the efforts made by countries of Asia in social and economic development and their initiatives in the formulation and implementation of population policies and family planning programmes during the last two decades, which have contributed significantly to the decline in the global birth rate;
 - Recognise the inextricable relationships between population, resources and environment in the efforts to manage issues of poverty, employment and development and, in this regard, reaffirm the objectives and goals of the Colombo Declaration on Population and Development and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Resources, Population and Development;
 - Reiterate the need for the countries of Asia to adopt an approach which will ensure the appropriate integration of resources and population in the formulation and implementation of their development policies and programmes;
 - Affirm the need for closer co-operation among countries of Asia in their endeavours to accelerate and advance the social and economic well being of their peoples while respecting the national sovereignty of each country;
 - Reaffirm the need for continuous efforts towards the early realisation and establishment of the New International Economic Order for a just and equitable distribution of the world's resources, and stress that these goals be realized through strengthening the bonds of solidarity and co-operation between and amongst the countries of Asia;
2. Acknowledging the diversity in religion and beliefs as well as culture and traditions, and mindful of the differences in social, economic and political conditions in the countries of Asia, we recognise, however, that we share many common concerns;
 - That the current population of Asia is estimated to be 2.6 billion, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the total world population, and that by the year 2000 it is expected to increase by another billion;
 - That 90 per cent of the world's poor live in Asia and if present trends continue, this situation will further deteriorate. This large proportion of our population suffer from malnutrition, illiteracy and ill health and thus do not fully enjoy their basic human rights and the benefits of development;
 - That although women constitute nearly 50 per cent of the population of the countries of Asia, this important sector has not been accorded equal opportunity to effectively participate in the development process and share the

benefits thereof;

- That although nearly 60 per cent of total population in Asia is below the age of 25, estimated to be 1.5 billion in 1980, youth as a vibrant segment of human resources has not been provided adequate Parliamentary of the countries of opportunities for their development to the fullest potential as citizens and leaders of the future;
- That while many countries of Asia are endowed with abundant natural resources, the achievement of a long-term balance between population and resources in order to improve the quality of life for our people is constrained at present by a lack of the complementary factors essential for the effective and productive utilization of these resources;
- That the effects of the imbalance between population and resources are resulting in deforestation, soil erosion and other ecological changes leading to a deterioration of the natural environment which if unchecked will threaten the very human beings;
- That most countries of Asia and their developing countries predominantly depend on agricultural production and the exploitation of natural resources and do not realize the just and equitable benefits from their participation in the existing international economic system;
- That peace, national security and stability are preconditions for development, and unless these are guaranteed for Asia, all our efforts to better the quality of life our people cannot succeed.

OBJECTIVES

In view of the concerns as expressed in the Preamble and recognizing the need to deal with them more effectively, this Conference, therefore, addresses itself to the following objectives:

1. To promote co-operation and collaboration amongst Parliamentarians of the countries of Asia through greater and continuing interchange of experience and knowledge in population and development.
2. To further improve and enrich the quality of life of the peoples of Asia through a more effective utilization and management of resources by the integration of population, resources and environment in the development process.
3. To attain social justice and economic progress through a more effective mechanism to hasten the process of an integrated and balanced approach to population, resources and development at national, regional and international levels.
4. To consolidate the efforts and strengthen the co-operation between and

amongst countries of Asia to achieve the early realization and establishment of the New International Economic Order.

CALL TO ACTION

This Conference therefore calls on: All Parliaments of the Countries of Asia:

1. to encourage the formation of national groups of Parliamentarians concerned with the issues of population and development and through these groups to:
 - increase the awareness and promote greater understanding of the interrelationships between population and development amongst Parliamentarians;
 - initiate, promote and support exchange programmes amongst Parliamentarians from the countries of Asia and other countries of the world, in order to increase knowledge of, and to exchange experience dealing with the interrelationships between population and development so as to develop new ideas and approaches to these issues; □ promote continuing dialogue between Parliamentarians and social, economic and population planners and implementers at local, regional and international levels.

GOVERNMENTS OF THE COUNTRIES OF ASIA:

2. in formulating strategies and programmes for the socio-economic development of their peoples, not to ignore the wealth of intellectual, philosophical and cultural traditions, but to draw upon the richness of this knowledge and its scientific basis for direct application to planning and implementation efforts.
3. in consonance with national needs and aspirations, to demonstrate their political will and to give greater impetus in support of the existing population programmes and allocate adequate resources to meet the needs of the programme, in addition to the adoption of a comprehensive population policy as an integral part of national development plans.
4. to establish a national co-ordinating body, where it does not exist, for the formulation and effective implementation of population policies and programmes.
5. to undertake periodic population surveys and examine their population trends and the impact of these trends on health, education, agricultural and industrial development, housing and the environment.
6. to increase financial allocation for family planning and population programmes within their country according to their needs.
7. to stimulate and sustain community participation and involvement in population and development through efficient use of the mass media as well as

through effective mobilization and utilization of community resources.

8. to promote and strengthen the participation of non governmental voluntary organizations in programmes of population and development at local, national, regional and international level in a spirit of common endeavours and partnership. To this end the government should encourage non-governmental voluntary organizations to intensify efforts to accelerate the process of integration of population with development by according a pivotal place to their role within the framework of national policies.
9. to review the existing targets and goals in the implementation of population and development programmes so as to contribute to the attainment of the one per cent population growth for the Asian region by the year 2000.
10. to strengthen and expand socio-economic development programmes and ensure that development is directed towards reducing and narrowing social and economic disparities and thus hasten the creation of a just society.
11. to ensure that the development process includes emphasis on individual and community self-reliance by creating, among the people, greater self-confidence, social awareness and responsibility as well as political consciousness oriented towards a grass-root approach in development planning and implementation.
12. to plan an effective strategy for conservation of their natural resources and their effective utilization while being mindful of the need to safeguard the environment.
13. to widen the opportunities of women for equal participation at all levels in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of development, taking particular note of the United Nations Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade for Women in the field of Health, Education, and Labour at the Copenhagen Conference, July 1980.
14. to enact and implement laws on family rights, where necessary, to ensure full and equal rights for men and women and to raise the level of education of women to make possible an increase in their social responsibilities and rights, particularly in their role as mothers.
15. to initiate, promote and utilize studies and research for better understanding of the problems of youth so as to introduce programmes to harness these vast human resource in the best interest of future development
16. to promote basic and vocational education and training, to ensure continuing education, to integrate population education with formal and non-formal educational systems as a preparation for youth to become responsible citizens for their participation in development and population programmes.
17. to re-emphasize the importance of and inculcate the need to balance and incul-

cate the need to balance material development with spiritual values, particularly among the young, so as to achieve the fullest benefit from development.

18. to give greater consideration to increased incidence of drug addiction and sexually transmitted diseases.
19. to strive for the early achievement of the goals and objectives of the New International Economic Order by intensifying co-operative and collaborative efforts in areas of mutual interest.
20. to undertake measures to increase inter-Asian trade and economic co-operation so as to take the fullest advantage of any economic natural resources and the market potential existing among the countries of Asia.
21. to increase meaningful dialogue between the developed and the developing countries in order to improve trade relations and effect a more equitable share of resources, technology and expertise.

ALL GOVERNMENTS

22. to increase the overall allocation of international assistance to population programmes of UNFPA, other agencies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, and reaffirms the call of the Colombo Declaration on Population and Development to achieve an annual target of one billion (one thousand million) dollars for population assistance by 1984 and contributing governments to designate a meaningful proportion of their development aid to population programmes. The increased international assistance proposed here will require that the role and function of UNFPA be strengthened.
23. to strive for the cessation of the mass migration in the form of refugee movements caused by political and military aggression, taking particular note of the United Nations resolutions on this matter.
24. to strive for the cessation of the arms race as a step towards genuine disarmament and further utilization of the resources thus made available for the solution of population and development problems.

THE UNITED NATIONS

25. to hold a UN World Population Conference in 1984, as recommended in the Colombo Declaration, to review the Colombo Declaration, to review the Bucharest Conference on population and to make proposals for further action.
26. To declare an annual World Population Day as a measure to increase awareness and enhance the understanding of the population problems as they relate to development.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND ALL ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, THE WORLD BANK AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS AS WELL AS OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

27. to increase their financial support and contribution to governments of Asian countries in order to sustain and further promote the implementation of projects and programmes for integration of population with development.
28. to follow up this Conference. of Asian Parliamentarians on Population and Development by supporting the organization of similar conferences at least once in every three years.
29. to maintain close relationships with groups of Parliamentarians in this endeavours and support the organization of sub-regional meetings of Parliamentarians on the same subject on a regular basis.
30. to support the continuing efforts of Parliamentarians at Asian and sub-regional levels to effectively co-ordinate the activities of national groups of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.
31. to support the strengthening of existing training and research institutions in the field of reproductive health, contraceptive technology and population and development studies in Asia, and to establish greater co-operation and collaboration amongst Asian countries as well as to expedite the development of trained manpower and expertise in this field which will indeed hasten the process of integration of population with development.
32. to accord high importance to the non-governmental organizations for transforming, the family planning programme into a broad-based peoples' movement and to emphasize the role of the private sector in supporting the efforts of these organizations.
33. to support and consolidate programmes of non-governmental organizations which are consistent with national policies for integrating resources, population and development thereby facilitating the achievement of national goals. To this end, non-governmental organizations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IP PF) have a key role to play and should get increased support.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

34. to raise their efforts and level of participation in spreading information on population issues and in implementing family planning programmes within the framework of national policies, especially in remote and inaccessible areas where access to family planning is not normally available.

THE PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA

35. to provide positive coverage of population and development issues, so as to increase public awareness and understanding of these matters.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

36. to take into account the tremendous impact of population pressures on human, spiritual and physical well-being.

COMMITMENT

36. We, the Parliamentarians at this Conference, in our various capacities as legislators, community leaders and representatives of the people, commit and dedicate ourselves to continue initiating and pursuing actions to achieve effective integration of population into development policies and programme.

AS LEGISLATORS

- we will stimulate the interest and create awareness and understanding of the inter-relationships between population and development amongst fellow parliamentarians;
- we will promote the formation of groups of parliamentarians concerned with population and development at national, regional and international levels;
- we will ensure through appropriate legislative measures that adequate allocation of resources be provided for the implementation of projects and programmes designed to integrate population into development policies and programmes;
- we will participate in and support the implementation of policies and programmes so as to facilitate effective integration of population with development, and to ensure that the benefit will reach all levels of society, especially the poor and the under privileged;
- we will ensure that discussions and deliberations on population issues are guided by the best interest of the nation as a whole.

AS COMMUNITY LEADERS

- we will generate public support, participation and involvement to achieve optimum use of resources in implementation of programmes to improve the socio-economic level of people.

AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE

- we dedicate ourselves to function as the channel of communication for the articulation of the peoples' needs and involved in the assessment of the implementation of policies and programmes and to bring about the necessary adjustments and improvements.
- we, who are the closest link between government and the people, dedicate ourselves to carry the message of the interrelationships of population and development through grass-root organizations.

FINALLY, IN ALL THESE EFFORTS,

We commit ourselves to work closely with other organizations in order to realise the aims and objectives of this Declaration.

NEW DELHI DECLARATION
20 February 1984

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Parliamentarians from 24 countries of Asia attending the First conference of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in New Delhi from 17 to 20 February 1984, in addressing ourselves to the issues related to Population and Development:
 - Note with satisfaction the increased commitment of Parliamentarians to population programmes despite worsening global economic and political conditions since the Colombo Declaration on Population and Development in 1979; the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Resources, Population and Development in 1980; and Beijing Declaration on Population and Development in 1981. Such commitment is reflected in the establishment of National Associations of Parliamentarians for creating and sustaining the awareness of the importance of population issues in relation to development; and increase in resources mobilized domestically and externally for population programmes:
 - Recognize the progress made towards the attainment of the demographic goals in terms of fertility rates and infant mortality rates through organized family planning programmes and general socio-economic development activities;
 - Acknowledge the greater need to curtail unfavorable rates of population growth in the Asian regions in view of the projected population size of the region estimated to increase to 3.6 billion by the year 2000, from 2.6 billion in 1981 when the Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development was held in Beijing;
 - Reaffirm the commitment to help achieve one of the key recommendations of the Beijing Declaration to attain a one percent population growth rate for the Asian Region, by the year 2000:
 - Affirm the need for further reduction of infant mortality as a basic human right and to accelerate family planning acceptance;
 - Realize the need for effective measures to achieve appropriate pattern of population distribution for the overall socio-economic development.
2. In order to deal with these issues, more practically and effectively, this FORUM addresses itself to the following major demographic variables: Population growth and fertility rates; Mortality, especially infant mortality; and Population distribution including rural urban migration.
3. The Forum recognizes that the maintenance of peace and national security in the Asian region and ending of arms race are essential. It is also necessary to put an end to all activities of terrorism which tend to disturb social peace and stability.
4. The provision of family planning information and services in the pursuit of demographic goals, whether these seek to increase or reduce population growth,

must be based firmly on the recognition of family planning as a basic human right.

5. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and Inter-Parliamentary Union Sponsored the First International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Colombo in 1979. The Colombo Conference established the potential role of the elected representatives in meeting growth challenges of population and development issues. To this end, it called for the formation of associations of parliamentarians for generating and sustaining their involvement.
6. UNFPA also sponsored the First Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Beijing in 1981 which stressed the need for increasing awareness and understanding of the independent relationship between population and development through sharing of knowledge and experiences. One of the major decisions of the Beijing Conference was to set up the Asian Forum or Parliamentarians to implement its recommendations. Accordingly, the FORUM was inaugurated in New Delhi on 9 March 1982. Similarly conferences of parliamentarians were held in other regions leading to formation of the Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.
7. Since the Colombo and Beijing Conferences, national associations of parliamentarians in several Asian countries have taken initiatives in securing political consensus among different political parties and leaders of various social and religious sectors. This has generated political will, essential to pursue population policies with greater sense of urgency. Colombo to New Delhi is a journey from Political Consensus to Political Will. This has led to mobilization and participation of people. Parliamentarians have an important role to play. They must accept the challenge that is so important to mankind by harnessing all possible resources further and by strengthening and creating new links with the people. This is the greatest challenge that parliamentarians are called upon to undertake in times ahead

SPECIFIC GOALS

8. Parliamentarians should work together to achieve the following specific goals:
 - A. A decrease of population growth in the Asian region as a whole in order to attain a growth rate of one percent by the year 2000.
 - B. A decrease in mortality rates throughout Asia and specifically the reduction of infant mortality in the region by 50 percent by the year 2000.
 - C. A balanced distribution of population in Asian countries through policies to accommodate planned urban growth together with efforts to retain population in rural areas.

PROGRAMME FOR ACTION

Population Growth Rate Reduction

The following actions need to be initiated and supported by parliamentarians in order to achieve the desired rate of growth:

- Incorporation of comprehensive population policies in all development plans.
- Immediate move towards universal literacy, with special emphasis on female literacy. Improvement of the status of women by removing legal barriers and increasing their economic opportunities.
- Rapid expansion of easily accessible family planning information and services to all segments of the population throughout the region.
- Improvement of basic health services to all in the shortest possible time, and the linkage of these services with family planning services.
- Strengthening of family planning programmes through improved management, expanded training of all categories of personnel and development of information and communication programmes appropriate to different population groups, especially the youth who constitute nearly 60 percent of the Asian population,
- Providing a full range of contraceptive methods on a continuous basis and introducing new techniques as they become available.
- Supporting research on new contraceptive technologies, including methods acceptable to all religious groups.
- Assuring community participation at all levels, both in the planning and implementation of family planning programmes, free of unnecessary red tape.

Mortality, Especially Infant and Early Child Mortality

Infant and early child mortality rates have not declined sufficiently. The achievement of lower mortality rates, in addition to enhancing well being, contributes to fertility decline and the acceptance of small family size. Similarly, increased spacing of children contributes to infant survival. The major causes of infant and early child mortality and disability should be tackled through a coordinated primary health care approach including:

- The expansion of immunization programmes to all children.
- Nutrition and nutrition education, including the wide use of child growth measurement charts.

- Health education of parents in the treatment of common childhood diseases, including the treatment of diarrhoea by oral dehydration therapy.
- The provision of potable water, in both slum and rural areas.
- Education programme on the benefits of breast-feeding.
- Training programmes involving community leaders and especially traditional birth attendants and healers in the identification and simple treatment of common childhood diseases.

Population Distribution

Imbalanced population distribution in relation to resources is one of the factors hindering socio-economic development. In particular, rapid urbanization is not only taxing the national and urban resources and infrastructure, it also contributes to deforestation, soil erosion and ecological disequilibrium. Some of the measures to be undertaken in order to remedy the imbalance are:

- To formulate and implement a comprehensive national urbanization policy including the reduction of the pull factors of urban centres', development of medium-sized cities and small townships.
- To provide more employment opportunities in rural areas.
- To improve and expand basic social and health amenities including MCH/ family planning services and education in rural areas.
- To develop appropriate measures to regulate urban growth.

CALL TO ACTION

The Conference Calls on:

1. PARLIAMENTARIANS OF ASIA

- To strengthen national associations of parliamentarians to achieve a greater understanding of the inter-relationships between population and development and to facilitate mutual exchange and dialogue among themselves:
- To take appropriate initiatives including legislative measures, in support of the programme of action.
- To establish close relationships with the academic and research community, in order to bring greater coherence to the formulation and evolution of population policies.
- To initiate the formation of statutory bodies in each country to coordinate the

formulation and implementation of population policies and programmes.

- To initiate legislation, where relevant, to raise the minimum age of marriage to 20 years.
- To establish a Parliamentary Committee on Population and Development.

2. GOVERNMENTS

- To implement the Programme of Action as rapidly as possible.
- To provide an adequate share of national resources to implement the Programme of Action and for other development programmes having a bearing on population.
- To strengthen socio-economic programmes directed specifically towards reducing social and economic disparities.
- To increase support of non-governmental and voluntary agencies to sustain and expand their initiatives.
- To increase population assistance through multilateral agencies, including UNFPA, and non-governmental agencies, including IPPF.
- To increase the overall volume of official development assistance and to channel this assistance through multilateral organizations, such as UNDP and bilateral agencies.
- To encourage developing countries to mobilize human and material resources so as to increase self-reliance
- To organize programmes for the welfare of the aged and to encourage their continued participation as productive members of society.

3. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

International organizations, such as IPPF, national NGOs and academic and development institutions should continue to pursue a positive and innovative role, in expanding and intensifying their efforts to stimulate family planning programmes.

- To continue to enlist voluntary support at the community level and explore new ideas for the wider acceptance of the small family norm.
- To work closely with Parliamentarians on matters of population and development in order to facilitate the effective formulation and implementation of population policies and programmes.

4. PRESS AND MEDIA

- To provide positive and constructive coverage of population issues.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- To increase the financial support of multilateral organizations, such as UN-FPA and bilateral agencies, to the governments and NGOs of Asian countries.
- To increase support for research on bio-medical, communication and programme aspects of family planning.
- To call upon the United Nations to declare a World Population Day to focus attention on population issues.
- To request its member-governments for substantial participation of parliamentarians in the International Conference on Population to be held in Mexico City in 1984.

6. THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE ASIAN FORUM

- To continue to provide opportunities for dialogue between Parliamentarians of Asia.
- To extend the dialogue to local legislative bodies.
- To review and report on the progress of the Programme of Action.
- To work to secure a substantial participation of parliamentarians on national delegations, to the International Conference of Population and apprise their delegations of recommendations of this Conference.

7. THE GLOBAL COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

- To continue and accelerate their global efforts to stimulate and facilitate the creation of regional and sub-regional and national groups of parliamentarians.
- To encourage and assist the work of such parliamentary groups to provide an informal link between parliamentarians and relevant international agencies and institutions.
- To general enhance and promote the key role of parliamentarians in Global Population and Development issues within and outside the UN system.

8. REDEDICATION

Finally, in order to secure early implementation of the Programme of Action, we, the Parliamentarians assembled at this conference will work for spreading benefits of population and development programmes to all levels of society, especially the poor and the underprivileged and improvement of the socio-economic levels of the people.

To this end, we rededicate ourselves to work for implementing the Programme of Action, with a view to securing a better future for mankind.

*ASIAN FORUM BEIJING
DECLARATION
24 SEPTEMBER 1987*

PREAMBLE

1. We, the parliamentarians from 23 countries of Asia attending the Second Conference of the ASIAN FORUM of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Beijing, China, from 23 to 25 September 1987, in addressing ourselves to the issues related to population and development;
 - Note with satisfaction the continued commitment of Asian parliamentarians to initiate and pursue action to achieve effective integration of population into development policies and programmes and to workout a sound solution to the problems of population and development;
 - Reaffirm the objectives of the UNFPA-sponsored First Asian Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Beijing in 1981 and of the First Conference of the ASIAN FORUM of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in New Delhi, India, in 1984;
 - Accept the responsibility as representatives of the people of Asian countries and as members of national legislative bodies to make a thorough study of the interrelationship of population and development, to urge our respective Governments and people to concern themselves with population matters, and to expedite the process of solving the population and development problem rationally;
 - Endorse the recommendation of the 1984 Mexico City Conference that parliamentarians, policy makers, and other persons in public life continue to promote and support action to achieve an effective and integrated approach to the solution of population and development problems by arousing public awareness and working towards the implementation of national population policies and programmes;
 - Recognise that a secure and stable international environment and prosperous and flourishing economy and culture are conducive to the solution of population problems;
 - Recognise the progress made towards the reduction of fertility and infant mortality rates through organized family planning programmes and general socio-economic development activities in Asian countries, taking special note in this regard of the inextricable link between population, resources and environment in the efforts to resolve the issues of poverty and development;
 - Strongly reaffirm the commitment to help achieve one of the key recommendations of the Beijing and New Delhi Declarations: to attain a 1 per cent annual population growth rate for the Asian region by the year 2000;
 - Recognise that further reduction of maternal and infant mortality, strengthening of maternal and child welfare programmes and acceleration of family planning acceptance are urgently needed;

- Emphasize the crucial role of the family as the basic unit of society in the solution of population and development problems;
 - Recognise the changing position of women in Asian society and fully support measures aimed at providing women with equal access along with men to opportunities which will enable them to discharge new and enlarged roles in the family and society;
 - Reiterate the need to establish effective measures to achieve patterns of population distribution appropriate for each country's overall level of socio-economic development.
2. The Forum notes that the worldwide activities undertaken in the context of the 'Day of Five Billion' on 11 July 1987 have drawn attention to some sobering statistics:
- world population is growing at 150 each minute, 220,000 each day and 80 million a year;
 - world population has surged from 2 billion in the 1920s to 3 billion in 1960 and 4 billion in 1974. The last billion was added in 13 years; the next billion will come in 12 years;
 - 90 per cent of the growth has taken place in Asia, Africa and Latin America – the developing countries of the world.
3. Acknowledging the diversity in religion and beliefs as well as in culture and traditions, mindful of the difference in social, economic and political conditions in the countries of Asia, and respectful of the national sovereignty of each country, we recognise nevertheless, that we share many common concerns:
- that the current population of Asia is nearly 60 per cent of the total world population of 5 billion;
 - that even though Asia is ahead of other regions in the strength and sophistication of its population policies, there is a constant need for each country to adjust its planning process so that all development activities and policies reinforce population policy objectives;
 - that while both fertility and family size have been reduced significantly in recent years, Asia's population continues to grow at a rate just under 2 per cent per year.
4. In their unremitting efforts to ensure that their respective peoples have ample food and clothing, live and work in peace and contentment, and are free from illiteracy, disease and poverty, parliamentarians should work together to achieve the following specific goals:

- a. Decrease the annual population growth rate in Asian region as a whole to 1 per cent by the year 2000;
- b. Decrease mortality rates, and specifically infant mortality, throughout the region by 50 per cent by the year 2000;
- c. Effect a balanced distribution of population in Asian countries through policies designed to accommodate urban growth and stem rural-to-urban migration;
- d. Devise mechanisms that can serve as alternatives for the extended family in providing social, economic and psychological security for Asia's aging population;
- e. Improve the status of women particularly in the areas of health, education and employment, and create public awareness and acceptance of the changing role of women in Asia and of its social, political and cultural implications;
- f. Observe an appropriate date in 1988 as the 'Day of Three Billion' with a view to informing every Asian family of the necessity, urgency and significance of the population issues in the region.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Population growth rate reduction

The following action needs to be initiated and supported by parliamentarians in order to achieve the desired rate of growth:

- Incorporation of comprehensive population policies in all development plans;
- Rapid expansion of easily accessible family planning information and services to all segments of the population throughout the region;
- Immediate, and continuous, improvement in both the delivery of primary health care and services to the entire population and the linkage of these services with family planning services;
- Acceleration of efforts to attain universal literacy, especially among women and youth;
- Abrogation or removal of laws, rules, regulations, customs and practices that discriminate against women or limit their access on an equal basis with men to opportunities in health, education and employment;
- Strengthening of family planning programmes through improved management, expanded training of personnel, and development of information, edu-

cation and communication programmes appropriate to different groups with the population, especially young men and women, who constitute nearly 6 per cent of the Asian population;

- Establishment of public information programmes and other programmes to promote responsible parenthood including family planning for both men and women and sharing of responsibilities between them in child rearing and household work;
- Removal of all bureaucratic obstacles to participation in family planning programmes.

Mortality, especially infant and early child mortality

While mortality rates in the region, in particular those of infants and of children aged 1 through 5, have declined significantly in recent years, overall rates for the region are still too high and must be reduced by some 50 per cent by the year 2000. The major causes of infant and early child mortality and disability should be tackled through a co-ordinated primary health care approach that includes:

- Expansion of immunization programmes for all children;
- Enhancement of programmes and outreach to ensure that all children receive adequate nutrition;
- Continued provision of education programmes on nutrition and health;
- Provision of potable water in both slum and rural areas;
- Expansion of education programmes on the complementary roles of men and women in child survival;
- Intensification of training programmes involving community leaders and especially traditional birth attendants and healers in the identification and simple treatment of common childhood diseases.

Population distribution

The imbalance between population and resources, the increase in the number of the poor and the rapid pace of urbanization all contributing to a deterioration of the natural environment in Asian countries as well as hindering socio-economic development in the region. Among the measures needed to remedy the imbalance between population distribution and resources are:

- Formulation and implementation of a comprehensive national urbanization policy, co-ordinated and integrated with national development plans, with provisions designed to reduce or offset the pull factors of urban centres and to expand the development of medium-sized townships;

- Creation and expansion of employment opportunities in rural areas;
- Improvement and expansion of basic social and health amenities, including mother and child health care / family planning, (MCH/FP), services and education, in rural areas;
- Identification of critical shortcomings in provision of social services in urban areas and development or enhancement of infrastructure to help alleviate them;
- Development of appropriate measures to regulate urban-growth and to accommodate the under-and-unemployed there;
- Creation of effective linkages between rural and urban areas for mutually reinforcing social and economic development processes.

Security for the aged

The success of family planning policies also calls for attention to their consequences. The extended family has traditionally been an essential part of the Asian system of security. Now, with smaller families, an alternative mechanism will be needed. Among the legislative and administrative measures needed to accommodate the social, economic and psychological needs of the increasing numbers of elderly people.

- Development of a comprehensive national policy, co-ordinated and integrated with national development policies, relating to elderly people who are without families or are not being cared for by their families;
- Extension of minimum benefits adequate to meet the essential needs of the elderly and guarantee their independence;
- Expansion and improvement of the provision of basic health, social services and housing to the aged;
- Creation of programmes for the retraining of the aged with a view to enabling them to acquire appropriate skills and to engage in socially useful work;
- Establishment of programmes aimed at promoting regular interaction among different generations.

Changing position of women in society

Special attention will have to be given to the changing position of women, who are giving birth to fewer children and seeking new and enlarged roles in society. As a result, women's education, employment and status in society will be major factors in influencing the development and population policies of Asian countries in the future. Measures needed to respond to the changing role of women include:

- Strengthening of national policies as well as national structures and organizations with regard to the roles and status of women;
- Provision of adequate training and establishment of appropriate infrastructure for the planning, implementation and co-ordination of national programmes for and concerning women;
- Expansion and improvement of national programmes and projects to enhance women's participation in population and development related activities and the initiation of attitudinal and structural changes needed to carry out such programmes;
- Increase the number and quality of educational and training programmes for women, and promotion of awareness among all members of society concerning the changing role of women and its social, economic, political and cultural implications.

Health care and family planning

There is increasing demand for family planning information and services in developing countries around the world. In Asia, in particular, this demand has not yet been adequately met despite the efforts undertaken by Governments as well as by non-governmental organizations; and serious efforts need to be undertaken to increase the services and to provide them in all parts of the country including remote areas. Among the measures needed are:

- Integration of family planning with primary health care services;
- Improvement of ante-natal health care services to pregnant women in order to reduce the unacceptable high levels of preventable maternal mortality;
- Provision of a full range of contraceptive methods on a continuous basis;
- Continuing support of research on new contraceptive technologies and introduction of new technologies as they become available;
- Adequate funding for research, public education and preventive measures relating to the increasing incidence of acquired immune deficiency syndrome, (AIDS)

CALL TO ACTION

The conference calls on:

1. PARLIAMENTARIANS OF ASIA

To continue their efforts to strengthen national associations of parliamentarians and to

facilitate mutual exchange and dialogue among them in order to;

- Increase awareness and promote greater understanding amongst parliamentarians of the interrelationship between population and development;
- Initiate, promote and support exchange programmes among the countries of Asia and of the world in order to exchange experiences and learn from one another;
- Strengthen their role as the crucial link between government and the people, functioning as the channel of communication for the articulation of the people's needs;
- To take appropriate initiatives, including legislative measures, in support of this Declaration's Programme of Action;
- To initiate the formation, or strengthening, of statutory bodies and people-based institutions in each country;
- To co-ordinate the formulation and implementation of population policies and programmes;
- To initiate legislation, where relevant, to guarantee women equal status with men throughout all aspects of society;
- To establish, or strengthen, Parliamentary Committees on Population and Development in each country.

2. GOVERNMENTS

- To implement the Programme of Action as rapidly as possible;
- To allocate an adequate share of national resources to implement the Programme of Action and to meet the needs of family planning and other programmes that have a bearing on population;
- To adopt, where lacking, a comprehensive population policy as an integral part of national development plans and to give greater support to existing population programmes;
- To widen and secure the opportunities for women to participate as equals of men in all aspects of development;
- To support non-governmental organizations and community groups in undertaking voluntary programmes aimed at increasing the outreach of various population and family planning programmes and allied social measures;

- To increase population assistance through multilateral agencies including the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, (UNFPA), and non-governmental organizations, including the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF);
- To strive to increase the overall volume of official development assistance and to channel this assistance through multilateral organizations;
- To devise comprehensive policies aimed at reducing rural-to-urban migration and improving the standard of living of urban dwellers;
- To establish, and / or to strengthen, programmes for the welfare of the aged in particular as concerns the universal provision of social security, and to encourage the rly's continued and active participation as productive members of society.

3. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- To enlist voluntary support and undertake action at the community level to stimulate the use of family planning programmes and acceptance of the small family norm.

4. PRESS AND MEDIA

- To focus attention on the implications of population and development issues at national, regional and international levels;
- To provide positive and constructive coverage of efforts undertaken by Governments and NGOs to deal with such issues;
- To encourage and promote public participation in voluntary population and family planning programmes.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- To strive for genuine disarmament and further utilization of the resources thus made available for the solution of population and development problems;
- To increase the financial support of multilateral and bilateral organizations which fund and / or implement population and related programmes in Asia and of the Governments and NGOs in the region;
- To continue to seek the co-operation and counsel of groups of parliamentarians in addressing issues and problems associated with population and development;

- To strive to engender a greater sensitivity to and understanding of the dimensions of population growth in Asia and its potential consequences;
- To increase support for research and development on bio-medical, communication and programme aspects of family planning;
- To call upon the United Nations, and UNFPA in particular, to intensify its efforts to create awareness throughout the world about a world of five billion and its ecological and environmental implications;
- To call upon the United Nations and its specialized agencies to ensure system wide co-ordination of all their programmes covering women with a view to strengthening the links between the status of women, population and development;
- To call upon UNFPA to assist Governments and NGOs in Asia in organizing the Day of Three Billion in 1988

6. ASIAN FORUM SECRETARIAT

- To promote regular exchange of information and expertise among parliamentarians and others with a view to enhancing the quality and impact of population and family planning programmes in the region.

REDEDICATION

We, the Parliamentarians, at the Second Conference of the ASIAN FORUM, in our various capacities as legislators, community leaders and representatives of the people, commit and dedicate ourselves to work untiringly to improve mother and child care and the general level of the people's health, through promotion of a rational growth of the population, solution of the problem of urbanization, migration and aging of the population and protection of the natural environment and ecological balance.

To this end, we rededicate ourselves to the successful implementation of the Programme of Action in the hope of securing a better harmony in population growth and socio-economic development and a better and peaceful future for mankind as a whole.

BANGKOK DECLARATION
18 October 1990

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Parliamentarians from 21 countries of Asia attending the Third Conference of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Bangkok, Thailand, from 15 to 18 October 1990, in addressing ourselves to the issues related to population and development:
 - Note with satisfaction some significant achievements in attaining the goals set by the Second Conference of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Beijing in 1987;
 - Recognize that the further integration of population concerns into development planning is essential to the stabilization growth rates in all countries of Asia, which in turn is critical to our collective efforts to balance population, resources and the environment and to sustain development;
 - Reemphasize the importance of family planning programmes and socio-economic development activities in improving the health and welfare of women and in reducing fertility and infant and maternal mortality rates;
 - Accept the responsibility to promote and support activities aimed at achieving an effective and integrated approach to population and development problems through, inter alia, the development of legislative agenda and the mobilization of governmental and public support;
 - Reiterate our strong resolve to help achieve an annual population growth rate of 1 percent for the Asian region by the year 2000;
 - Emphasize the urgent need to accelerate the acceptance, of family planning, both as an effective and safe method to reduce fertility;
 - Declare that the principle of equality in human rights and responsibilities.
 - Recognize that the surest way to achieve sustained decline in fertility is to invest in social and human resource development, improve mother and child health, enhance the status and education of women and make family planning as widely available as possible to both men and women;
 - Express concern at the social and economic implications of increasing numbers of young and aged people in Asian countries and recognize the need to devise special programmes to promote their active participation in social and economic development;
 - Affirm, in principle, the population goals and objectives as well as the programme priorities and approaches set forth in the Amsterdam Declaration, "A better life for future generations";
 - Reaffirm the need for further disarmament and utilization of the resources

thus made available for population and development activities.

Demographic situation in Asia

2. Despite rapid and substantial declines in fertility in the region as a whole, Asia's current population of 3.1 billion will reach 3.7 billion by the end of the century. By and large, the biggest increase will occur in the poorest countries, those by definition least equipped to meet the needs of the new arrivals and invest in their future. For example, South Asia, in general growing at 2.34 percent year, will add 350 million during the decade, whereas East Asia, known for its spectacular advances in contraceptive usage, will add only 200 million.
3. An ever-increasing proportion of this growth is taking place in Asian cities, which have been at the heart of the process of change. Such urban development has led to greater industrialization, affluence and increased consumption. But it has also increased industrial pollution, damaged forests and agricultural land, added to the global warming trend and made slum dwellers and squatters out of half of Asia's urban population. The region is also witnessing increasing aging of its population in part due to the improved health care services available. This aging trend is creating profound socio-economic and psychological implications which require a significant amount of societal resources.

Investing in the Future

4. While mindful of the differences in social, economic and political conditions in the countries of Asia and respectful of the national sovereignty of each country, we recognize the need, common to Parliamentarians everywhere, to reassess our assumptions about development. This requires, among other things:
 - Taking seriously the growing concern with environmental damage and its causes;
 - Making a direct and all-out attack on both poverty and rapid population growth, notably through the development of human resources and social programmes, with the purpose of relieving human suffering, slowing population growth, and creating a balanced development;
 - Developing suitable alternatives to current urbanization trends;
 - Investing in strong and determined family planning programmes;
 - Investing in women as human resources and/or a priority for social and economic development;
 - Emphasizing self-determination as the foundation of national development.
5. The Forum stresses that economic development cannot, and must not, be bought at the cost of human development. Measures to reduce fertility, mortality and migration levels must be supplemented and complemented by measures seeking

to influence related social, economic and environmental factors. Population policies and programmes must therefore go beyond health and family welfare and address such issues as social and economic inequality, unemployment, the role and status of women, education and illiteracy, and environmental degradation.

6. Women, who comprise half the world's population, must be among the top priorities for social investment. Women must not, however, be regarded merely as contraceptive agents, or only as a means for economic growth but rather as human persons equal to men in their dignity and worth as human beings. They should have equal educational opportunities. In Asia, as in other regions in the developing world, women are responsible in large part for the production of food and the gathering of fuel and water. They are at the centre of development and therefore must play a vital role in nation-building as well as in agricultural and environmental management and social and economic development.
7. Ignoring women's needs can have devastating effects; uncontrolled population growth; high infant and child mortality; a weakened economy; ineffective agricultural production; a deteriorating environment; a generally divided society and a poorer quality of life for all. For girls and women, it can mean unequal opportunity, less schooling, poorer health, lower wages, inadequate protection under the law and a life devoid of choice.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Any programme of action seeking to address the complex issue of population and development must, by definition, be rooted in three basic principles: (1) that population, resources and the environment are inextricably linked; (2) that development cannot be sustained without due regard to each of these factors; and (3) that economic growth must be balanced with population growth, concern for the environment and social progress. Thus, an effective development strategy must, growth, balance population distribution, protect the environment, ensure adequate food supply to all sectors of society, in particular those most disadvantaged and eliminate poverty. It must also attempt to reduce maternal and infant mortality, improve the status of women, provide for the security of the aged, address the special needs of youth and enhance health care and family planning services.

Reducing Population Growth

Rapid population growth among other things, impedes balanced development, destroys forests and degrades land and water supplies. This in turn threatens the food supply and lessens the quality of life. For their part, Parliamentarians should use their considerable influence and good offices to initiate or support the following actions to help reduce population growth rates:

- Encourage the formulation and strengthening of comprehensive national population strategies as integral components of national development plans;
- Integrate population planning into all other aspects of development plan-

ning;

- Foster governmental and societal support for fertility regulation;
- Increase the number of women using family planning services by making family planning information and services widely available and easily accessible to all segments of the population, including men, teenagers and newly-wed couples by utilizing all national strategies, coordinated and integrated with national development plans, aimed at offsetting the growth of large urban centers by investing in the development and expansion of medium sized and small urban centers;
- Adapt family planning services to local customs and preferences so as to expand training personnel;
- Strengthen family planning programmes through improved management and expanded training of personnel;
- Facilitate the local production of contraceptives, through supportive legislation and the procurement of the necessary resources;
- Secure adequate public funding for research on developing contraceptive methods that are cheap, simple, reliable, safe and reversible.

Reducing mortality, especially maternal and infant and child mortality

Childbirth anywhere has its risks, but for mothers and children in the developing world the risk is staggering. Each year, at least 500,000 women die from pregnancy or childbirth-related causes, 99 percent of them in developing countries. In some parts of Asia, a woman's chances of dying as a result of childbirth are 1 in 18. Worldwide, young children, age five and under, fare even worse, with 14 million or so dying every twelve months. The greatest tragedy is that most of these deaths could be prevented through simple, effective and inexpensive measures, such as:

- Developing special information and education campaigns to create awareness about the demographic and health effects of pregnancies that are too early, too late, too many and too close together;
- Improving and expanding the delivery of primary health care and services and integrating these services with family planning services;
- Further integrating family planning programmes into agricultural, industrial and social programmes;
- Expanding immunization programmes to all children;
- Expanding and improving programmes on nutrition and health;

- Encouraging breast-feeding for nutritional and family planning reasons;
- Intensifying training programmes, follow-up and supervision for traditional birth attendants and healers for safe delivery and in the identification and simple treatment of common childhood diseases.

Balancing Population and Distribution and Resources

There is little doubt that the world is in the middle of an urban revolution. Since 1950, the number of people living in cities in developing countries has more than quadrupled. For Asia, the proportion of people who will be living in urban areas in the year 2000 is projected at 35 percent. Such urban growth seriously strains the delivery of vital social services and the provision of basic necessities, especially to the poorest among society, chews up agricultural land, and aggravates the growing imbalance between population and resources. Among the measures needed to help remedy this situation are:

- Formulation and implementation of national strategies, co-ordinated and integrated with national development plans, aimed at offsetting the growth of large urban centres by investing in the development and expansion of medium-sized and small urban areas;
- Development of more adequate statistical databases on social programmes, including health and family planning services in urban areas;
- Relocation of industrial, social and educational facilities away from major urban centers where feasible;
- Improvement and expansion in rural areas of basic social and health amenities, including maternal and child health care and family planning (MCH/FP) services and education;
- Creation and expansion of employment opportunities in rural areas;
- Development of the informal sector composed of people, often migrants, engaged in petty trading and services, food processing, low-cost transportation and construction as an integral part of the city's economic and cultural landscape;
- Development of urban infrastructure with the aim of providing adequate and affordable basic services to people already living in urban areas, including eradication of slum areas.

Safeguarding the environment

Increasing human demands are damaging the natural resource base-land, water and air upon which all development depends. Population plays a key role in this process. For any given type of technology, level of consumption or waste or level of poverty or equality, the more people there are the greater the impact on the environment. This

is particularly true of the degradation of the soils and forests of developing countries and global warming, both of which currently pose the greatest threat to human welfare and survival. Establishing a sustainable relationship between human numbers and resources in the Asian context will require among other things:

- Slowly and actively stabilizing population growth;
- Providing suitable directions and measurers for balanced urban development;
- Adopting legislation to protect village forest and farmland rights, particularly those of the poorest farmers and women;
- Investing in the agricultural resource base, both to enhance the productivity of existing farmland and to rehabilitate and revitalize degraded agricultural land;
- Ensuring the adequate supply and timely distribution of food to all sectors of society, especially the underprivileged groups;
- Prohibiting the use of environmentally unsafe fertilizers and pesticides, as well as the dumping of industrial wastes;
- Promulgating appropriate laws to prevent deforestation;
- Developing and introducing environmentally safe industrial process;
- Educating and encouraging farmers in better water and irrigation management and in the use of bio-fertilizers;

Full involvement of Women

Investing in programmes for women means widening their choices and reducing their dependence on children for status and support. It means taking women's abilities, rights and needs into account at every stage of development planning, so that women's status and security are derived from their contribution to society rather than solely from childbearing. Family planning is one of the most important investments a society can make, since it represents the freedom from which other freedom flows. The same is true of investments in women's health and education. Specific measures needed include:

- Ensure that women are consulted and involved at every level in the organization of family planning services;
- Identifying problems, developing a legislative agenda and mobilizing governmental and public support with a view to improving the status of women, in particular destitute and migrant women, abolishing discriminatory practices in marriage and reducing maternal mortality;

- Repealing all laws and practices preventing or restricting women from owning or administering productive resources;
- Expanding educational and training opportunities for women on an equal basis with men, including special attention to the needs of illiterate women;
- Documenting and publicizing women's vital contributions to development;
- Ensuring that national statistics are desegregated by sex;
- Providing the widest possible audience with accurate and full information on women's productive and reproductive rights and responsibilities;
- Ensuring that women have access to credit, where possible, without collateral and improving their access to markets in the agricultural and informal sector;
- Establishing and enforcing laws guaranteeing equal employment opportunity and equal pay for work of equal value;
- Providing adequate support services so that there would be no barriers to women entering the work force.

Providing Security for the Aged

Successful family planning produces smaller families. Successful economic development often results in high social mobility and dispersed families. The advent of smaller nuclear families in place of larger extended family threatens the traditional Asian system of security for the aged. Thus, an alternative mechanism is needed to provide social, economic and psychological security for Asia's aging population. The legislative and administrative measures required to address the needs of increasing numbers of elderly include;

- Coordinating efforts to deal with aging with those aimed at moderating population growth;
- Strengthening the scientific understanding of aging as it pertains to the actual conditions of each individual country and adopting a long-term approach based on the overall enhancement of social and economic development;
- Extending the age of mandatory retirement and creating employment opportunities for those who wish to work after retirement, accompanied by specialized retraining programmes;
- Reviewing national health insurance plans and pension schemes with a view to identifying cost-effective ways of improving coverage and benefits for the elderly, including elderly women who comprise the majority of the elderly;

- Developing appropriate measures based especially on community resources to sustain and promote family ties to provide not only financial but also psychological support for the aged.

Addressing the Special Needs of Youth

One consequence of rapid growth is an ever-increasing proportion of young people dependent on others for their social economic welfare. In the industrialized world, there are 4.1 people of working age for every school-age child. In the developing world, there are 2.3 people. The added strain on the economically active members of developing countries contributes to economic underdevelopment and overloads social programmes. The key is to focus on limiting the number of children born to those young people who have just entered or are about to enter their reproductive years. This requires:

- Improving the legal, social and cultural statues of the girl child;
- Extending family planning coverage to previously neglected groups, in particular teenagers and young newlyweds;
- Postponing age at first marriage;
- Integrating education in population and family life into formal and non-formal curricula;
- Developing information, education and communication programmes on the importance of postponing the birth of the first child and lengthening the space between subsequent births;
- Creating income-generating activities for both male and female young people;
- Expanding the outreach of non-formal education and literacy programmes.

Improving Health Care and Extending Family Planning Services

One of the keys to reducing population growth and improving the health of mothers and children is a strong and determined family planning programme. Lessons learned from highly successful programmes in Asian countries indicate that delaying and spacing births contributes to higher rates of infant survival; better all-round health for mothers and children; cleaner safer living conditions; and a better life for the whole family. Successful family planning programmes also benefit the community. The importance of family planning as both a health measure and a means to reduce population growth is all the more pronounced when viewed in the, context of current and projected unmet needs for the 1990s. Meeting these needs will require:

- Further integrating family planning with maternal and child health care and other sectoral activities;

- Making high quality services as widely available and easily accessible as possible to both women and men;
- Providing the widest possible choice of family planning methods, thereby enabling couples to select the method best suited to their needs;
- Ensuring the active participation of community leaders and trusted local figures concerning the choices of services and methods, as well as in the delivery of supplies and the evaluation of programmes;
- Enhancing access to family planning by bringing services closer to users, including integration of family planning into primary health care networks at the village level;
- Making every effort to ensure high quality of services, supplies and counseling.

CALL TO ACTION

The Conference calls on:

1. PARLIAMENTARIANS OF ASIA

To redouble their efforts to increase awareness and promote greater understanding among parliamentarians, government officials and the public of the interrelationship between population and development and to strengthen their role as the crucial link between government and the people, in particular as a channel of communication for the articulation of the people's needs.

To take appropriate initiatives, including legislative measures, in support of this Declarations' Programme of Action, in particular those measures concerned with improving the legal, social, economic and cultural status of women;

To enlist the active participation of local voluntary organizations in spreading family planning messages and information and of all religious and spiritual leaders in supporting population policies and programmes;

To help organize formal as well as informal discussion on major issues and proposed policies between concerned government officials, leaders of NGOs and the community at large with a view to reaching a consensus on national and local needs and priorities;

To promote further awareness of population and related issues through upcoming events such as the Asian and Pacific population conference (1992) and the International Meeting on Population (1994).

2. GOVERNMENTS

To allocate, especially by reducing armaments on the basis of avoiding internal and external conflicts, an adequate share of national resources to implement the Programme of Action and to meet the needs of family planning and other programmes that have a bearing on population;

To make every effort to increase their financial contribution to the international population assistance programmes, in particular to the UNFPA programme, in order to help solve population problems in developing countries;

To increase their political commitment to population policies and programmes, in consonance with national development priorities;

To develop integrated population, environment and social programmes aimed at balancing population growth, resource use, and economic and social development;

To translate national population policy and programme goals into community actions;

To enlist the support of non-governmental organizations and community groups in helping to extend the outreach of population and family planning programmes, in particular to audiences and target groups still relatively unserved;

To strive to improve the role and status of women in all sphere of life and to ensure that women actively participate in and benefit from all population and development activities;

To increase the enrollment of girls in primary and secondary schools, with a view to achieving universal female enrolment in primary school by the year 2000;

To integrate population education into formal school curricular;

To provide adequate public funding for research on socio-cultural attitudes towards contraception and fertility change and the factors and circumstances that influence changes in values and outlook concerning family size and make-up;

To devise comprehensive policies to reduce rural-to-urban migration and improve the standard of living of less privileged urban dwellers;

To strive to achieve the population goals and objectives as enunciated by the Amsterdam Declaration.

3. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

To encourage and enlist the support of non-governmental organizations to undertake actions at all levels and particularly at the community level to stimulate people's participation adopting family planning and the small family norm, and in undertaking development activities to improve the quality of life;

To utilize existing NCO national and local networks to further extend family planning services at the grass-roots level.

4. PRESS AND MEDIA

To encourage and promote public participation and family planning programmes;

To create awareness of the importance of population and related issues in social and economic development;

To provide positive and constructive coverage of population activities.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

To increase financial resources for multilateral and bilateral organizations, especially UNFPA, to enable them to meet increasing demand for population assistance in the Asian region;

To increase support for research and development on bio-medical, communication and programme aspects of family planning;

To enhance the coordination of population activities not only between donors and national governments but among donors as well;

To develop strategic plans for international population assistance, both to complement and supplement national strategies and to better determine aid priorities, harmonize procedures and define the roles of the various donors;

To strengthen and systematize monitoring and evaluation procedures of population programmes and projects;

To facilitate the transfer of scientific knowledge and technical information about contraceptives and family planning to developing countries.

ASIAN FORUM SECRETARIAT

To promote regular exchange of information and expertise among Parliamentarians and others with a view to enhancing the, quality and impact of population and family planning programmes in the region.

REDEDICATION

We, the Parliamentarians at the Third conference of the Asian Forum, in our various capacities as legislators, community leaders and representatives of the people, commit and dedicate ourselves to work untiringly to bring about a balanced development

combining population reduction, respect for human rights, social progress, concern for the environment and economic development. We therefore pledge to support policies and programme aimed at improving mother and child care and the general level of people's health, promoting rational growth of population, solving the problems of urbanization and migration, providing for the security of the aged, addressing the special needs of youth, and safeguarding the environment and ecological balance.

To this end, we rededicate ourselves to the successful implementation of the Programme of Action in the hope of securing a better harmony between population growth, socio-economic development, resource use and environmental protection. We further dedicate ourselves to work for a better and peaceful future for humankind as a whole.

KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION
28 OCTOBER 1993

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Parliamentarians from 22 countries of Asia attending the Fourth General Assembly of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 26–28 October 1993, in addressing ourselves to the issues related to population and development:
 - Recall the New Delhi (1984), Beijing (1987) and Bangkok (1990) Declarations of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development;
 - Take note of the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, adopted at the Fourth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in August 1992 as part of the preparatory process of the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in September 1994;
 - Appreciate the goals adopted in the Declaration to attain replacement level fertility (equivalent to 2.2 children per women) by the year 2010 or sooner, to reduce the level of infant mortality to 40 per 1,000 live births or lower during the same period, and to reduce maternal mortality by at least half by the year 2010 in countries and areas in which maternal mortality is high;
 - Agree with the Declaration that population factors play a decisive role in safeguarding the environment and in pursuing sustainable development and that, accordingly, population considerations must be fully integrated into all aspects of planning and policy making;
 - Agree also that sustainable development as a means to ensure human well-being, equitably shared by all people today and in the future, requires that the interrelationships between population, resources, the environment and development should be fully recognized, properly managed and brought into a harmonious, dynamic balance;
 - Acknowledge that countries should formulate enforceable measures to promote greater harmony between population, resources, environment and development so as to achieve improved quality of life on a sustainable basis;
 - Reiterate that every country has its own specific array of population problems and policy objectives and has the sovereign right to pursue its own population goals, policies and programmes with regard to the goal of global sustainable development;

- Recognize that in showing concern for human well-being, population policies should recognize that individuals are members of the family, community, society, State and global community, and they possess rights within those contexts;
- Recognize that poverty intensifies the imbalance between population, resources, environment and development;
- Recognize further that the best way to achieve a balance between population, resources, environment and development is to adopt an integrated strategy that harmonizes efforts to slow population growth, rationalize population distribution, alleviate poverty, and lessen environmentally dangerous consumption patterns;
- Acknowledged that family planning is one of the most cost-effective and efficient investments a society can make in social and economic development and therefore emphasize that it must be an integral component of any such integrated strategy;
- Recognize the need, therefore, to promote and support maternal and child health and more concentrated efforts to accelerate the acceptance and improve the quality, accessibility and availability of family planning services;
- Emphasize that women must play a central role and fully participate in all decision making relating to population and sustainable development;
- Emphasize also that international cooperation in the fields of population and development is essential and that no political conditions should be attached to the contributions and assistance made by the international communities in these fields.

Demographic situation

2. In 1992, the population of Asia was 3.2 billion, or approximately 59 per cent of the world's population. Six of the 10 most populous countries in the world were in Asia, including the two largest, China and India, which together accounted for 38 per cent of the world's population. The population of the region is projected to reach 3.7 billion by the year 2000 and to pass 4 billion some time in

2006. Although the rate of growth is expected to decline over the next two decades, from its current level of 1.8 per cent a year to 1.3 per cent, approximately 1 billion people will be added to the region between now and the year 2010. Well over half of this increase will take place in Southern Asia, which will surpass Eastern Asia as the most populous sub-region in Asia.

3. Less than one third of Asians live in cities. Yet, the region is in the midst of an urban revolution. In 1990, the less-developed countries of the region had more urban residents than any other area in the world — 879 million persons. This constituted 63 per cent of the urban population in less-developed regions and 39 per cent of the world urban population. The number of urban dwellers in Asia is expected to triple by the year 2025, to 2.5 billion. At present, 7 of the world's 13 largest urban agglomerations are in Asia: Tokyo, Shanghai, Bombay, Seoul, Beijing, Calcutta, and Osaka. Another three — Jakarta, Tianjin and Metro Manila — will be added to the list in 1994. Moreover, 14 of the 26 largest urban agglomerations projected for 2010 will be in Asia.

Population, environment and development

4. Development cannot be sustained if it destroys the earth's natural resource base in the process. Nor can it be sustained if population continues to grow at its current rate and if patterns of consumption and resource use remain unchanged.
5. The situation is magnified by deepening poverty, the prime causes of which are landlessness and lack of opportunities for work. In rural areas, poverty is concentrated in households that have either no land or insufficient land and whose income is not enough to lift them out of poverty. In urban areas, the poor tend to hold unstable, low-paying jobs, usually in the informal sector.
6. Such conditions are made worse by rapid population growth and by rural-to-urban and rural-to-rural migration, all of which are closely interlinked. Rapid urbanization eats up surrounding cropland and chews up prime agricultural land. This, in turn, induces farmers to overuse or even exhaust the soil and drives rural migrants to ecologically fragile frontier zones or to the more accessible areas, such as those close to roads or along coastlines. The resulting increase in population densities in these areas creates greater pressure on migrants to intensify cultivation, increase harvests of forest products and expand settlements to remote and steeper locations.

Family planning, reproductive health and the status of women

7. Family planning ensures that all couples and individuals can decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children. The impact of family planning is enhanced when provided as part of a larger, integrated package of social, health, welfare and economic measures that seek to alleviate poverty; improve overall health care, especially reproductive health care; improve the quality of and ensure equal access to education, in particular that of girls; and promote the role and status of women, both in society and in the development process.
8. There is a multiplier effect when effective family planning programmes are introduced along with legal, social and economic measures that make them accessible, acceptable and affordable. Such programmes must promote the full and equal participation of all men and women on a voluntary and responsible basis.
9. It is estimated that between 25 and 40 per cent of maternal deaths could be prevented if women could choose to avoid unwanted and poorly planned pregnancies. But family planning services and women's health care more generally, have typically been given low priority in national expenditures. Part of the problem is that women are consigned to subordinate positions in countries where their status is low and where childbearing is considered a major part of their social function.
10. Equal treatment under the law reinforces respect for women as equals. It also reinforces women's self-respect and widens their reproductive choices. Sex discrimination starts early in life with society's preference for sons. But girls who have been brought up to regard themselves as equal to boys are more likely to adopt family planning as adults. They are also more likely to give equal value to boy and girl children and to understand the importance of their own reproductive health care.
11. As women assume greater responsibility for income provision within the household, men need to share in childcare and housework responsibilities in order to relieve the double burden of women.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

12. Four areas require our immediate attention if we are to achieve a sustainable balance between the number of people in Asia and the amount of resources they consume. These are:
 - Increasing attention towards the social sectors, in particular to efforts to encourage slower population growth and to improve women's reproductive health;
 - A direct and all-out attack on poverty itself;
 - A shift to a more balanced rural and urban development;
 - A decisive improvement in the status of girls and women, with particular attention to education.
13. Ultimately, sustainable development is about choices and responsibilities for the individual, the community, the nation and the world. Its aim is to widen our freedom of choice in the matter of family size, choice in population policy and programmes and the many competing demands on limited government resources, and choice in development philosophy and practice.
14. With choice, of course, comes responsibility. Men and women must take responsibility for **contraception and parenthood; individuals** for their consumption patterns; communities for their weaker and more vulnerable members; nations for the well-being of their people; and the international community for ensuring the balance between development and environment upon which all else depends.
15. While mindful of the differences in the social, economic and political conditions in the countries of Asia and respectful of the national sovereignty of each country, we parliamentarians, in our dual capacity as legislators and community leaders, pledge to develop national legislative agenda and mobilize governmental and public support for the recommendations set forth in this Programme of Action.

Investing in family planning programmes

16. The most cost-effective and efficient means of slowing population growth

and reducing fertility is to invest in strong and determined family planning programmes. In fact, permanent declines in fertility can be realized only through widespread, voluntary use of family planning services and information. Strong family planning programmes have a significant effect at any stage of a country's development. Whatever their income or education, couples choose smaller families when they have access to adequate and appropriate family planning information and services. To be effective, family planning programmes must have the full support and commitment of the government and be part of a well-coordinated, integrated national strategy that:

- brings information and services close to the people they serve;
- places strong emphasis on upgrading the quality of services and providing a wide variety of methods; makes greater use of women-oriented and women-managed facilities;
- employs fresh and innovative ways to involve men, young people and newly-weds, and to reach young women in the workplace;
- fully integrates services into all health services, particularly primary health care;
- encourages community-oriented approaches in addition to traditional individual-oriented approaches, particularly in South Asia;
- enhances cooperative efforts among the government, non-government and private sectors so as to maximize the synergistic effects of their comparative advantages;
- emphasizes the benefits of birth spacing, particularly among young women.

Empowering women

17. Empowering women means according them equal status with men. It means giving women equal opportunity in all occupations and in all sectors, assuring them the same conditions of work as men, receiving equal pay for equal work, and sharing household responsibilities equally among women and men. Parliamentarians have a particularly crucial role to play in this sensitive area, working through their national legislatures to:

- strengthen women's access to productive and remunerative employment;

- protect women from all forms of discrimination, including economic discrimination, and all forms of violence;
- remove all remaining legal, administrative and social barriers to women's rights and economic independence, including the right to own property and obtain credit;
- establish and enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment and equal pay for equal work;
- incorporate gender considerations in all aspects of development planning.
- formulate policies and programmes that promote the status, equality and well-being of the girl child and that instil in the boy child behavioural norms and values consistent with gender equality.

Balancing rural and urban growth

18. Urbanization is inevitable, and irreversible. Millions of the world's poorest people migrate to towns and cities each year in search of work and a better life. Many are driven by poverty, high fertility and environmental degradation. Others seek the benefits of development policies that favour urban and export markets. The results have been the rise of mega-cities, with large numbers of unemployed and underemployed migrants living in slums and settlements, and the decline of the rural sector and its contribution to national economics. Among the measures needed to address this situation are to:

- develop national policies that seek to balance rural and urban growth, rather than restrict rural-to-urban migration;
- strengthen economic and institutional links between urban centers and their surrounding areas;
- develop the capacity of and decentralize authority to municipal governments to plan and manage urban development;
- improve the income-earning capacity of migrants working in the informal sector through vocational training and access to credit schemes;
- improve and expand basic social and health infrastructure and services, including maternal and child health and family planning services, in both rural and urban areas;
- encourage and facilitate private-sector investment in smaller towns and cities.

Alleviating poverty

19. Widespread poverty poses a major challenge to population and development efforts. It is often accompanied by ignorance and illiteracy, low status of women and limited access to health and family planning services, all of which contribute to high levels of fertility, morbidity and mortality. The vicious cycle of large family size and persistent poverty also contributes to environmental degradation and resource depletion.
20. The all-out attack on poverty, therefore, must be an integral part of a larger effort to slow population growth, expand economic opportunities for the poor and disadvantaged and meet the basic health, education and social needs of poor people. This has to be accompanied by and interact with, effective family planning programmes and job-producing environmental activities such as agro-forestry, reforestation and terracing.

Providing security for the aged

21.
 - Formulate comprehensive, long-term development strategies that specifically take into account the social and economic implication of population aging;
 - enact legislation to protect the employment and pension rights of the elderly, provide free or low-cost medical care and ensure access to free and low-cost housing;
 - extend the age of mandatory retirement and create work opportunities for those who wish to work after retirement, accompanied by specialized training programmes;
 - develop programmes at the local level to bring the active elderly in mainstream social and economic activities;
 - create awareness and understanding of the issues of aging, especially among youth, and educate the young as to the importance, for both the individual and society of caring for elderly relatives.

Mobilizing resources: National action and international cooperation

22. A programme of action, regardless of how comprehensive and ambitious, is only as good as the resources that are available for implementing it. The key to providing such resources □-human, technical and financial□□is political will and commitment□□the commitment to adopt integrated population, environment and development policies and programmes, and the will to translate this commitment into action.

23. Such will and commitment must be present at all levels and draw upon the inputs of all sectors – governmental, non-governmental and private. Nations must develop national policies and programmes as part of their overall development strategies, increasing budgetary provisions to social sectors and providing the requisite human resources to implement them. Through South-South cooperation, the countries of the various developing regions must share their valuable experience, knowledge and technical expertise with one another, allocating the requisite resources – human and financial – to do so. Such exchange will greatly help countries that are still in the process of attaining their demographic goals and objectives.
24. Mobilizing the additional financial resources needed to support population programmes worldwide requires the strong support of the international community. Such resources could be mobilized if donor countries were to allocate 4 percent of official development assistance to population programmes. The most appropriate mechanism through which to channel this assistance would be the United Nations system, and most notably the United Nations Population Fund. Other United Nations organizations, international agencies and non-governmental organizations, in particular the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), should support the implementation of population policies and programmes.

CALL TO ACTION

The Conference calls on:

1. PARLIAMENTARIANS OF ASIA

- ◆ To promote greater awareness and understanding among Parliamentarians, government officials and the public of the complex interrelationship between population and sustainable development;
- ◆ To take appropriate initiatives, including legislative measures, in support of this Declaration's Programme of Action, in particular those measures concerned with empowering women and improving maternal and child health and reproductive health care;
- ◆ To use their good offices to encourage regular exchanges between governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and to promote government collaboration and use of NGOs in the development of innovative programmes;
- ◆ To encourage their national legislatures to endorse the population goals enunciated in the Bali Declaration and to promote and support national legislation that would facilitate achieving those goals.

2. GOVERNMENTS

- To allocate an adequate share of national resources to promote and support activities aimed at achieving an effective and integrated approach to population, environment and development problems, and in particular to family planning and reproductive health care;
- To develop long-term plans with the goal of making national population programmes self-reliant;
- To include efforts to reduce population growth as an integral component of national strategies to alleviate poverty;
- To develop integrated population, environment and social programmes aimed at balancing population growth, resource use, and economic and social development with an integrated approach which incorporates an ethical dimension stressing respect for others, non-violence, cooperation and elimination of wasteful consumption;
- To remove all remaining legal, administrative, economic and social barriers to women's rights and economic independence;
- To develop national policies that seek to balance rural and urban development, in particular by improving and expanding basic health and social infrastructure and services, including maternal and child health and family planning services;
- To develop plans to ensure the provision of adequate care of the aged;
- To strive to achieve the population goals adopted in the Bali Declaration.

3. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- To continue to support national population programmes through their grass-roots networks and strategies based on community participation;
- To initiate and promote regular exchanges with government counterpart organizations, particularly in the area of family planning service delivery.

4. PRESS AND MEDIA

- To create awareness of the complex interrelationship between population, environment, resources and development;
- To provide positive and constructive coverage of population issues, in particular in the context of the upcoming International Conference on Population and Development.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- To increase financial resources for multilateral and bilateral, and non-governmental organizations, especially UNFPA and IPPF, to enable them to meet increasing demand for population assistance in the Asian region;
- To encourage all United Nations agencies and organizations to support population policies and programmes;
- To seek debt reduction initiatives designed specifically to generate resources for maternal and child health, reproductive health and family planning programmes and for the improvement of the status of women;
- To promote South-South cooperation in population programme experiences;
- To support national family planning programmes through the transfer of scientific knowledge and technical information about contraception;
- To encourage and support activities designed to strengthen and expand the capacity of developing countries to plan, develop and implement national population policies and programmes, and ensure the effectiveness and coordinated use of international cooperation;
- To establish guidelines and recommendations for assistance levels as proportions of gross national product and official development assistance.

6. ASIAN FORUM SECRETARIAT

- To promote regular exchange of information and expertise among Parliamentarians and others with a view to enhancing the quality and impact of population and family planning programmes in the region.

REDEDICATION

We, the Parliamentarians at the Fourth General Assembly of the Asian Forum, in our various capacities as legislators, community leaders and representatives of the people, commit and dedicate ourselves to work untiringly to bring about a truly sustainable

development combining efforts to slow population growth, rationalize population distribution, alleviate poverty, and lessen environmentally dangerous consumption patterns. We therefore pledge to support policies and programmes aimed at investing in family planning programmes, enhancing maternal and child health care and reproductive health care, empowering women, balancing rural and urban growth, alleviating poverty, providing security for the aged and mobilizing resources.

To this end, we rededicate ourselves to the successful implementation of the Programme of Action in the hope of securing a better harmony between population growth, socio-economic development, resource use and environmental protection. We further dedicate ourselves to work for a better and peaceful future for mankind as a whole.

CANBERRA STATEMENT
27 SEPTEMBER 1996

PREAMBLE

1. We Parliamentarians from 29 countries of the Asia and Pacific region, home to approximately 60% of the world's population with a rich cultural, traditional and religious diversity, attending the Fifth General Conference of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) in Canberra, Australia, from 25-27 September 1996, present the following statement on food security and population¹.
2. In this century, humankind has experienced an unprecedented scale of population growth. While the rate of population growth has declined due to considerable efforts, both national and international, numbers of people in absolute terms continue to increase at an alarming rate leading to large increase in food consumption and powerful pressures on the global environment, including the fragile ecosystems of island nations.
3. We must recognize that mother earth, too long taken for granted as having infinite resources, is indeed a unique and precious planet. No degree of scientific and technological progress will enable us to live beyond the limits of mother earth. We are part of a single community, destined to share a common fate, within the confines of the finite and closed system of our planet. We cannot escape from this reality and must find ways to ensure our survival in a sustainable manner.
4. We must also recognize that food security is world security. It has a direct bearing not only on people's well being but also on social stability, regional and world peace. Food security therefore is vitally important to all countries and to the international community as a whole.
5. In this century, we have overall achieved a high degree of increases in food production due to the progress of science and technology in general and to the success of *the Green Revolution* in particular. As a result, the rate of food production has exceeded that of the population increase. However, there are signs that this may be changing. There are going to be limitations to the availability of new cultivable land and the shortage of fresh water.
6. It is also important to recognize that global projections on resource availability are too often made by narrow groups of specialists. As a way of ensuring balanced and realistic projects for the future, all countries should make their own assessment of their carrying capacity. This should be done by interdisciplinary groups, including scientists from different disciplines and government officials

¹ *This statement takes into account the AFPPD Executive Committee Statement on Food Security and Population adopted in Kuala Lumpur on 2 May 1996 and the Statement of Parliamentarians on Food Security, Population and Development adopted at the Pacific Regional Meeting of Parliamentarians in Coral Coast, Fiji, on 14 August 1996. Water resource is a serious concern which appears to be worsening every day. Furthermore, due to salt and acidic damage, over-cropping and excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, the soil has lost its integrity causing marginal productivity to decline. We are also being reminded that the maritime resources, which in the past seemed infinite, are indeed finite, resulting in declining harvest. The earth, which seemed to have tolerated our misbehavior in the past, is telling us of its limit through environmental deterioration.*

from different specialized agencies. Parliamentarians have both special responsibilities and special capacities to bring together and listen to these divergent views.

7. While projections of global demand and supply of food and population growth give us cause for optimism in the short term, there is cause for pessimism over the long term. Before this stark reality, eventually we must bring our efforts now to ensure that we hand over the planet in a responsible manner to the future generation. We, therefore, offer the following statement with regard to 1) population growth and food production, 2) food production and environment and 3) community development.

Population Growth and Food Production

8. Despite our commitment and efforts to reduce the rate of population increase, its numbers in absolute terms continue to increase. This implies a continued growth in the demand for food. *Thus measures to limit population increase as much as possible are essential if humanity is to continue to survive on the planet.* Furthermore, in order to diminish the load and ensure sustainable food production we must develop agriculture that is in harmony with the environment.
9. As parliamentarians we stand committed to the population cause by reaffirming: the Cairo Declaration of the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development; the Copenhagen Statement of the International Meeting of Parliamentarians on Population and Social Development and the Tokyo Declaration of the International Meeting of Parliamentarians on Gender, Population and Development. The vision described at Cairo calls for substantial increases in resources for primary health care, family planning and reproductive health services and primary education. This is especially critical for women and girls and for those living in rural areas, who are often left behind in development efforts. We believe it is important for parliamentarians to encourage the international community and their own governments to increase resources for these activities.

Food Production and Environment

10. For more than half a century, world food output has increased more rapidly than population growth. Social and technological developments and agricultural policies have produced significant green revolutions. These past successes are important, but they can also give a false sense of security. Even with past successes in output, there remain important distribution problems globally, nationally and within communities and households. In ensuring future increases in food output, we must keep in focus the need for environmental protection, so as to assure that agricultural development is sustainable.
11. Governments and parliamentarians should examine international agreements, including those with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and see how such agreements will affect agricultural production in their countries. Similarly, preferential trade agreements made between groups of countries may also negatively

affect agricultural production and price structures. Developed countries may often make it difficult for developing countries to export their excess agricultural production. Governments would therefore do well to closely examine the impact of international agreements on agricultural exports. Before signing conventions/agreements, the governments should see to it that the conditions imposed by such agreements do not adversely affect agriculture and the environment in the countries concerned.

12. We recognize the importance of food production, which will be the focus at the World Food Summit. Equal emphasis should be placed on issues of *food access and use, especially amongst the most disadvantaged communities and individual producers*. The rural and urban poor must have access to sufficient food for sustainable livelihood. Rural producers of food and forest resources, especially women, must have ownership of productive assets such as land and have access to credit and appropriate technologies. Continued efforts should be made to increase food production through processes already well known, such as increased rural credit, small-scale irrigation schemes and agricultural experimentation and extension services. These are well known and well understood processes, which all too often are not sufficiently provided to small producers.
13. In the context of food production, there are many signals that current agricultural processes are environmentally destructive and thus are not sustainable. For example, the world demand for water is increasing twice as fast as population growth and there is a host of water-related problems that need addressing, including pollution of aquifers by chemicals, soil erosion in steep lands caused by deforestation and intensive agriculture, salinization of irrigated areas and receding water tables, among many others. Greater effort must be made, therefore, to reduce environmental degradation, improve groundwater management, and develop a more sustainable agriculture.
14. Environmental limitations varies by economic sector, whether it is agriculture, forestry or fisheries or manufacturing or services. Agro-forestry-fishery industries are directly impacted by physical and environmental limitations such as availability of cropland, conditions of soil, level of water tables and climate. In this regard, unlike other industrial sectors, it is most important that a pattern of sustainable agriculture is developed taking into full consideration environmental parameters. On the other hand, properly managed agriculture and forestry production can contribute to the preservation of the environment.
15. As Parliamentarians, we acknowledge that no activity will ensure our survival if there were a collapse of the system of primary production – *agro-forestry-fishers*. Many of the primary productive processes we engage in today are environmentally destructive and not sustainable. Hence, all such processes must be reviewed from the perspective of environmental preservation and sustainable development so as to build a fair and reasonable economic and trading system for each section of production.
16. We have to ensure food security at the global level by expanding regional and international cooperation, while encouraging each nation to produce food based

on its environmental conditions and cultural traditions. Equality, we need to find ways to formulate more rational economic policies that will help to build a global trading system essential to preserving the finite global environment and addressing population concerns.

17. Food relief at times of natural and man-made disasters and emergencies requires regional and global cooperation. In order to build a food security system at the regional, interregional and global levels based on mutual cooperation, it is important to expand co-operative relations between food importing and exporting countries and to ensure that food is not used as a form of threat or any means of exploitation.
18. Another area of concern is the need to continue supporting established agricultural research particularly adaptive and participatory research, through international and national institutions, especially in developing countries, which has produced such high economic and social returns in the past. In addition, it is necessary to promote new forms of interdisciplinary policy research for the purpose of building a tax system that provides incentives to protect the environment, taking into account the value and cost of environmental protection in economic activity.

Community Development

19. The rural community, which has played a large role in ensuring food and water resources and preserving the environment in the process of modernization, is under stress as a result of population growth. Accompanying the stress is the population exodus from farming communities to the city, undermining public safety and causing environmental degradation of urban communities and a decrease in land for cultivation.
20. As a result of the population pressure and mobility, the capacity of the farm community to produce food, manage land and preserve the environment is being eroded. There is an urgent need for community development to curb population growth and realize food production in harmony with the environment.
21. Governments should develop appropriate legislative frameworks to provide incentives to local producers so as to enable communities to organize themselves for their own interests and benefits. Attention should be paid to such things as an independent judiciary and media to promote the empowerment of local people with particular emphasis on women. No community development can be realized without developing women's human resources and potential and integrating them fully into the development process.
22. We recognize that in many societies farmers lack economic, political and social power, and are subject to forces of the elements and decisions by remote governments. While in some developed societies farmers do exercise considerable power, often to resist fundamental changes, this is not so in developing countries. Efforts must be made to enable all farmers to exercise meaningful economic, political and social power, especially through education and training.

23. Community development also means the need to promote and ensure reproductive rights by making available reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health, as defined in the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), to all rural areas and farm communities.
24. Development of small and medium-sized towns, with an emphasis on providing such basic amenities as safe water and electricity, assists in optimizing population and distribution and building viable communities. Such development may help to prevent over-concentration of population in large cities and encourage development of farm communities in harmony with the environment.
25. Population, sustainable food production, environmental protection and social development are mutually reinforcing and interdependent variables. Success in these areas requires a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach, which must link specialized agencies of government and be expeditiously implemented.
26. People at risk must be involved in identifying appropriate actions to address food insecurity and malnutrition. The World Food Summit therefore should examine cases in which popular participation has succeeded in improving food security and population programs. Improving women's and girl's education and enhancing their participation in all aspects of society and development will facilitate improvements in women's roles in decision making, concerning not only their reproductive health choices but also their access to and use of credit, agricultural technology and nutritional resources.

COMMITMENT TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

27. As Stated in the resolution adopted at past meetings of parliamentarians, peace, participation, coordination and an interdisciplinary approach are essential to solving problems of food security and population. We Parliamentarians from the Asian and Pacific region offer this statement as testimony of our firm commitment for a collective future, by reaffirming that the only way to meet these common challenges lies in working together. We therefore strongly urge the international community to honour the commitments it made at the recent major international conferences and to translate these commitments into concrete actions. We further urge the international community to make every effort to maintain a close working relationship with all agencies and organizations active in the population and development field, including the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and its fellow parliamentarians groups.

NIIGATA DECLARATION
6 OCTOBER 1999

PREAMBLE

1. We, the 96 parliamentarians from 28 countries,¹ meeting in Niigata, Japan, on the eve of the Day of 6 Billion and of the next millennium to reflect on the results of the ICPD +5, renew our commitment to population and development. The Asian population now represents 61 per cent of the world population. Therefore, the world of the next millennium will in great part depend on the population-related decisions taken by Asian Governments, parliamentarians and the people.
2. Since its establishment in 1981, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) has been a leader in raising awareness of, and advocating for, population and development issues and activities in the region and beyond. It has contributed significantly to the establishment of many forums of parliamentarians on population and development in other regions, including Africa and Arab States and in organizing the landmark International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 and the International Forum of Parliamentarians on ICPD Review in The Hague, 1999.
3. In recent decades, Asia has seen much progress. Yet this region is the one where the trends have been most diverse and diverging. Indeed, Asia includes countries which are developed, developing, and in transition. Asian countries have suffered from the recent economic crisis or are in the midst of major reforms. While some have an abundance of natural resources, water and food, others cannot feed their populations or meet their basic needs. All these countries have different demographic dynamics and must address these in relation to their own specific economic and social realities.
4. Asia is characterized both by populations with rapid demographic changes and populations growing at or below replacement level; youthful populations and rapidly aging populations; countries with highly or rapidly increasing prevalence of HIV/AIDS and countries where only a few cases have been diagnosed. Most countries are facing challenging migratory patterns, especially toward the cities. Great differences are also found in the level of education of women, or infant and maternal mortality, of adolescent fertility, and in access to quality reproductive health information and services and life expectancy.

CALL FOR ACTION

5. We reaffirm the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Cairo Declaration on Population and Development adopted by parliamentarians on the eve of ICPD. We welcome the ICPD+5 process, including the International Forum of Parliamentarians on ICPD Review, held in The Hague, which guides us in the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

¹ These 28 countries, include the following members, associate members and observers: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, China, Fiji, Ghana, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia.

6. We urge all Governments to implement the ICPD Programme of Action, in close partnership with the civil society, to develop long-term perspectives and strategies addressing the interrelationship between water, food, natural resources environment and population. We also urge all Governments to address the factors hindering gender equity and male participation; access to quality reproductive health information and services, especially for youth; as well as those factors contributing to high abortion rates, the spread of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS and high infant and maternal mortality rates. We urge our fellow parliamentarians to put these issues on their national agendas, take concerted action on them, and monitor progress on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.
7. Recognizing the inseparable relationship between population and sustainable development, we urge all Governments to ensure that international agreements and conventions, especially international trade rules, are fully consistent with food security whereby basic needs and conditions for human survival, such as food and water resources, are met.
8. We call on the United Nations, including its regional commissions, and in particular the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), to continue to play a pivotal role in helping countries to formulate and implement population policies and strategies, as well as on regional mechanisms such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and others to assist in such activities. We also call on the United Nations to hold its next International Conference on Population and Development in 2004 in a country in Asia.
9. The insufficiency of the resources allocated to population and reproductive health is a major obstacle to the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. We therefore, call upon all donor Governments to increase the flow of official development assistance to the 0.7 percent target of GNP and to devote 4.5 to 5 percent of it to population and reproductive health. We urge recipient Governments to increase the share of their national budgets to population and reproductive health. We also urge our fellow parliamentarians to push for greater investment in the social sector, particularly for population and development, and call on all parties to ensure that resources are used efficiently.

PLEDGE

10. On the eve of the Day of 6 Billion and of the new millennium, now is the time for action. We must urgently address population and development issues in a comprehensive and strategic manner. We, therefore, reaffirm our commitment to the parliamentarian's movement as an important vehicle to change the mindset and behaviours of citizens and Governments, and to translate people's concerns into legislative and government action. To provide global support for such actions at national and regional levels, we, the members of the AFPPD, pledge to take the lead in establishing a worldwide network of parliamentarians concerned

with population and development, as recommended in The Hague Declaration.

11. We strongly pledge to translate this commitment into proactive advocacy on population and development issues and into direct support to population policies and programmes in order to meet people's basic needs and to bring about peace, prosperity and equity.
12. Changing the world sounds like a formidable task but when individuals change, the world changes. As individuals and as parliamentarians, we pledge to carry out the actions set forth in this Declaration. We have both the authority and responsibility to do so.

BEIJING DECLARATION
17-18 OCTOBER 2002

PREAMBLE

1. We, 187 parliamentarians and other participants from 28 countries of the Asia Pacific region, have assembled again in Beijing, China, for the 7th General Assembly and 20 years celebration of AFPPD. The present Assembly is a continuation of the past six assemblies successively held in New Delhi, Beijing, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Canberra and Niigata. Looking back on the course of the activities of the Asian Forum in the past 20 years since its founding, we fully affirm its achievements. After extensive discussions, at the two-day Assembly, on population and development with the relevant opportunities and challenges, we have reached a broad consensus and unanimously reaffirmed our commitment to population and development.
2. Since its founding in Beijing in 1981, the Asian Forum has dedicated itself to raising awareness of and advocating for population and development issues among elected representatives and -through them- members of the general public. It has established a national forum of relevant representatives in most of the countries in the region and has also helped form the regional forums in the Africa and Arab region, and Europe;
3. The population of the Asia Pacific region was 3.52 billion in 1995. Although population growth is slowing in some countries, the region's population generally will still continue to increase. It is projected to increase to 4.58 billion by the year 2020. This equals an increase of over 1 billion or 30 percent over 25 years. Moreover, with the acceleration of urbanization and ageing and the spread of the AIDS epidemic, population growth has brought about numerous new challenges to the region in addition to its pressure on resources and ecological environment;
4. Humankind is confronted with complex and profound challenges taking place all over the world. We are called upon by the new situation to proceed from the larger interest of harmony between human beings and nature and complementarities between environment and development and to take the road of sustainable development with stronger determination and commitment.

CALL FOR ACTION

We...

5. Reaffirm the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Cairo and Hague Declarations on Population and Development adopted by the Parliamentarians on the eve of ICPD and later at the review of ICPD. In order to pursue and promote the population and development programme and meet the new challenges. AFPPD urges the parliaments of various countries to mobilize more of their members to take part in the activities of this field;
6. Urge all governments to continuously formulate and improve laws and regula-

tions on control of population growth, environmental protection, resource management, and disaster prevention and reduction;

7. Urge all governments to implement the ICPD Programme of Action with renewed vigour as population planning is the base for future development strategy, involvement of civil society, and strategies emphasizing the inter-relations among population, water, food security, natural resources and poverty;
8. Urge all governments to clearly integrate poverty reduction strategies into population and development programmes, while recognizing that in spite of economic growth, poverty is widely prevalent in the region with more than one billion people living below the poverty line, and realizing that poverty is closely linked to various aspects of population growth;
9. Urge all Governments to ensure that international agreements and conventions, especially those on environmental issues are fully consistent with food and water security, acknowledging the inseparable strong linkages between population and sustainable development, and appreciating the recent UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, we call on all countries to take measures to carry out the follow-up activities of the World Summit, and basic needs and conditions for human survival should be given priority, including food security in the process of economic development. The population factor should be taken into full consideration in the implementation of those international agreements, conventions and relevant national strategies;
10. Call on the United Nations, and in particular the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), to continue to play an important role in helping countries formulate and implement population policies and strategies;
11. Also call upon Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), as the regional organization of the United Nations dedicated to economic and social development, to accord priority to population and development in its efforts to assist the member countries to formulate, implement and monitor their population, including reproductive health programmes as population factors play a significant role in development;
12. Reiterate with concern that the resources available for population and reproductive health are not sufficient and funding is declining. We call upon all donor governments to increase the official development assistance to population related programmes. We also urge our fellow parliamentarians to strive to increase investment in the social and health sectors, particularly, for population and development and call on all partners concerned to ensure that available resources are used effectively and efficiently;
13. Recognize that HIV/AIDS is an extremely serious issue that requires an urgent, coordinated response in many of our countries, and urge our fellow parliamentarians to increase their efforts to ensure effective HIV/AIDS legislation, preventive measures as well as treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS;

14. Realize that young people are especially prone to risk behaviour, including unprotected sex and drug use, making them vulnerable to acquire HIV/AIDS and other STDs. About 50% of the new HIV/AIDS infections in Asia occur in the age group of 15-24 years. We urge our fellow parliamentarians to place special emphasis on adolescent reproductive health, and to ensure that young people are paid full attention and provided with more convenient services;
15. Ensure protection of the rights of women; emphasize that sexual abuse and violence against women cause and sustain the psychological and physical impairment of women, and emphasize that the elimination of violence against women is fundamental to the achievement of women's rights and until that issue is addressed, sustainable and equitable national and regional development cannot be achieved;
16. Urge our fellow parliamentarians to plan policies that ensure that the elderly are well taken care of and that their needs and rights are respected, while noting the substantive increases in the proportion of elderly people in many countries of the region, and the effect ageing has on economic, social, and health developments;
17. Realizing the oncoming crisis of clean drinking water for the masses, the parliamentarians should encourage Government Organizations, Non-Government Organizations, and civil societies to create awareness to save water through water harvesting and other ingenious methods, and ensure that water is available to all, particularly to the people from developing countries who live in poverty.

PLEDGE

We pledge....

18. To act more effectively to ensure that our governments give due attention to the population and development programmes and emphasize their inter-relations with food security, water, environment, and poverty;
19. To ensure that population and development programmes are effectively implemented, through monitoring the programmes and educating our constituency members to use the services;
20. To oppose any move to dilute the population agenda as we firmly believe that development, food security, and poverty reduction are not possible without proper population planning;
21. To ask our governments to emphasize the importance of population policies and programmes in development, food security and poverty reduction work undertaken by ESCAP, at the forthcoming Asian and Pacific Population Conference;
22. To bring to the attention of our fellow parliamentarians the importance of the

HIV/AIDS issue and motivate them to ensure that an effective and adequately funded national policy and programme is in place by the earliest time possible;

23. To involve women parliamentarians in our committees and programmes and to give emphasis to gender equality and equity at the national level;
24. To increase our efforts to remove legal, social and cultural barriers that prevent women from fully participating in society;
25. To urge developed countries to ensure that increased resources are allocated for population and reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS related programmes in their ODAs, and urge UNFPA to continue to support the parliamentarians' involvement in population and development programmes at the national and regional level;
26. To recognize AFPPD as an important forum for the exchanges of the parliaments and parliamentarians of the Asia Pacific region. It also serves as an important channel to increase exchanges among the people of the region to gain more mutual understanding, confidence and cooperation. We believe that with the common efforts of parliamentarians from various countries, the Asian Forum will continuously develop and make greater contribution to the realization of population growth in harmony with socio-economic development, resource utilization and environmental protection for the sake of sustainable development and food security in the Asia Pacific Region.

JAKARTA DECLARATION
12-13 NOVEMBER 2005

PREAMBLE

1. We, the Parliamentarians from twenty-four countries of Asia and the Pacific assembled here in Jakarta, during 12-13 November 2005, on the occasion of the Eighth General Assembly of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and having discussed the interrelated issues of population, reproductive health, culture and religion:
 - **Recognize** that the Millennium Development Goals and related targets, in particular the eradication of poverty and hunger, can only be achieved through strong political commitment of heads of State and Government with full support of all stakeholders including parliamentarians, civil society, and the private sector;
 - **Reaffirm** the call made at the World Summit Outcome Document to “achieve universal access to reproductive health as set out in the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal in strategies to international development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration aiming at improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty”.
2. We, further take note of the fact that though progress has been made during the past ten years in meeting the goals of ICPD and ICPD+5 major challenges and constraints still remain and that they vary among and within countries of the region;
 - **Emphasize** that efforts to advance the ICPD goals must take cognizance of the diversity of cultural and religious contexts as well as other developmental factors in the context of promoting human rights.

CALL FOR ACTION

In our pursuit to eradicate poverty and hunger and to improve the well-being of our peoples, we commit ourselves to:

- **Refocus** efforts to achieve the goals of ICPD and ICPD+5 by developing and enacting supportive legislations, advocating for allocation of adequate resources, mobilizing support at the national and local levels, and by monitoring the progress in the implementation of related policies and programmes;
- **Focus** attention to improve access to and quality of reproductive health services; eliminate gender inequality and gender based violence; promote education and capacity building; reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS; and address the needs, including the reproductive health needs, of young people; especially among the poor and the marginalized segments of our societies. To that end, we encourage active involvement of religious leaders and due consideration of existing cultural and local norms, values and wisdoms;

- *Support* efforts to meet the needs of the growing number of older persons.
- *Support* regional and global efforts to maximize development benefits and minimize negative impacts of international migration, paying special attention to the needs of migrant workers, in particular women and members of their families as well as their human rights.
- *Take measures* to mitigate the adverse impacts of natural calamities and other unforeseen events that disproportionately affect the poor and the disadvantaged, and in fulfilling the above:
- *Develop a longer-term strategy* and establish goals and priorities at the national and regional levels for implementation by AFPPD and the National Committees, and to take follow-up actions necessary to monitor to progress in achieving them.

AFPPD

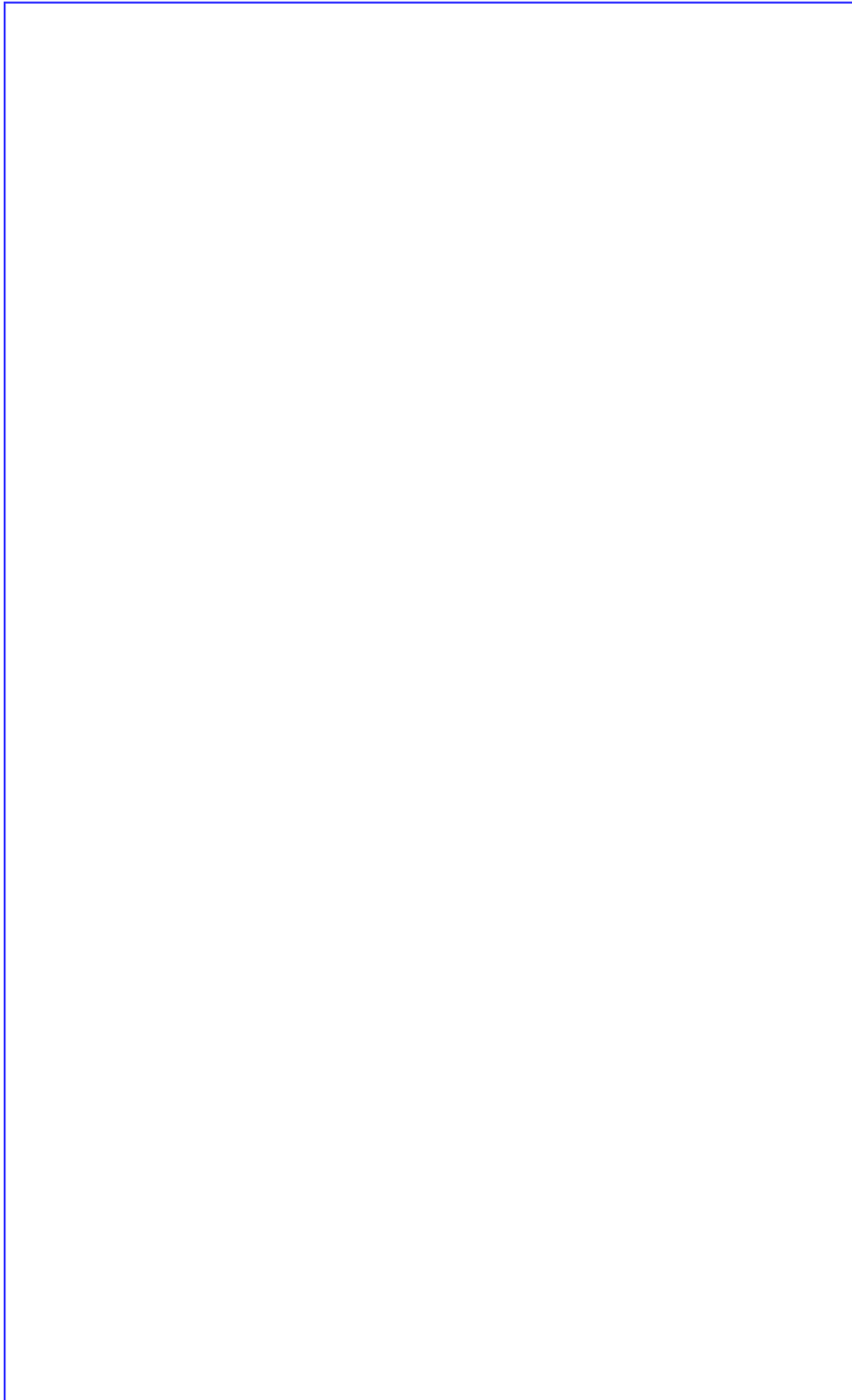
We call upon AFPPD and its secretariat to augment efforts to strengthen national committees, in particular those that are newly established;

- To take steps to develop strategic regional and national action plans for consideration by the Executive Committee at its second session in 2006; and
- To take steps for commemorating the 25th year of establishment of AFPPD and support the convening of the global conference of parliamentarians in 2006 in Bangkok.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	Asian Development Bank
AFPPD	Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
APDA	Asian Population and Development Association
APPGPD	Australian All Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
CAPPD	Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
CST	UNFPA Country Support Team
EPF	European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
FAAPPD	Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
GA	General Assembly
GCPPD	Global Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
IAPG	Inter-American Group of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
IAPPD	Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICPD+5	Five year review of the ICPD
ICPD+10	Ten year review of the ICPD
ICPPD	International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
IEPFPD	Inter European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
IPCI	International Parliamentarians Conference on ICPD
IERD	UNFPA Information and External Relations Division
IFPPD	Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
IMPO	International Medical Parliamentarian Organization
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
IPU	Inter Parliamentary Union
JFPF	Japanese Parliamentary Federation for Population
MDGs	Millennium development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPC	National Peoples Congress
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PGA	Parliamentarians for Global Action
PGPD	Parliamentary Group on Population and Development
PLCPD	Philippines Legislators Committee on Population and Development
PPAP	Person-to-Person Advocacy Project
RTI/STI	Reproductive tract Infections and sexually transmitted infections
STDs	Sexually transmitted diseases
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development

UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	UN Joint Programme on AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAPPD	Vietnam Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
WAY	World Assembly of Youth
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WPF	World Population Fund
WPY	World Population Year



The Population Challenge in Asia: Parliamentarians as Advocates and Policy Makers



The Asian Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) was founded 25 years ago from the perspective that coping with population issues was indispensable for bringing about sustainable development and, that unless we resolve population problems humankind would not have a bright future.

Building on an idea put forward by Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda, former Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan Mr. Takashi Sato and other Asian parliamentary leaders established the AFPPD. It represented the world's first regional parliamentary network on population and development, and it is continuing energetically today to carry out important activities.

At the core of AFPPD's activities are population issues. The *ultimate objective* of our activities, however, is not population issues as such.

If it were possible to continue to live in peace and prosperity on this earth even with a constant increase in population, there would be no need to particularly address population issues. But when we consider the earth's environment and the planet's finite capacities for supporting our lives, it becomes quite clear that without dealing with these issues, it is not possible for humankind to live peaceful and happy lives.

Building upon the conviction that solving population issues will assure the foundation for humankind's sustainable development, we have for over a quarter of a century invested earnest and positive efforts towards achieving sustainable development through resolving population issues.

In the process, we have come to share this ideal with almost all of Asia's major countries. Members of parliaments in the Asian region have kept close contact, to an unprecedented degree, as we carry out practical activities in this field of endeavour. As a result, there has been great progress in the Asian region towards practical resolution of population issues. Simultaneously, many countries have attained notable development in the economic sphere. Of course, these successes are in large part the fruit of devoted efforts of the people and governments of the countries themselves. However, at the same time, I think we, as members of the AFPPD, can take justified pride that to some extent our organization has made important contributions to these successes.

This book by Jyoti Shankar Singh, who has been associated with AFPPD from the very beginning, recounts how the parliamentary movement on population and development issues has developed in Asia and the Pacific over the years, on national and international levels. The book is an essential reading for both fellow parliamentarians and all those interested in the role of parliamentarians in population and development issues.

Yasuo Fukuda
Member of Parliament, Japan
Chairman, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on
Population and Development (AFPPD)

Jyoti Shankar Singh is a former Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA. He also served as Executive Coordinator of the 1984 International Conference on Population and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. During 1998-1999, he was Special Adviser to the Executive Director of UNFPA on ICPD+5 review. In 2000-2001 he served as the Executive Coordinator of the United Nations World Conference on Racism. During 1999-2005, he was also President of Population 2005 - a global network of individuals with significant experience in the population field committed to the earliest possible implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the Cairo Conference. Currently he is permanent observer to the United Nations of Partners in Population and Development- an intergovernmental organization of developing countries.