11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference on Ensuring Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment from a Life-Cycle Approach Leaving No Girls and No Women Behind 4-5 November 2016 | Bangkok, Thailand

Concept Note

Since the UN Member States adopted unanimously the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, the Asian Forum Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) has spearheaded its parliamentary advocacy work to mainstream gender equality and women’s empowerment into regional and global agenda. The first six months of the SDGs era and the AFPPD Strategic Cycle (2016-2019) saw the AFPPD’s flagship events generating tangible results — parliamentarians’ concrete follow-up action and partnership building. The South Asian regional conference to accelerate our collective efforts to eliminate child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations, as well as achieving universal health coverage, ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for political and economic activities. The Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD) co-organized by the AFPPD toward the G7 Ise-Shima Summit has proven to be successful in soliciting the world leaders’ collective commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment. The G7 Leaders’ Declaration and the G7 Guiding Principles for Capacity Building for Women and Girls have integrated the GCPPD recommendations in order to translate their commitments into concrete national, regional and global level actions.

Building on these recent achievements by the AFPPD and the outcomes of the past ten Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conferences, the 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference will take up women’s rights and empowerment issues from a life-cycle approach. It will highlight the issues identified within the AFPPD’s strategic priorities framework, following the principle of leaving no girls and no women behind, including the elderly and the vulnerable. The Conference will be organized such that both male and female parliamentarians can meet in Bangkok to discuss how they can further take concrete actions in order to fully achieve the SDGs 3 and 5 and all relevant targets for empowering all girls and women. An evidence-based approach will be adopted to roll out AFPPD’s new research outputs - case studies on good practices of laws and policies to ensure women’s and girls’ safety/security, health and participation - to critically examine the entrenched barriers to gender equality and effective interventions to overcome them.

Objectives:
- Foster concerted collaboration among men and women parliamentarians and ministers to formulate and advocate for a regional gender-related policy agenda from a life cycle approach;
- Define regional and country strategies to ensure a pronounced gender goal in the SDGs under the principle of leaving no girls, women, elderly and vulnerable women behind;
- Agree on effective advocacy mechanisms, based on evidence-based good practices, that mobilize both men and women parliamentarian in pushing gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Participants:
The conference will bring together about 60 ministers and parliamentarians from Asia-Pacific joined in by experts from International Organizations, CSOs, faith-based organizations, youth, and the media.

Organizers:
The conference is organized by the AFPPD, with support from the Government of Japan (the Japan Trust Fund), the UNFPA APRO and the IPPF SARO, hosted by the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand.
Session 1: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Elimination of Violence against Women

Thematic Questions:

How far has the global and regional agenda evolved since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment, and in particular eliminating violence against women? How can we strengthen/establish the coordinated and comprehensive national system to combat and prevent violence against women that is interconnected with policies on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women?

Background:

Gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential for meeting Asia-Pacific’s aspiration of inclusive and sustainable development. Neither gender equality nor development can be achieved if violence against women and girls continues to take place. Eliminating violence against women is a crucial step to achieving this equality. In 2015, the twenty-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action, the adoption of the Addis Ababa Agenda, and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development reiterated the need for addressing gender inequalities as critical for sustainable development.

Globally, one in three women experiences gender-based violence in her lifetime. In the Pacific region, two in three women experience physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner in their lifetime. Violence against women has economic and fiscal consequences; the number of productive days lost, as well as the cost to referral services, is a drain on the families, communities and societies. Also, such health, emotional and psychological consequences have proven to have a spiral effect over generations, disabling girls and women to achieve their full potential as an individual. The combined effect will be detrimental to achieving development outcomes, and ultimately the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A significant number of legal instruments and policy documents and mechanisms at the global, regional and national levels have mandated States to combat violence against women. Despite (or because of) the existing framework, however, violence against women remains universally widespread, systemic and structural. There remain huge gaps in the effective and efficient implementation of the laws, policies, and programs, towards upholding the commitments made at different fora. Ending violence against women requires investments in gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly in education, reproductive health and rights, and economic and political empowerment.

Purpose: The session will provide an opportunity for stakeholders in addressing the elimination of violence against women to take stock of the progress, identify gaps and discuss good practices and effective and sustainable solutions and strategies. The session aims to draw a plan of action to address the gaps identified during the course of a discussion, helping parliamentarians and other stakeholders take concrete national, regional and global actions towards the full achievement of SDG 5.
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference

Session Concept Note 1

The stand-alone goal for gender equality (SDG 5) has six targets specifically addressing women’s disadvantage and the three means of implementation.

Goal 5: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere;
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation;
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation;
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate;
5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

Outcome: At the end of the session, the participants will have some increased knowledge and shared understanding of (1) causes and dire consequences of violence against women from a victim’s perspective; (2) effective prevention measures, especially good practices of engaging men and boys for addressing violence against women; (3) country-specific evidence-based legislation and policies addressing and tackling violence against women, in general, and child marriage and human trafficking, in particular; and (4) the importance of setting up/strengthening mechanisms for coordination and cooperation for a comprehensive national system to address violence against women. Parliamentarians reaffirm their commitments to address gender inequalities and elimination of VAW.

Format:

- The session will consist of a resource person’s presentation and an interactive panel discussion, followed by open discussions.
- After the resource person’s presentation, the chair will set the stage for the discussion, raise some questions, and stimulate dialogue among the panelists. The chair will invite the audience to comment on the key points of the discussion. At the end of the session, the chair will summarize the key points and recommendations to be included in the Conference Declaration and Recommendations.
Chair (5 minutes)

- Ms. Lubna Baqi, Regional Director, UNFPA APRO

Video: Case Study from Briefing Cards (5 minutes)

Inspirational Speaker:

- Ms. Brooke Axtell, Director of Communications and Survivor Leadership, Allies Against Slavery
  (15 minutes)

Presentation:

- Ms. Ingrid Fitzgerald, Technical Adviser, Gender and Human Rights, UNFPA APRO (15 minutes)

Panel (20 minutes)

- Hon. Ms. Mahtab Akbar Rashdi, MP Pakistan
- Hon. Ms. Mereseini Vuniwaqa, MP Fiji, Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation
- Hon. Ms. Suwannee Sirivejchapun, MP Thailand
- Dr. Rinchen Chophel, Director General, South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children

Open discussion (25 minutes)

Some questions to guide the panel discussions are as follows:

1. How can we engage boys and men in the prevention of violence against women and girls? What has been the result? What are the remaining challenges? (Hon. Ms. Mereseini Vuniwaqa)

2. How do we embed the role of parliamentarians in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment in achieving the SDGs (Goal 5) with a focus on eliminating violence against women, in general, child marriage and human trafficking, in particular? (Hon. Ms. Mahtab Akbar Rashdi; Hon. Ms. Suwannee Sirivejchapun)

3. How can parliamentarians effectively secure social and legal remedies for the victims of violence so that they can be empowered to be able to lead a safe, healthy and dignified life?

4. How can we strengthen coordinated efforts of regional intergovernmental forums (SAARC) to combat and prevent violence against children both girls and boys? (Dr. Rinchen Chophel)

Chair’s wrap-up (5 minutes)
Chart 1: Proportion of women aged 15–49 years experiencing physical violence (irrespective of the perpetrator) at least once in their lifetime and in the last 12 months, 1995–2013 (latest available)

Source: The World's Women 2015
Session Participants’ Bios:

Session Chair:

Ms. Lubna Baqi, Deputy Regional Director, UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office

Ms. Lubna Baqi became Deputy Director of the UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Office in September 2011. Prior to this, she worked as the Associate Director of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO) in New York for three years.

Ms. Baqi first joined UNFPA in 1990 as a Programme Officer for Asia and the Pacific, and has served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Executive Director, Deputy Representative in Egypt, Representative in Sri Lanka and Country Director for Maldives.

Inspirational Speaker:

Ms. Brooke Axtell, Director of Communications and Survivor Leadership, Allies against Slavery

Ms. Brooke Axtell is the Director of Communications and Survivor Support for Allies against Slavery, a non-profit devoted to ending human trafficking. She also founded Survivor Healing and Empowerment (S.H.E.), a healing community for survivors of rape, abuse and sex-trafficking.

As an advocate, Ms. Axtell supports survivors through their recovery process with a focus on creative expression. She is a member of the Speaker’s Bureau for Rape, Abuse, Incest, National Network (R.A.I.N.N.), and serves on the advisory board of The Refuge, the first long-term therapeutic care program for survivors of child sex-trafficking in Austin, Texas.

She has also spoken at the United Nations, the U.S. Institute for Peace and the 2015 Grammy Awards. Her work as a writer, speaker, performing artist and activist has been featured in many media outlets, including the New York Times, Time Magazine, Rolling Stone, Wall Street Journal and CNN.

Presenter:

Ms. Ingrid Fitzgerald, Technical Advisor, Gender and Human Rights, UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office

Ms. Ingrid Fitzgerald is the Technical Advisor on Gender and Human Rights at the UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Office. Previously, she was the Special Adviser to the Senior UN Coordinator (“Fit for Purpose” for the 2030 Agenda) and Special Adviser to the Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director (DED) for Policy and Programme of UN Women in New York.

She has also worked as a Policy Specialist for the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Hanoi, Vietnam and Gender Advisor the Cambodian Development Resource Institute.
Panelists:

Hon. Ms. Mahtab Akbar Rashdi, MP Pakistan

Hon. Ms. Mahtab Akbar Rashdi serves as Member of Parliament representing the Pakistan Muslim League. She is a member of the Standing Committee of Assembly, in health, environment and energy, and a member of the Board of Directors of Green Star Social Marketing. She played an active role in the early marriage bill that was passed in 2015 and was involved in a bill that has been moved in the assembly against corporal punishment in schools and places of employment.

Hon. Ms. Mereseini Vuniwaqa, MP Fiji, Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation

Hon. Ms. Mereseini Vuniwaqa serves as Member of Parliament representing the Fiji First Party. She won a seat in the Parliament at the last general elections in September 2014. She was subsequently appointed as Minister for Lands and Mineral Resources for two years and then later became the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation.

The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation is responsible for Policy and Operational oversight for issues pertaining to women, children, elderly citizens, disabled persons and poverty alleviation.

Hon. Ms. Suwannee Siriwetchapan, MP Thailand

Hon. Ms. Suwannee Siriwetchapan serves as Member of Parliament at the National Assembly of Thailand. In 2016, she led the Thai delegation of National Legislative Assembly members to the Asian Parliamentary Assembly in Iran. That same year, she was also elected as Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)’s Women’s Affairs Coordinator, tasked with the coordination of women’s affairs within the IPU.

Dr. Rinchen Chophel, Director General, South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children

Dr. Rinchen Chophel is the Director General of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC) and is a medical doctor by profession. Previously, he has held the position of Executive Director of the National Commission for Women and Children, The Royal Government of Bhutan, and has championed the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children with distinction.

At the regional level, he is a well-known and highly regarded expert on gender and human rights, and supported many agencies including the SAARC Secretariat in many key regional projects and initiatives. He has extensive experience in working with the Ministries of Women and Children of the Governments in South Asia as well as with the UN, INGOs, NGOs and research organisations in the SAARC Region.
Session 2: Ensuring Girls’ and Women’s Health throughout their Life Course

Thematic Questions: “What can and should parliamentarians do to close inequality gaps in access to sexual and reproductive health care services, information and education in order to achieve SDGs 3 & 5? What needs to be done in order to scale up successful interventions in reducing maternal mortality, increasing access to family planning, and enabling young people to receive comprehensive sexuality education?”

Background:

Women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are crucial to women’s realization of their basic human rights. Access to SRHR promotes women’s health, saves lives, empowers women, and brings economic and social benefits to the entire society. However, the current situation remains less than satisfactory. Poor SRHR indicators reflect that the wide inequality gaps exist both within and between countries.

Poor sexual and reproductive health outcomes represent one-third of the total global burden of disease for women aged 15-44 years. The greatest burden of ill-health among women is concentrated in places where health systems are weak. Despite the 44 per cent decline in the global maternal mortality ratio over the years of 1990-2015, about 830 women die every day due to preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth, of which 99 per cent of all maternal deaths occur in poor settings. The MDG5 (a three-quarters reduction in maternal mortality) has yet to be achieved.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, estimated 225 million women who want to avoid a pregnancy are currently not using an effective contraceptive method. If all women who wished to avoid a pregnancy used modern contraceptives, and if all pregnant women and their newborns received the standard maternal and infant care recommended by WHO, the benefits would be phenomenal:

- **Unintended pregnancies** would drop by 70 per cent from 74 million to 22 million per year;
- **Maternal deaths** would drop by 67 per cent from 290,000 to 96,000;
- **Newborn deaths** would drop by 77 per cent from 2.9 million to 660,000;
- **Transmission of HIV** from mothers to newborns would be nearly eliminated – achieving 93 per cent reduction to 9,000 cases annually.

Only 25 US dollars per woman of reproductive age is estimated to be required annually to achieve the above-mentioned benefits. These investments would be cost-effective, because helping women choose the number and timing of their pregnancies makes health care more affordable overall.

**Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)** is another important intervention to achieve good reproductive health outcomes. There is a clear evidence that CSE has contributed to delayed sexual debut, reduced number of sexual partners, more use of condoms, and other healthy sexual behaviours among young people.

Women’s and girls’ access to SRHR are important as an end per se. More important is the fact that they impact other aspects of women’s lives throughout their life-course. Access to SRHR enables or at least increases the chance for girls and women to go to school and continue education, to have a steady income by being gainfully employed, to be free from violence, to participate in a decision-making process or make their own decisions, and to have control over their lives. SRHR must become central to any government plan for healthcare, including universal health coverage. Equal access to health care...
including SRHR must be prioritized. When women are healthy, their families and their societies will be healthy as well.

**Purpose:** The main purpose of this session is to provide a platform for participants to discuss how they can take further actions in order to fully achieve the SDGs 3 and 5, particularly, targets related to SRHR:

**Goal 3.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- 3.1 by 2030 reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births;
- 3.7 by 2030 ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs;

**Goal 5.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- 5.6 ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Participants will be given the opportunity to reflect on effective advocacy mechanisms based on evidence-based good practices related to SRHR policies and programs. They will then develop recommendations for national and regional advocacy plans, national SRH policy and strategies, to be integrated in the Conference Declaration and Recommendations.

**Expected Outcomes:** Increased parliamentarians’ knowledge and understanding of their possible actions to address inequalities resulting in poor reproductive health outcomes for women; increased commitment to promote these issues as central agenda in the SDGs at the national and regional levels.

**Format:**

- The session will consist of a resource person’s presentation and an interactive panel discussion, followed by open discussions.
- After the resource person’s presentation, the chair will set the stage for the discussion, raise some questions, and stimulate dialogues among the panelists. The chair will invite the audience to comment on the key points of the discussion. At the end of the session, the chair will summarize the key points and recommendations.
Chair:

- **Hon. Lord Fusitu’a**, MP Tonga, Co-Chair, AFPPD Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

**Video:** Case Study from the Briefing Cards *(5 minutes)*

**Presentation (15 min)**

- **Hon. Mr. Teddy B. Baguilat**, MP Philippines, AFPPD Vice-Chair

**Panel (30 minutes)**

- **Hon. Mr. Bishma Adhikari**, MP Nepal
- **Hon. Ms. Ermalena Muslim Hasbulla**, MP Indonesia, Chair of IFPPD
- **Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont**, MP Thailand, Secretary-General AFPPD

**Open discussion (30 minutes)**

Some questions to guide the panel discussions are as follows:

1. What have parliamentarians done and can do in your countries in order to reduce the inequality in access to sexual and reproductive health services, information and education for the most disadvantaged women and communities, such as poor, rural, young women and girls, women living with HIV and other vulnerable groups in order to fully achieve SDGs 3 and 5 and their relevant targets?

2. What are some of the most successful policies and/or strategies that resulted in clear advances for women’s SRHR, access to quality services, including family planning, access to CSE in your country? What were the obstacles and how have you overcome them? How can they be scaled up?

3. What do you consider as effective advocacy mechanisms to promote integration of SRHR into national development strategies, national SDG implementation plans and national budgets?

Special references can be made to the following legislation and activities conducted by the panelists:

- **Philippines:** The Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act (2012) (Republic Act No. 10354), informally known as the Reproductive Health Law or RH Law
- **Thailand:** Adolescent Pregnancy Act (2016)
- **Nepal:** National and regional advocacy on prevention of early, child and forced marriage (2016); The Constitution of Nepal (2015)
- **Indonesia:** Engaging religious leaders to advocate for women’s and girls’ access to SRHR (2016)

**Chair’s wrap-up (5 minutes)**
Session Participants’ Bios:

Session Chair:
Hon. Lord Fusitu’a, MP Tonga, Co-chairperson, Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Hon. Lord Fusitu’a has participated in AFPPD’s activities since 2013, and a strong advocate of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA) in the Kingdom of Tonga and in the Pacific Region.

Lord Fusitu’a is Member of Parliament for the Niuas, Legislative Assembly of the Kingdom of Tonga. In the Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga, Lord Fusitu’a is currently Chair of the Standing Committees on Population and Development and the Standing Committee on Anticorruption. He is a member of the Standing Committee on Privileges, Standing Committee on Legislation, Standing Committee on Social Services, and Standing Committee for Retirement Fund Board.

Lord Fusitu’a is also Barrister of the High Court of Australia, Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory, and Law Practitioner of the Supreme Court of Tonga.

Prior to being in Tonga politics, Lord Fusitu’a was Executive Director of the Spartan South Pacific Group Limited, and Director of the Priority Consulting Group, as well as the former Acting Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Crown Counsel in the Crown Law Department and Legal Counsel for Pacific Asia Global Holdings Ltd.

Lord Fusitu’a has a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) degree and Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (GDLP), Law from the Australian National University. He graduated with the Bookers ANU Law School Prize for Legal System and Process. He also has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Literature/Linguistics and History/Politics from the University of the South Pacific. He graduated with University Gold Medal for top graduand in Literature and Linguistics.

Lord Fusitu’a is also a board member of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) World Board.

Presenter:
Hon. Mr. Teddy B. Baguilat, MP Philippines

Hon. Mr. Teddy Baguilat serves as Member of Parliament representing the Liberal Party of the Philippines. He is the newly elected Chairperson of the Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) in the lower chamber of Congress. Most notable of PLCPD’s work was the passage of the Responsible Parenthood Law.

Hon. Mr. Baguilat is one of the few Members of Congress who is vocal against extra-judicial killings and the reinstatement of the death penalty. He has advocated for the protection and promotion of indigenous peoples’ rights, welfare, and privileges; the protection of the environment; transparency and accountability in the government; women’s and children’s rights; agrarian reform; food security; among others.

Panelists:
Hon. Ms. Ermalena Muslim Hasbullah, MP Indonesia
Hon. Hasbullah is Deputy Chairperson of Commission IX (Population and Health) of the Indonesian Parliament from 2014 to 2019. She is also Chairperson of Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD) from 2015-2019. Before joining the Parliament she served as a Senior Adviser to the Minister of Cooperative and Small Business, and a Senior Adviser to the Minister of Religious Affairs.

Prior to that, she worked with several international organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children, and Helen Keller International. She was also active in several institutions under the Nahdatul Ulama, the biggest Muslim organization in Indonesia, such as LKKNU, PMII, IPPNU, Fatayat NU, and Muslimat NU. Hon. Hasbullah graduated as a pharmacist from Pancasila University of Jakarta.

Hon. Dr. Bhishma Nath Adhikari, MP Nepal

Hon. Dr. Adhikari is a Member of Parliament, and is currently conducting research work on power devolution and practice of decentralization in Nepal. He previously served as a member of Constituent Assembly, the assembly that promulgated the constitution of Nepal 2015, also his past work include being a consultant and advisor of Minister for Local Development of Nepalese Government. Hon. Dr. Adhikari worked as a member of the regulation draft committee of local government.

His political career started as a student activist when he was involved in the democratic movement of Nepal 1978. In 1989 and 1990, Hon. Dr. Adhikari was actively involved in the joint mass movement of Nepalese Political Parties; this movement succeeded to bring the monarchy under Nepalese constitution. After promulgation of Constitution of Nepal adhering universal values and standard of modern democracy, Hon. Dr. Adhikari was involving in re-drafting various laws in Nepal. During the last 2 years, he has been actively participating in population and development networks of parliamentarians. He has also attended international conferences, seminars and workshops in various Asian, American and European countries.

Hon. Dr. Jete Sirathranont, MP Thailand, AFPPD Secretary General

Hon. Dr. Sirathranont has been Secretary-General of AFPPD since 2014.

He is a medical doctor and has been working on health issues as a legislator. In his capacity as the current Chairperson of Thailand’s National Legislative Assembly's (NLA) Public Health Committee as well as AFPPD’s Secretary-General, Hon. Dr. Sirathranont is leading advocacy efforts to address adolescent pregnancy issues through a Reproductive Health Protection Bill in Thailand.

Hon. Dr. Sirathranont served twice as member of the Senate of Thailand in 2008-2011 and 2011-2014. From 2013 to 2014, he was the Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Public Health of the Senate. He was Director of Somdet Phraphuttha Loetla Hospital in Samut Songkhram Province, and Director of Phrachomklao Phetchaburi Hospital in Phetchaburi Province.
Session 3: Women’s Political Participation

Thematic Questions: Why does women’s political participation in Asia and the Pacific remain low? What barriers are most critical that need to be addressed and removed in order to increase women’s political participation? Has the introduction of a quota system in many Asia-Pacific countries effectively improved women’s political participation, thus promoting female leadership in parliament? What specific actions can both male and female political leaders take in increasing further women’s political participation?

Background:

Over the past 20 years, the percentage of women in parliament in the world more than doubled, increasing from 11.3 per cent in 1995 to 22.8 per cent in June 2016.1 Despite this seemingly positive progress, the average proportion of women in parliament in Asia and the Pacific stood as low as 19.2 and 13.5 per cent, respectively. Women in Asia and the Pacific continue to be under-represented as political leaders and elected officials, and often removed from crucial national decision-making processes. Why has the progress in women’s political participation been so stagnant especially in Asia and the Pacific? A host of barriers may have prevented women from gaining political experience as well as political ambition: discriminatory legislation and cultural practices, gender stereotypes, greater family responsibilities, lack of access to education, information, and financial resources, to name a few.

Targets related to women’s political participation are outlined in several globally recognized documents including the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Parliamentarians are expected to continue to play a significant role in achieving these targets in their respective countries. Major questions, however, remain unanswered as to how and what barriers need to be removed, requiring country-specific contextual analysis and solutions.

To address this gender imbalance in political representation, some Asia-Pacific countries have introduced a quota system for women. Proponents of the quota system emphasize that women have the right to equal representation. They further argue that experiences of both male and female politicians are needed in parliament in order to improve people’s lives, especially increasing the likelihood for parliamentarians to take up gender-related issues, and deliberate and pass gender-sensitive policies and legislation that may have been overlooked by male-only and male-dominant parliaments.

Opponents of the quota system, on the other hand, argue that it is tokenistic, undemocratic, and discriminatory. In some countries, political parties have difficulties to find a sufficient number of qualified female candidates to fulfil the quota. In fact, some countries have proven that the mere introduction of a quota system does not effectively influence the overall situation of women’s representation in decision-making bodies. Research on political quota system and evidence show that there have been certain cases in which elected female politicians had no power in their own constituency and they rarely attained key decision-making positions in the central parliamentarian committees.

Tables 1 & 2 show a mapping of AFPPD member countries in terms of introduction of a quota for women and the proportion of female political representation. Out of the 29 AFPPD member countries, 14 have adopted one or two quota systems as follows: (1) to secure legislated candidate quotas in the

lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels; (2) to reserve seats in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels; or (3) to set voluntary gender quotas at the political party level in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels. Some countries such as Timor-Leste and the Philippines have demonstrated higher than the global average of female political representation in the lower House of Parliament, 38.5 per cent and 29.8 per cent, respectively, due in part to their quota systems. In some countries such as Thailand, the introduction of a quota system has not yet contributed to increased female representation in parliament. Further classification of the AFPPD member countries in terms of the presence/absence of the quota and the proportion of women in parliament also reveals mixed results. Some countries without a quota for women have achieved the almost equally high proportion of female political representation: New Zealand (31.4%), Lao PDR (27.5%), Kazakhstan (27.1%), and Vietnam (26.7%). As many as seven countries have shown an alarmingly low level of female political representation.

What lessons and good practices can parliamentarians learn from experiences of other Asia-Pacific countries in terms of policymaking and legislation in addressing the issues of women’s political participation, including the introduction of a quota system?

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the session is three-fold. First, it aims to increase knowledge of participants on the situation related to women’s political participation in the world, in general, and the Asia-Pacific region in particular. Secondly, the session aims to increase knowledge of participants on selected Asia-Pacific countries’ efforts and interventions such as a quota system, in order to increase women’s political representation, and the resulting impact on gender-friendly policymaking and legislation. Thirdly, it intends to stimulate a discussion by engaging participating parliamentarians from different country groups as classified in Tables 1&2 to share their respective country experiences on what has worked and has not in terms of increasing female political representation as well as passing gender-friendly policies and legislation. At the end of the session, Parliamentarians, Ministers and other stakeholders are expected to gain a better understanding on challenges, opportunities and the role of parliamentarians in increasing further women’s political representation and participation.

The session will also provide a platform for the participants (Speakers, Ministers and Parliamentarians from the Asia-Pacific region and experts) to have a dialogue on the role of parliamentarians in increasing female political representation and the full achievement of SDG 5, particularly, the target 5.5 and the means of implementation outlined below:

**Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

**Expected Outcome:**

Increased understanding of the participating Speakers, Ministers and Parliamentarians that the promotion of female political participation requires sound national policies and legislations, a holistic approach and long-term commitment from governments.
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference

Session Concept Note 3

Format:
The session will consist of a country presentation by Vice Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament, Kazakhstan, Vice Chair of AFPPD, and an interactive panel discussion followed by an open discussion. The session will use a participatory format to create opportunities for inclusive and diverse discussions on political participation of women and effective policy measures to increase their political representation. After the presentation and panel discussion, the chair will set the stage for a discussion, raise some questions, and stimulate dialogues among panelists. The chair will invite the audience to comment on the key points of the presentations and discussion. At the end of the session, the chair will summarize the key points and recommendations to be included in the Conference Declaration and Recommendations.

Chair (5 minutes)
- Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP India

Video (5 minutes): Case Study from the Briefing Cards

Presentation (15 minutes)
- Hon. Ms. Gulmira Issimbayeva, MP Kazakhstan, Vice Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament, Vice Chair of AFPPD

Panel (40 minutes)
- Hon. Ms. Akosita Lavulavu, MP Tonga
- Hon. Ms. Ria Bond, MP New Zealand
- Hon. Ms. Dina Mahalaxmi Upadhyay, MP Nepal, Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

Open discussion (20 minutes)

Invite other country groups classified in Tables 1&2.

Some questions to guide the panel discussions are as follows:

1. How can parliamentarians and their political parties promote active recruitment of women in order to increase women’s political representation?

2. What are the key challenges and barriers to the successful implementation of a quota system?

3. What can parliamentarians do to increase the number of qualified female candidates to fulfil the quota?

Chair’s wrap-up (5 minutes)
Women in National Parliaments

Table 1. Lower or single House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of female MPs</th>
<th>Quota</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.1% and higher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Timor-Leste¹² (38.5%)</td>
<td>New Zealand (31.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.1%-30%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Philippines²³ (29.8%)</td>
<td>Lao PDR (27.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nepal¹ (29.6%)</td>
<td>Kazakhstan (27.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Australia³ (28.7%)</td>
<td>Vietnam (26.7%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan² (27.7%)</td>
<td>Cambodia (20.3%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>China² (23.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pakistan² (20.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1%-20%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bangladesh² (20%)</td>
<td>Tajikistan (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan¹ (19.2%)</td>
<td>Cooks Islands (16.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mongolia¹ (17.1%)</td>
<td>Malaysia (10.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia¹ (17.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Korea¹ (17%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>India² (12%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%-10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thailand³ (6.1%)</td>
<td>Japan (9.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bhutan (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iran (5.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maldives (5.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka (5.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tonga (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Papua New Guinea (2.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ - Countries with legislated candidate quotas in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels
² - Countries with reserved seats in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels
³ - Countries with voluntary gender quotas for the lower, upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels

Source: IPU Website.

Table 2. Upper House or Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion of female MPs</th>
<th>Quota</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30.1% and higher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Australia³ (36.8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.1%-30%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Philippines²³ (25%)</td>
<td>Tajikistan (21.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Afghanistan² (26.5%)</td>
<td>Malaysia (21.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Japan (20.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1%-20%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pakistan² (18.3%)</td>
<td>Cambodia (16.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>India² (11.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%-10%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bhutan (8%)</td>
<td>Kazakhstan (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ - Countries with legislated candidate quotas in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels
² - Countries with reserved seats in the lower or upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels
³ - Countries with voluntary gender quotas for the lower, upper House of Parliament or at sub-national levels

Source: IPU Website.
Session Participants’ Bios:

Session Chair:

Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP India

Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur is a well-known, active and vocal champion on women empowerment (ICPD, MDGs, SDGs) issues in the Indian Parliament carrying the legacy of her parents in politics. As the former Minister in the State of Himachal Pradesh, she has worked hard to empower the women of Himachal Pradesh and to stand against violence on women.

Previously, she was a member of the Hindi Salahkar Samiti of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, a member of the Hindi Salahkar Samiti of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and an active member of Sub-Committee I which examines the functioning of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) of the Committee of Health and Family Welfare. From 2008 to 2009, Hon. Mrs. Thakur was also member of the Committee on Government Assurances.

Presenter:

Hon. Ms. Gulmira Issimbayeva, MP Kazakhstan, Vice Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament, Vice Chair of AFPPD

Hon. Ms. Gulmira Issimbayeva has been a member of the Mazhilis (lower chamber) of the Parliament of Kazakhstan since 2007. At the first session of Mazhilis of the VI Convocation, Hon. Ms. Issimbayeva was elected as Vice-Speaker of the Mazhilis of Parliament. She is also the Head of the parliamentary faction of the ruling party Nur Otan.

Hon. Ms. Issimbayeva started her professional career as a school teacher. From 1990 to 1993, she served as a member of the Supreme Council of Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic and as the Deputy Chair of Education and Science Committee. From 1993 to 2007, Hon. Ms. Issimbayeva was the Head of the Education Department of Almaty City and has authored a major textbook for primary schools in Kazakhstan.

Panelists:

Hon. Ms. Akosita Lavulavu, MP Tonga

Hon. Ms. Akosita Lavulavu was first elected into the Legislative Assembly of Tonga in November 2014, becoming the only Tongan female parliamentarian to represent women’s concerns and interests in the Parliament. She represents the Vava’u 16 constituency. Previously, she was the Principal of ‘Unuaki ‘o Tonga Royal Institute.

Hon. Ms. Ria Bond, MP New Zealand

Ms. Ria Bond is a Member of Parliament representing New Zealand First. She is also an active member of Rotary and has served on New Zealand First’s board.

Ms. Bond joined the New Zealand Parliamentarians Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) in 2016 when she was elected as NZPPD representative of AFPPD’s Standing Committee on Investing in Youth. Ms. Bond will represent the NZPPD Co-chair (Ms. Barbara Kuriger) of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment at the 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference.
Ms. Bond has a business background and experience as a mediator and spokesperson. She is outspoken of her own background which was affected by family violence and has become a powerful advocate for women and families affected by family and sexual violence.

Hon. Ms. Dina Mahalaxmi Upadhyay, MP Nepal, State Minister of Water Resource, Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

Hon. Ms. Dina Mahalaxmi Upadhyay is a Member of Parliament representing the Nepali Congress. She also serves as the State Minister of Water Resource, President of the Community and Women Development Center (CWDC), Chairperson of the National Forum of Parliamentarians for Population and Development (NFPPD), Nepal, and Co-Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth. Previously, she was a member of the Drafting Committee of Constitution on Fundamental Rights and Directive Principle.

Hon. Ms. Upadhyay has a strong interest in social and development issues. She has extensive training on: HIV/AIDS/STI awareness; non-formal education; leadership development and women; skill management and market management; safe motherhood and reproductive health; and community development and sanitation.
Session 4: Women’s Economic Participation

Thematic Questions: Why has gender gap in economic participation remained pervasive and unresolved worldwide, particularly in Asia and the Pacific? What are the root causes of this persistent phenomenon? What are the main constraints preventing women from entering the formal economy, achieving high-level and well-paid managerial and decision-making positions? What legislation and policies can be instrumental to address these issues, especially in order to decrease the burden of unpaid work and create more economic opportunities for women throughout their life-course?

Background:

Despite the progress being made in women’s advancement in education, gender gap in women’s economic participation has been significant and persistent. Globally, only one in two women aged 15 and over is employed, compared to about three out of four men. According to the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Index Report (2014), over the period of 2006-2014 the gender gaps in two categories, namely health/survival and educational attainment, have been closed by 94 per cent and 96 per cent, respectively, while only 60 per cent of the economic participation gap has been closed in Asia and the Pacific.

Major constraints on women’s economic participation may include, but are not limited to, adverse social norms and practices, discriminatory laws and lack of legal protection, lack of access to financial and property assets, and any combination of these multiple factors. Evidence shows that traditional social norms, practices and gender stereotypes have prevented women from participating in economic activities regardless of countries’ development stages. Moreover, 155 out of 173 countries in the world still have legal restrictions impeding women’s economic opportunities that men don’t face.

For example, in 18 countries (including one country from Asia and the Pacific, or Iran), husbands can legally prevent their wives from working.

The burden of unpaid care also acts as a barrier to women’s gaining paid work in the formal economy. Women and girls are responsible for the majority of unpaid household work including child and elderly care. According to UNICEF, girls spend 40 per cent more time performing unpaid household chores than boys, which amounts to 160 million extra hours a day worldwide. Women take on 75 per cent of unpaid work, which equals at least 13 per cent of global GDP. It is estimated that closing the gender gap could deliver $12-28 trillion of additional annual global GDP by 2025. Women’s unpaid work represents the opportunity cost to national and global economies.

Even if women are gainfully employed either in the formal or informal sector, they tend to face the unfavourable treatment of significant and persistent gender differences. Women tend to be engaged in jobs characterized by gender stereotypes with lower earnings, poor working conditions, and limited career advancement opportunities. Gender wage gaps exist across the board even among the OECD economies, ranging from 5.6 per cent in New Zealand to 36.6 per cent in South Korea. Among the

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8. Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)
S&P 500 companies, 25 per cent of senior leadership positions are held by women, but only 4.6 per cent of these companies have female CEOs.\(^8\)

In the informal economy, hundreds of millions of women work without social and labour protection by law or in practice. In India, for example, some 120 million women work informally, accounting for around 95 per cent of women employed in paid work.\(^9\) This implies that a significantly dominant portion of women are not legally protected and more vulnerable to the violation of their rights, including sexual exploitation. Also, lagging behind men as entrepreneurs, women are less likely to own small or medium-sized enterprises; only 20 per cent of firms in the poorest countries have female owners.\(^10\)

Over the past two years, 65 countries carried out 94 reforms increasing women’s economic opportunities.\(^11\) Women’s economic empowerment has been placed among the top priority agenda with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today, high-level leadership and political commitment are imperative more than ever to drive the change for women’s economic empowerment.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the session is to enable participants to grasp a better understanding of constraints undermining women’s economic participation and empowerment, focusing on three areas of work: unpaid household/care work; regulated paid employment in the formal economy; and unregulated paid employment in the informal economy. The session aims to share successful interventions and approaches that have worked to empower women economically. For example, life skills programmes, expanding female entrepreneurship opportunities, and mentoring programmes for women leaders will be shared. At the conclusion, the session is expected to make concrete recommendations for parliamentarians’ actions to increase women’s economic participation in their respective countries (i.e., regulatory framework for parental or paternity leave, variations of government support for child care).

The session will also provide a platform for the participants (Speakers, Ministers and Parliamentarians from the Asia-Pacific region and experts) to have a dialogue on the role of parliamentarians in expanding opportunities for women’s economic participation to ensure the full achievement of the SDG5, particularly, the targets outlined below:

**Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:**

5.4 *Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate;*

5.5 *Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;*

5.a *Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.*

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\(^8\) MGI (2015). Ibid.
Expected Outcome: Increased commitment of the participating Speakers, Ministers and Parliamentarians to (i) promoting female economic participation through driving change toward gender-sensitive legislation, national policies, and effective implementation of relevant legislation and policies; (ii) tackling social norms that undermine women’s economic empowerment; and (iii) supporting regulatory frameworks that empower women in formal and informal sectors.

Format:

The session will consist of presentations and a panel discussion, followed by an open discussion. Ms Jane Sloane (Director of the Women’s Empowerment Program from The Asia Foundation) will provide an overview of the current situation of women’s economic participation in Asia and the Pacific, with some evidence-based interventions emerging from Asian countries that can be potentially replicated by other economies. Hon. Dr. Karen Makishima, MP from Japan, will follow and make a presentation on “Work Style Reform in Japan,” addressing the root causes of Japanese women’s low economic participation and necessary interventions. Hon. Ms. Lork Kheng (MP from Cambodia) and Hon. Mr. Farhad Hossain (MP from Bangladesh) will share and discuss issues faced by women working in the formal and informal sectors in their respective countries, with specific references to women’s unpaid work and legal and social protection. Expert panellist, Ms. Su-Mei Thompson (CEO, The Women’s Foundation/TWF, Hong Kong) will present and share her organization’s successful interventions and programmes in empowering girls and women, including TWF’s efforts to encourage girls from underprivileged backgrounds to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects and careers, TWF’s acclaimed mentoring programme for women leaders, TWF’s initiatives to help women entrepreneurs scale up their businesses and how TWF is mobilising men to be male champions for change.

After the presentations and panel discussion, the session chair will set the stage for open discussions focusing on the issues and effective interventions presented and shared by the presenters and panelists. At the end of the session, the chair will summarize key discussion points of the session for recommendations to be included in the Conference Declaration and Recommendations.

Chair (5 minutes)
- Hon. Mrs Ann Sudmalis, MP Australia

Video (5 minutes): Case Study from the Briefing Cards [Women-Participation #2&#4]

Presentation (30 minutes)
- Ms. Jane Sloane, Director of the Women’s Empowerment Program from The Asia Foundation
- Hon. Dr. Karen Makishima, MP Japan (“Work Style Reform in Japan”)

Panel (30 minutes)
- Hon. Ms. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia
- Hon. Mr. Farhad Hossain, MP Bangladesh
- Ms. Su-Mei Thompson, CEO, The Women’s Foundation, Hong Kong

Open discussion (25 minutes)

Some questions to guide the panel discussions are as follows:

1. What legislation and policy framework can effectively address and relieve the burden of unpaid care work for women?
2. What are the country experiences of legislating and implementing paternity leave policies?
3. What are the country experiences of legislating and implementing social protection policies for women who are not working in the formal sector?
4. How can parliamentarians make effective interventions to improve working conditions for women, especially related to wage gaps, health and nutrition, breastfeeding, child and elderly care, safety and various forms of workplace harassment?
5. What can parliamentarians do to effectively support and promote women’s access and advancement to leadership positions?

Chair’s wrap-up (5 minutes)
Session participants’ bios:

Session Chair:

Hon. Mrs. Ann Sudmalis, MP Australia, Vice-Chair AFPPD

Hon. Ann Sudmalis is the Federal Member for Gilmore, a seat on the South Coast of New South Wales, Australia. She is a Member of the Australian House of Representatives and was first elected in September 2013. Mrs. Sudmalis is involved in many committees such as Education and Employment, Defence and Veterans Affairs, Indigenous Affairs, Regional Infrastructure and Development, Social Services and is the Chair of the New South Wales Black Spot Consultative Committee. As a former High School Science Teacher, she is passionate about education and women’s empowerment. Mrs. Sudmalis fought for and delivered the Australian Government’s National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education to ensure all Australian children have access to 15 hours of preschool education per week.

In the seat of Gilmore, she has delivered a centre for the education, research and provision of mental health services at a local University campus. She has also delivered funding for a local Youth Ice detox facility and an Indigenous Women’s Health Program. Mrs Sudmalis is a member of the Parliamentary Friends of Dementia, Parliamentary Friends of Parkinsons, Parliamentary Friends of Diabetes, Parliamentary Friends against Domestic Violence, Parliamentary Friends of Primary Producers and the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving.

Presenters:

Ms. Jane Sloane, Director of the Women’s Empowerment Program from The Asia Foundation

Jane Sloane leads The Asia Foundation’s programs to empower women and promote gender equality. She has over thirty years of experience working in international development and over fifteen years of experience in leadership roles focused on advancing women’s rights and promoting gender equality around the world. Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. Sloane spent four years as Vice President of Programs with the Global Fund for Women, where she led a team of program staff in managing Global Fund for Women’s global grant-making and programmatic initiatives.

She earlier served as Vice President of Development with Women’s World Banking (WWB) in New York focused on WWB’s Center for Microfinance Leadership, an extended Girls’ Savings Program, and new technologies in support of women’s savings. Prior to this she was Executive Director of International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA), based in Melbourne, Australia, supporting women’s rights organizations across Asia and the Pacific.

Ms. Sloane was founding CEO of the Social Entrepreneurs Network in Australia, and held executive positions with social sector organizations including World Vision, AusAID, and Marie Stopes International. She also worked in Papua New Guinea and the Fiji Islands. She is a recipient of a Global Ambassadors Award from the Advance Foundation, a Woman of Distinction Award from the Asia Pacific Women’s Business Council, a Churchill Fellowship, an Australian Government Endeavour Fellowship, and a Human Rights Medal from the Vietnam Women’s Union.

Ms. Sloane is an advisory member of the Centre on Women, Peace and Security at the London School of Economics, and serves on the Board of the International Women’s Funding Network. She holds a master’s degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Sydney, and a bachelor’s degree in History from the University of Adelaide.
Hon. Dr. Karen Makishima, Ph.D., MP Japan

Hon. Dr. Makishima is a Member of the House of Representatives from Japan. She is Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Cabinet Office. Hon. Dr. Makishima is also a Deputy Chief for the Women’s Division of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP), the world’s first non-partisan parliamentary group working on population and development issues. She also serves as Secretary General for the Women’s Division and International Healthcare Division in her party.

In May 2015, Hon. Dr. Makishima led the Japanese Delegation at the IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Tokyo. She is actively communicating through Twitter and Facebook. Hon. Dr. Makishima is also an author of a best-selling book entitled “Politics become song” under the diplomacy and international relations category in 2009.

Panelists:

Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia

Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng has started her MP position in the Commission on Public Health and Women Affairs, then Commission on Finance and Auditing, and now she has moved to the Commission on Human Rights. She was a successful business woman in the areas of construction and education. Meanwhile, she has established the Eye Care Optic Center, which was the leading company among optic business in Cambodia.

Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng was also a treasurer to Cambodian Red Cross of Phnom Penh branch for two mandates and now she has become a Deputy President of this organization. She has actively promoted social wellbeing to trigger the campaign around the suburb of Phnom Penh where a lot of migrants and poor household were based and has achieved significant result in reducing HIV/AIDS prevalent. She is also active in Orange day campaign to stop violence against women at the community level and engaging youth in politics.

Hon. Mr. Farhad Hossain, MP Bangladesh

Hon. Mr. Hossain is a Member of Bangladesh Parliament, elected from the historical constituency of Meherpur-Mujibnagar. He is a Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Finance. He also heads the district committee of Bangladesh Awami League, the current ruling party. He is an executive member of the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs’ trustee board. As an active member of Bangladesh Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (BAPPD), he is involved in various activities relating to Youth Development, Child Marriage, Reducing Child Mortality Rate and Promoting Breast Feeding Campaign.

Apart from his political commitments, Mr. Hossain is an Associate Professor at Dhaka City College. He graduated from the University of Dhaka. Mr. Hossain represented Bangladesh in the South Asian Parliamentarians’ Meeting on Child Marriage at Kathmandu, Nepal and participated in the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth. He has also represented Bangladesh in several international conferences, including IPU and IPPF.

Ms. Su-Mei Thompson, CEO, The Women’s Foundation, Hong Kong

Ms. Su-Mei Thompson is the CEO of The Women’s Foundation, a NGO dedicated to the advancement of women and girls in Hong Kong. In 2013, she founded the 30% Club Hong Kong which champions bringing more women onto corporate boards. Ms. Thompson was also an Associate Producer for TWF’s
new documentary “She Objects” which was officially selected for the 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong.

Ms. Thompson started her career as a corporate finance lawyer at Linklaters and went on to hold senior management positions at Disney, FT and Christie’s. She is a member of the Equal Opportunities Commission of Hong Kong, a board member of Opera HK and council member of the Cheltenham Ladies College. She is the winner of the 2015 AmCham Women of Influence Award for Non-Profit Leader of the Year and the 2015 HKAH/Tatler Women of Hope Awards for Power & Influence. Ms. Thompson holds law degrees from Cambridge and Oxford and a MBA from IMD.
Session 5: Ensuring the Rights of the Vulnerable (in the context of Migration)

**Thematic Questions:** How far has the global and regional agenda evolved since the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 to address the opportunities and challenges of international migration for development? More specifically, what concrete actions have been implemented for protecting the rights of migrants, as well as for addressing the challenges of undocumented migration and forced migration? What more needs to be done, especially by parliamentarians who may hold a decisive key to the fate of hundreds of millions of migrants?

**Background:**

The Programme of Action, adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), provides the most comprehensive, negotiated text on international migration to date. In Chapter X, the Programme of Action examines the opportunities and challenges of international migration for development, highlights the rights of documented migrants, and lists concrete actions to address the challenges of undocumented migration, refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons. In 2006, the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development convened the first high-level event exclusively dedicated to the issue. Since then, the international community has collectively taken steps to address the issue of migrants, and subsequently in 2007-2015, the Global Forum on Migration and Development continued to provide a platform for informal dialogue and cooperation to examine complex and often politically controversial issues such as the rights of migrants, linkages between migration and environment, and the challenges of forced migration.

These efforts, however, are outpaced by the rapidly increasing international migration. The total number of international migrants, defined as persons living in a country other than where they were born, increased by 41 per cent to reach 244 million over 2000-2015 in the world. Nearly two thirds of all international migrants live in Europe (76 million) or Asia (75 million). Of the top twenty countries of destination for international migrants worldwide, nine are located in Asia, seven in Europe, two in Northern America, and one each in Africa and Oceania.1

In recent years, Asia witnessed a rapid increase in the number of international migrants of diverse and dynamic nature. The stock of male migrants in Asia grew by 62 per cent, from 27 million in 2000 to 44 million in 2015, while the stock of female migrants increased by more than 40 per cent, from 22 million to 32 million. East Asia and the Pacific accounted for 44 per cent of the 2015 new displacement caused by natural disasters, followed by South Asia (41%). Disaster-prone Asia and the Pacific will continue to face displacement and out-migration challenges caused in part by climate change.

In this context, there is further need to understand the consequences of migration of various causes and motivations, not only for migrants themselves but also for family members who are ‘left behind’ including children and the elderly. Forced migrants are often deprived of the rights and opportunities to education and employment in the countries of destination. In case of economic migration, repatriation to home countries poses major challenges in every aspect of their lives. Also, if the current rate of migration continues, all major areas are projected to have significantly higher old-age dependency ratios in 2050. For every 100 working population aged 15-64, there will be 28 and 30 dependent older persons aged 65 or older in Asia and Oceania, respectively, by 2050.

1 POPFACTS, No. 2015/4.
Migration issues are highly complex. They cannot be resolved without collective political will, not only in a single country but also at the regional and global levels. While migration issues and challenges are well captured in the 2030 Agenda, more concerted holistic approaches and strategies need to be developed and adopted for implementation in order to fulfil the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda.

**Purpose:** The session will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to showcase strategies that have worked in addressing the rights of the migrants, in particular contexts caused by conflicts, economic motivation and imperatives, climate change, and natural disasters. It will also aim to identify obstacles as well as key facilitating factors to creating more inclusive societies at the national, regional and global levels to satisfy the needs of migrants including basic needs, health, education, and employment.

**Migration in the SDG Goals, Targets, and the Means of Implementation:**

Eradicate human trafficking:

5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

8.7. Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Protect labour rights of migrant workers:

8.8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration:

10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

Establish legal identity, including through birth registration:

16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

Disaggregate data by migratory status:

17.18: By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

Means of Implementation:

3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.

10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.
Outcome: At the end of the session, the conference participants will have shared and increased knowledge on the issues faced by migrants, good practices on addressing the issues and ensuring the rights of the vulnerable population in the context of migration. The participants will also reaffirm their commitments to migration-related goals, targets and the means of implementation in the ICPD and SDGs.

Format:
- The session will consist of a resource person’s presentation and an interactive panel discussion, followed by open discussions.
- After the resource person’s presentation, the chair will set the stage for the discussion, raise some questions, and stimulate dialogues among the panelists. The chair will invite the audience to comment on the key points of the discussion. At the end of the session, the chair will summarize the key points and recommendations.

Chair (5 minutes)
- Hon. Lord Fusitu’a, MP Tonga, Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Video: Case Study from Briefing Cards (5 minutes)

Presentation:
- Mr. Paul Tacon, Social Affairs Officer at the Social Policy and Population Section of the Social Development Division, ESCAP (15 minutes)

Panel (35 minutes)
- Hon. Ms. Sahera Sharif, MP Afghanistan
- Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev, MP Kyrgyzstan
- Rev. Prof. Vernie B. Compas, Executive Director, Interfaith Partnership for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood, Philippines
- Ms. Susana Concordo Harding, Director, International Longevity Center, Tsao Foundation, Singapore

Open Discussion (25 minutes)

Some questions to guide the panel discussions are as follows:

1. Given the enormous task of sustained efforts in nation building that lies ahead, what strategies are being developed or have been developed to reduce the impact of migration and conflict on women? What more needs to be done in Afghanistan? (Hon. Ms. Sahera Sharif, MP Afghanistan)
2. What are the economic and social impacts of migration on the society in Kyrgyzstan? What are the challenges faced by migrant workers and their families? (Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev)
3. What are the challenges faced by the elderly whose children are migrants? What is the role of the elderly in the context of the rising migration population worldwide? (Ms. Susana Concordo Harding)
4. What strategies and programs have proven effective in repatriating the migrant population in education and development in the context of the Philippines? (Rev. Prof. Vernie B. Compas)

Chair’s wrap-up (5 minutes)
2. Countries or areas with the largest number of international migrants living abroad, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Area</th>
<th>Number of Migrants (Millions)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palestinian State</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Syria</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Pakistan</td>
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<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “United Kingdom” stands for United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and “United States” for United States of America.

Session Participants’ Bios:

Session Chair:
Hon. Lord Fusitu’a, MP Tonga, Co-chairperson, Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

Hon. Lord Fusitu’a has participated in AFPPD’s activities since 2013, and a strong advocate of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA) in the Kingdom of Tonga and in the Pacific Region.

Lord Fusitu’a is Member of Parliament for the Niuas, Legislative Assembly of the Kingdom of Tonga. In the Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga, Lord Fusitu’a is currently Chair of the Standing Committees on Population and Development and the Standing Committee on Anticorruption. He is a member of the Standing Committee on Privileges, Standing Committee on Legislation, Standing Committee on Social Services, and Standing Committee for Retirement Fund Board.

Lord Fusitu’a is also Barrister of the High Court of Australia, Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory, and Law Practitioner of the Supreme Court of Tonga.

Prior to being in Tonga politics, Lord Fusitu’a was Executive Director of the Spartan South Pacific Group Limited, and Director of the Priority Consulting Group, as well as the former Acting Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Crown Counsel in the Crown Law Department and Legal Counsel for Pacific Asia Global Holdings Ltd.

Lord Fusitu’a has a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) degree and Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice (GDLP), Law from the Australian National University. He graduated with the Bookers ANU Law School Prize for Legal System and Process. He also has a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Literature/Linguistics and History/Politics from the University of the South Pacific. He graduated with University Gold Medal for top graduand in Literature and Linguistics.

Lord Fusitu’a is also a board member of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) World Board.

Presenter:
Mr. Paul Tacon, Social Affairs Officer at the Social Policy and Population Section of the Social Development Division, ESCAP

Mr. Paul Tacon is a Social Affairs Officer at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), where he has worked since 2010. Prior to this, he worked for the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Beirut, Lebanon. Prior to joining the UN, Mr. Tacon has worked at the headquarters of the International Organization for Migration from 2008 to 2010 in a number of different policy areas, including migration and development, health, counter-trafficking and gender.

Panelists:
Hon. Ms. Sahera Sharif, MP Afghanistan

Hon. Mrs. Sahera Sharif is a Member of Parliament and a Member of the Standing Committee on Religious and Cultural Affairs, Education and Higher Education. She also voluntarily teaches at Khost University and is the author of five books that focus on the political, cultural and economic roles of women in the history of Afghanistan.

Previously, Hon. Mrs. Sharif was the Head of the Department of Women’s Affairs in the Khost province from 2003 to 2005. During the same period, she directed the Afghanistan Development Association (ADA) Women’s Fast Learning Program in Khost. From 1992 to 2002, Hon. Mrs. Sharif has worked as a teacher at the German Organisation for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) School in the Kachagaray Refugee Camp in Pakistan and as an editor of the “Zani Afghan” monthly magazine’s Pashto page.

Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev, MP Kyrgyzstan

Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev is the State Counselor of 2nd Class. In October 2015, he was elected to Jogorku Kenesh, Parliament of Kyrgyz Republic. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Population and Development Committee. He was elected as Member of Parliament of the IV Convocation from 2005 to 2010, and worked as the Minister of Energy from 2010 to 2011 and from 2013 to 2014.

Prior to serving the Kyrgyzstan Parliament, Hon. Mr. Artykbayev was a businessman, acting as the Director-General of major local companies including the largest pharmaceutical company in Kyrgyzstan.

Rev. Prof. Vernie B. Compas, Executive Director, Interfaith Partnership for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood, Philippines

Reverend Professor Vernie B. Compas is the Executive Director of the Interfaith Partnership for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood (IPPR). He is strongly interested in population issues particularly in the areas of reproductive health, responsible parenting and family planning. This includes addressing unmet needs, teen pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, addictions and social entrepreneurship.

Rev. Prof. Compas has participated various meetings on these issues including the Global Consultation on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights in Istanbul with UNFPA in 2014 and Seminar Workshops on Spectrum, Population and Statistics in Manila with PLCPD in 2015.

Ms. Susana Concordo Harding, Director, International Longevity Center, Tsao Foundation, Singapore

Ms. Susana Concordo Harding is the Director of the International Longevity Centre Singapore, providing overall direction and leadership of its research and policy advocacy efforts and developing new programmes that will support active ageing and enhance older people’s participation in the community.

Ms. Harding has 25 years of experience in the non-profit sector, especially in the areas of community development, project management, needs assessment, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, social policy advocacy, partnership development and networking. She was an Observer at
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference

Session Concept Note 5

the Special Session co-organized by AFPPD at the HelpAge Asia-Pacific Regional Conference in September 2016 in Hanoi.