Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

Toward the 2016 G7 Ise-Shima Summit

Message from AFPPD Chair Keizo Takemi, MP Japan

On behalf of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), and 2016 G7 Summit host nation Japan, I welcome you all to this Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD2016), which will make an important contribution to the G7 Ise-Shima Summit.

The GCPPD has set an ambitious goal and strategic agenda, building upon the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations last September. First and foremost, the GCPPD aims to solicit high-level commitments and encourage political action by global parliamentarians, leveraging the G7 Summit to help ensure that critical issues are tackled worldwide without delay. To achieve this goal, we are meeting as a global platform gathered by parliamentarians to address population and development issues.

Why “global?” Increasingly, critical emerging issues cannot be tackled without global collective action. Even as a Japanese politician, my life-long dream is to realize the health and well-being of not only my fellow Japanese citizens but also citizens of the broader Asia-Pacific and around the world. Members of Parliament, standing alone, cannot realize this vision. We need a platform for like-minded parliamentarians and experts from all over the world to address the world's most critical population and development issues, as well as emerging trans-boundary issues such as deadly infectious diseases including Ebola and Zika, and merciless natural disasters caused by climate change.

Why “parliamentarians”? The role of parliamentarians is explicitly laid out in Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Declaration, Means of Implementation: "We acknowledge the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments.” Parliamentarians are accountable for ensuring effective governance and leadership through legislation, shaping and supporting government policy-making and implementation for each sustainable development goal. The GCPPD takes place at a crucial moment, one month after the adoption by the UN Statistical Commission of a global indicator framework and associated global and universal indicators. The GCPPD will give global parliamentarians a platform to deepen their understanding of parliamentarians’ collective role at the global level, reaffirming the role of parliamentarians both at the national and global levels in the SDGs era.

Finally, why “population and development”? I believe we are gathering because we understand that these issues are so central to human security and the quality of life. Thus, in the spirit of the SDGs’ guiding principle of “no one left behind,” the GCPPD is aligned with the strategic focus of the AFPPD’s three Standing Committees, namely, gender equality and women’s empowerment, investing in youth, and active ageing, covering all populations throughout their lifetimes. Building on key outcomes from the 2008 G8 Summit, the GCPPD will explore the strengthening of health systems, including universal health coverage, which can be effective means of implementing the SDGs in specific national contexts.

I look forward to seeing you all, and to your active participation in this critically important expression of the voice of global parliamentarians in global political action. Together, we can share knowledge and take collective action to ensure effective policymaking and implementation at the national, regional and global levels. Together, we must set a high standard for all global parliamentarians, by exhibiting political will and making concrete commitments in the first year of the SDG era.