



27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum -APPF Women Parliamentarians Meeting- Siem Reap, Cambodia 14-17 January 2019

Proposed Agenda 2:

Ensuring Equality for All Women and Men Access to Education, Technical Training and Information Technology for Sustainable Peace and Achieving SDGs

Concept Note:

Education is both a basic human right and a key element of sustainable development. It is one of the themes of Sustainable Development Goals which aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote learning opportunities for all. Education would also allow individuals to construct prosperous and successful lives as well as economic prosperity and social welfare of a society. As an addition, technical training and information technology would be a major element in one's personal growth and development in a sense that it is useful for improving studies, staying informed, help acquire new skills and strengthens self-esteem. Education, technical training and information technology could elevate one's lives to be more dignified and prosper. Access to information technology can improve the quality of education and technical training in many ways. It opens doorways to a wealth of information, knowledge and educational resources as well as interactive teaching methods supported by the internet which would increase the opportunities of learning. However benefits such as these rely on equal access to education, technical training and information technology. Improving women access to information technology would also open countless economic (and social) doors — including into finance.

In reality, women in some countries in Asia Pacific have already begun to thrive in some of the region's burgeoning digital industries. In Indonesia's largest online marketplace, women-owned businesses account for 35% of total revenue. And in China, women found 55% of new internet businesses.¹ Despite the success story of poverty reduction efforts and impressive economic growth and despite more girls and women are in school today in Asia-Pacific than ever before, we cannot afford to be complacent. We must continue our efforts in ensuring equal access to education, as in some part of the region gender gaps remains a challenge as girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to lag behind in education.

Disaggregated data reveal that females continue to face higher barriers to education than males particularly those in rural areas.² Educated, trained and well informed society tends to avoid conflict and settles issues and disputes through dialogue and understanding. In the contrary, less educated and misinformed society (due to limited access to information technology), is more prone to conflict. Therefore as parliamentarians, it is our duty to ensure that society has equal access to education, technical training and information technology for all women and men so that peace can be sustained and SDGs can be achieved.

¹ Mc Kinsey Global Institute Research on Gender Equality

² UNESCO, Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

Proposed Draft Resolution:

**ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)
27th ANNUAL MEETING**

**RESOLUTION APPF.../...
ENSURING EQUALITY FOR ALL WOMEN AND MEN ACCESS TO EDUCATION,
TECHNICAL TRAINING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABLE
PEACE AND ACHIEVING SDGS**

The 27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum;

Recalling the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action adopted by United Nations member states concerning equal access to education and eradicate illiteracy among women, non-discriminatory education and training, as well as Improved women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education;

Reaffirming resolutions by previous Annual Meetings of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls: increasing the political, economic and social participation of women;

Further recalling the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) against Women, in particular with regards to the rights to education;

Referring to the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 4 of achieving inclusive and quality education for all;

Acknowledging SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and calls for enhanced use of enabling technology – ICTs in particular – to promote the empowerment of women;

Being Convinced that equal access for men and women to education, technical training and information technology are the key to sustain peace and achieving sustainable development;

Take into consideration that according to the United Nation the number of girls and women who have gained access to education in the region have increased substantially, but challenges remain as there are still illiteracy where females in rural areas lag behind those from other socio-economic backgrounds. Females are also less familiar about information technology, enjoy using the computer less than male students, and perceive more problems with software. Hence, the importance of increasing efforts from APPF Member States to enhance equal access to education, technical training and information technology is imperative;

RESOLVES TO

1. **Urge** APPF Member States and APPF Parliaments to enact laws and legislation that ensure equal access for men and women to education, technical training and information technology;
2. **Encourage** Member States to improve commitment in providing technical training and information technology empowerment in order to increase economic and social participation of women and girls with disadvantaged background;
3. **Recommend** APPF Member States to use Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda as a guideline in adjusting, aligning and monitoring their legal and regulatory frameworks in providing inclusive and quality education for all;
4. **Call upon** APPF Member States to continue ensuring policies that would allow broader access to education, technical training and information technology for women and girls from disadvantaged background, particularly those in rural areas, as part of efforts of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5;
5. **Encourage** APPF Member States to increase commitment in promoting awareness of the positive economic benefit of having information technology to women and girls, as well as supports and inspire women to engage in the field of information technology and related industries;
6. **Promote** gender equality in all areas as well as foster an enabling environment for the empowerment for women and girls, through awareness raising and enhanced access to education, capacity building and training, as well as access to information technology to improve women's overall economic and social condition;
7. **Encourage** APPF Member States to involve all stakeholders in working together to give women equal access to education, technical training as well as information technology, and also providing women better chances to pursue careers in the Information Technology sector.

Proposed Agenda 1:

The Role of Women Parliamentarians as an Agent of Peace and Economic Growth

Concept Note:

The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia would like to propose an agenda in the upcoming APPF Women Parliamentarians Meeting, The Role of Women Parliamentarians as an Agent of Peace and Economic Growth. We acknowledge that women parliamentarians can play a significant role as an agent of peace and economic growth contributing more to the current progress on gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and the Pacific, despite the region's diversity in both its levels of development and social gaps. Research indicates that a legislator's gender has a distinct impact on policy priorities, making it critical that women are present in politics to represent the concerns of women and other marginalized citizens and help improve the responsiveness of policy-making and governance.³ Women's political participation may also affect the range of policy issues that are considered as well as the types of solutions that are proposed. As women parliamentarians reach leadership positions within their political parties, the parties would be likely to prioritize issues related to health and education, which are issues that are closely related to economic growth.

When more women are elected to office, the chances of policy making that reflects the significance of economic growth particularly with regards to the welfare of families, women, ethnic and racial minorities would increase. Women parliamentarians can also play an effective role in promoting peace and economic growth agenda. This is given to parliaments overarching function as the people's representatives, and their core functions of law-making, representation, oversight and budget supervision to manage the risk of social crises, prevent violent conflict and foster conditions for sustaining peace and economic growth. Women parliamentarians would also be able to act as agents of peace and economic growth by working together transcend boundaries in peace negotiations, and push forward common agenda to protect women, girls and children as well as ensuring continued political commitment at the highest level to peace and growth in respective countries.

In support of the important role of women parliamentarians as an agent of peace and economic growth, it is also critical for APPF member states to have gender quota in parliament to ensure women's further participation and representations in society and politics through parliament. In most democratic countries, women lawmakers are often perceived as more honest and more responsive than their male counterparts, qualities that encourage confidence in democratic and representative institutions. In a study of 31 democratic countries, the presence of more women in legislative is positively correlated with enhanced perceptions of government legitimacy among both men and women.⁴

³Chinkin, C. (2003) "Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender Equality and Ensuring the Participation of Women." United Nations: Division for the Advancement of Women. [<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/reports/BPChinkin.PDF>].

⁴ Schwandt-Bayer, L.A. and W. Mishler (2005) "An integrated model of women's representation" in *The Journal of Politics*. Vol. 67, No. 2: 407-428.

Proposed Draft Resolution:

**ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)
27th ANNUAL MEETING**

**RESOLUTION APPF.../...
THE ROLE OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AS AN AGENT OF PEACE AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

The 27th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum;

Recalling The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women;

Recalling the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which underscores the importance of addressing the needs of women and girls victims of violence, ensuring women's participation in decision-making—especially in conflict-prone or conflict-affected areas—empowering women and girls, and advancing gender equality in order to achieve sustainable peace;

Also recalling the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in particular the General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations which recommends the reinforcement and support to support women's formal and informal conflict prevention efforts, as well as to ensure women's equal participation in national, regional and international organizations, as well as in informal, local or community-based processes charged with preventive diplomacy;

Reaffirming resolutions by previous Annual Meetings of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) on women's economic empowerment and participation in political and economic life as well as women's participation at all levels of political and public life;

Acknowledging Women parliamentarians significant role as an agent of peace and economic growth through the parliamentary function of law-making, representation, oversight and budget supervision in managing the risk of social crises, preventing violent conflict and fostering conditions for sustaining peace and economic growth;

Highlighting the importance of women's inclusion in all decision-making bodies and that their involvement strengthens the democratic process; and that Women are deeply committed to peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction and have a unique and powerful perspective to bring to the negotiating table;

Recognizing that women lawmakers tend to see issues more broadly as social issues and see parliament as a tool to help serve underrepresented or minority groups. Women lawmakers, therefore, have often been perceived as more sensitive to community concerns and more responsive to constituency needs in particular with regards to peace and economy;

Deeply concerned to the fact that as reported by the United Nation Refugee Agency (UNHCR) where women comprise 49 per cent of the refugees worldwide, mostly as a result of conflict, and are often put at greater hardship than men in these situations based upon their gender;

Deeply disturbed to the fact that Rohingya women suffers the most painful impact of conflict in form of gender based violence and have endured horrifying ordeals, as well as in the condition of statelessness;

RESOLVES TO

1. **Urge** APPF member states to ensure women's participation in decision making, especially in conflict-prone or conflict-affected areas, as well as enabling policy in empowering women and girls, and advancing gender equality in order to achieve sustainable peace;
2. **Call on** APPF member states to continue to support women efforts in conflict prevention and fostering economic growth through participation in national, regional or international organization, as well as in informal community-based entities;
3. **Recommend** the APPF Member States to provide support mechanisms that would allow the promotion of the advancement of women to achieve gender balance in parliament, public administration and the judiciary, to strengthen representation of women's role in peace-making efforts;
4. **Call on** APPF Member States to increase their commitment to provide women with equal access to quality education, economic resources and the judicial system, in order to support their role as agent of peace and economic growth;
5. **Encourage** APPF Member States to consider implementation of measures, as appropriate, including quota systems in parliaments to enhance women further involvement in realizing peace and sustainable development through parliament as democratic institution;
6. **Suggest** APPF Members to comply with internationally adopted instruments related to women, children and statelessness in order to ensure that every woman, girls and children refugees or those without citizenship receive their right of citizenship and adequate humanitarian protection in the time of crisis and conflicts.