

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF AIPA (WAIPA)

Prepared by the Cambodian AIPA National Secretariat

I. OVERVIEW

The Virtual Meeting of Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians of AIPA (WAIPA) was held via videoconference on 30 August 2022 from 08.30 AM to 12.15 PM (GMT +7), hosted by the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Program of activities is appended as Annex A.

II. DELEGATIONS

The meeting was attended by delegations from 8 AIPA Member Parliaments, Observers and representatives from the Asian Vision Institute (AVI) and Parliamentary Centre of Asia (PCAsia). The Parliament of Singapore did not send delegation due to unavoidable circumstances.

The list of delegates is appended as Annex B.

III. OBJECTIVES

The Coordinating Committee Meeting aims to:

1. Take stock of the impacts of the COVI-19 pandemics on the livelihoods of women and girls and assess regional responses and mechanisms.
2. Continue to advance the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda which was initiated by the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 and initiate policy interventions to effectively implement the Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace, and Security in ASEAN by ASEAN Leaders in 2017.
3. Develop innovative pathways towards a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery through the empowerment of women and girls.
4. Explore ways to increase women's equal participation in politics, including the possibility to increase the minimum number of women parliamentarians participating in AIPA General Assembly.
5. Solicit inputs from AIPA Member Parliaments for the Draft Resolutions to be tabled at the WAIPA Committee Meeting of the 43' AIPA General Assembly.

IV. OPENING CEREMONY

Welcome and Opening Remarks by Hon. Kittisangahakbindit Khuon Sudary, Second Vice-President of the National Assembly of Cambodia and Chairperson of WAIPA

In her remarks, she highlighted the topics discussed in WAIPA's Coordinating Committee Meeting, which included the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's health rights, how wars and conflicts affect women, the advancement of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda; and the roles of women parliamentarians in providing solutions to these emerging global issues and challenges.

For more resilient governance, she cited the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2021, which recommended putting women and girls at the centre of planning and action and incorporating gender perspectives into ASEAN and national laws and policies. The governance system must become more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient and women's participation in governance reform is vital.

She noted that Cambodia has prioritised the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. Cambodia hosted the first meeting of ASEAN's Expanded Advisory Group on Women, Peace, and Security in January this year to exchange information on WPS-related programs and analyse links, gaps, and possibilities.

She concluded her speech by encouraging WAIPA members to continue working closely to solve shared concerns. She then offered gratitude to all delegates and expressed hope for constructive conversations.

*The full text of the Welcome and Opening Remarks of Hon. Kittisangahakbindit Khuon Sudary is appended as Annex C.V. **FIRST SESSION***

Presentation by the Representative of the Parliamentary Centre of Asia (PCAsia)

Dr. Lison Guignard, the representative from the Parliamentary Centre of Asia gave a presentation on “How COVID-19 has affected women’s right to health”. She reported that women’s health was affected more than men’s during the COVID-19 pandemic because they were unable to access health service. During the pandemic, women mostly worked as frontline health workers and provided the majority of home-based care compared to men.

Further in the representation, the representative of PCAsia also showed the legal recognition, political commitments, the UN SDG and constitutions and laws at the international level regarding women’s right to health. She further stressed the importance of the role of AIPA Member Parliaments in developing effective policy options, strategies, and measures for improving health outcomes to achieve the SDG 2030. Lastly, she showed the relevance of WAIPA to establish and enforce legal and regulatory frameworks to address the surge of violence against women and girls that has occurred during the pandemic, promote a healthy work–life balance, and protect health pregnant and breastfeeding women at the workplace.

The PowerPoint presentation is appended as Annex D.

VI. Discussion on “Roles of Parliaments in promoting gender-responsive recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic” by MPs of AIPA Member Parliaments

Honourable Mrs. Dyah Roro Esti Widya PUTRI, *Member of The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia*

The Hon. MP presented "Gender Equality and Parliament's Role," which consists of three elements: 1. exercising the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; 2. increasing women's participation and representation in political life to give stronger attention to women's issues; and 3. exercising legislation, budgeting, and oversight functions that uphold non-discrimination and equality. In respect of national economic recovery strategies, the honourable MP emphasised MSMEs initiatives, vaccination programs, health worker incentives, and social protection measures. Last, Hon. MP highlighted the cooperation that the Indonesian House of Representative advocates, such as 1. Adoption and implementation of ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF); and 2. Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF), and Internal cooperation between the Committee and the Indonesian Parliament Women's Caucus (KPPRI).

The PowerPoint presentation is appended as Annex E

Honourable Dato' Sri Rohani Abd Karim, *Member of the Parliament of Malaysia*

In her remarks, she discussed promoting gender-sensitive parliaments, which is the key to ensuring a proper COVID-19 response and recovery from a gender perspective. She proposed that AIPA develop a framework for parliamentarians to make legislation more gender-responsive. The purpose is to assist parliamentarians in reflecting on the importance of repealing existing discriminatory laws; identifying practical approaches to enacting more effective and equal legal protections for men and women in all spheres, and finding entry points and good-practice approaches to progressing meaningfully and timely law reform in support of gender equality.

The full text is appended as Annex F.

Honourable Ms. Wilailuck ARINTHAMAPONG, *Member of the House of Senate of the Kingdom of Thailand*

The Hon. MP emphasised that gender-responsive oversight should be a key approach when parliamentarians draft laws to ensure that women's specific needs will be addressed. She reiterated the importance of gender equality as one of the keys for social development in our region during and post COVID-19. In addition, she stated that parliamentarians should promote women's participation in decision-making processes, women's rights to access social services, social protection, and financial independence in the post COVID-19.

The full text is appended as Annex G.

Honourable Mrs. Nguyen Thanh Cam, *Member of Parliament, Standing Member of the Social Affairs Committee of the National Assembly*

The Hon. MP discussed 2 main points. The first one is “*completing the national legal and policy framework to promote women's economic empowerment in the post-pandemic recovery and employment through digital and financial inclusion*” and second one is “*doing policy supervision related to promoting post-pandemic recovery*”. The Hon. MP proposed 3 recommendations to strengthen roles of Parliaments in promoting gender-responsive recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic as follows:

1. Strengthening the role of Member Parliaments in continuing to improve the national and regional legal policy system to create a legal corridor to promote sustainable recovery and ensure gender-responsiveness from the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. sharing experiences among member Parliaments in implementing gender-responsive socio-economic recovery Programs in the post-COVID-19 period and doing together - Conducting research to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and socio-economic solutions to gender-responsiveness of the Member Parliaments;
3. Promoting bilateral, regional and international cooperation especially in applying digital platforms to promote recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; building mechanisms to coordinate and connect countries, regions and the world and setting connection networks to create jobs to promote recovery, especially in the post-COVID-19 period.

The full text is appended as Annex H.

Honourable Mrs. Irine Yusiana Roba Putri, *Vice-chair of WAIPA, Member of the House of Representatives of Indonesia*

In her intervention, she discussed the mental health crisis that emerged as a result of the pandemic and its socio-economic impacts. She also emphasised the right of everyone to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as underlined in various international and regional human rights instruments. At the end of her intervention, she had 2 questions for the panellists. The questions are: 1. How does your country manage or deal with mental health issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Does your country respond with specific and targeted programs? And what are the challenges, particularly regarding the resources that the country has? 2. How can WAIPA galvanise regional action in that regard?

The full text is appended as Annex I.

Honourable Mrs. Nin Saphon, *Member of Parliament, Chairperson of Commission on Public Works, Transport, Telecommunications, Posts, Industry, Mines, Energy, Commerce, Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction of the National Assembly of Cambodia*

Honourable MP discussed the 3 main points as follows: 1. Cambodia has developed inclusive and long-term emergency preparedness in collaboration with ASEAN members for post-

COVID economic recovery; 2. the Draft Resolution, which addresses the issues that need cooperation and support in the region, is important to be gender-responsive for post-pandemic recovery; and 3. clear guidelines would help us take a balanced, rational approach that takes both health and economy into account for consideration. *The full text is appended as Annex J.*

VII. SECOND SESSION

Presentation on “Impacts of conflicts and wars in advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda” by Dr. Chheang Vannarith

The President of the Asian Vision Institute (AVI), Dr. Chheang Vannarith began his presentation by highlighting women and armed conflict, in which women suffer in war not because of an absence of law, but because of the lack of implementation of existing laws, for example, the UN Resolution 1325 that was adopted in 2000. He emphasised that the challenges and constraints are due to patriarchal gender norms and institutional socio-political, the lack of clear strategy at the national level on the implementation of the WPS agenda and the lack of resources and expertise.

It was shared in the presentation that Cambodia has contributed in promoting women’s role by participating in many international events. Concluding the presentation, he explained about the role of parliamentarians in promoting the Women, Peace, Security (WPS) Agenda, where it can be incorporated in national legal and administrative frameworks.

The PowerPoint presentation is appended as Annex K.

VIII. Discussion on “Roles of Parliaments in advancing Women, Peace and Security agenda” by MPs of AIPA Member Parliaments.

Honourable Mrs. Agustina Wilujeng Pramestuti, *Member of The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia*

In respect of enhancing women’s role in the peace process, she discussed 3 main points as follows:

1. adopting UNSCR 325 as a guideline and standard for carrying out the WPS Agenda; 2. exercising Parliament's functions of legislative, budgeting, and oversight, and ensuring government's policy focuses on increasing women's participation and representation in the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict; and 3. conducting parliamentary diplomacy to galvanise regional/ASEAN action. In regard to "strategies of Indonesia on WPS", she discussed the support of UNSCR 1325, UNSCR 2538 and the South East Asian Network of Women Peace Negotiators and Mediators (SEANWPNM).

She also emphasised the actions that the Indonesian Parliament wants to see taken, such as: 1. the adoption and implementation of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace, and Security (RPA on WPS); 2. the prevention and resolution of human rights violations

against women in conflict areas through international and regional resolutions; and 3. the creation of a budget that focuses on improving the role and contribution of women in the pre-conflict period.

The PowerPoint presentation is appended as Annex L.

Honourable Silumpa LERTNUWAT, *Member of the House of Representatives of the Kingdom of Thailand*

Honourable MP emphasised the significance of UNSCR 1325, which reaffirms the role of women in preventing conflicts, promoting peace, providing humanitarian aid in post-conflict reconstruction, and emphasising the significance of their full and equal participation in all peace and security efforts. She also noted the participation of MPs, which is necessary to promote the WPS agenda. MPs may advance the WPS agenda via four fundamental parliamentary tasks and authorities: law making, budgeting, oversight, and representation. She continued by emphasising the need for AIPA Member Parliaments to continue working closely together to ensure that women, peace, and security agendas remain a priority in all of our efforts to resolve conflict and establish security and stability in our area.

The full text is appended as Annex M.

Honourable Mr. Ty Sokun, *Member of Parliament, Secretary of the Commission on Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information and Media of the National Assembly of Cambodia*

The honourable MP emphasised the need of increasing women's status as the backbone of society and the vital force for sustained peace and sustainable development. Moreover, in his intervention, he emphasised the need for capacity development in order to drastically decrease the disproportionate number of women. We must guarantee that women are taught the required leadership capabilities and that the relevant legislative framework is used to ensure that the proper foundations are established. Additionally, their advancement is certain. He added that it must be assured that all stakeholders and women are participating in WPS initiatives, and that our regional and international counterparts must share the most recent information and knowledge.

The full text is appended as Annex N.

Hon. Mrs. Ratih Megasari Singkaru, *Member of Parliament, Member of Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation of the House of Representatives of Indonesia*

Honourable MP discussed the devastating effects of sexual or gender-based violence on physical and mental health. Additionally, it may have detrimental consequences on the economy as a whole and on productivity. In order to combat this issue, collaboration between

the ASEAN parliaments must be both relevant and successful. WAIPA can aid in securing a safe environment for women in crisis zones.

The full text is appended as Annex O.

Honourable Mrs. Le Thu Ha, *Member of Parliament, Standing Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly of Viet Nam*

The honourable MP stressed the importance of Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), which was formalised by the United Nations Security Council through Resolution No. 1325 (in 2000) and 10 subsequent Resolutions. She continued by stating that the National Assembly of Viet Nam has responsibly participated in promoting gender equality goals at both national and international levels, achieving many positive achievements and results. She closed her intervention by proposing 6 recommendations as follows:

1. Empowering women in diverse forms: economic empowerment, educational empowerment, cultural and social empowerment and political empowerment;
2. promoting women's participation in politics, empowering women in politics, ensuring equal representation of women in politics;
3. mainstreaming gender issues and WPS agenda into policies and programs; strengthening oversight, resources and having appropriate sanctions to ensure substantive implementation;
4. further strengthen efforts to combat and eliminate violence against women and children;
5. strengthening communication to eliminate prejudices and change the perception of leadership at all levels and the people, about the role of women, especially for peace and security;
6. strengthening international cooperation; developing a coordination mechanism to create national, regional and global connection; focus on training and improving women's capacity to increase women's participation in UN's peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding activities.

The full text is appended as Annex P.

IX. CLOSING CEREMONY

Concluding Remarks by Honourable Mrs. Nguyen Tuong Van, *Secretary General of AIPA*

AIPA Secretary General Nguyen Tuong Van stated that WAIPA is a unique body of AIPA with huge potential, and the inaugural meeting of the WAIPA Coordinating Committee will be the start of realising that potential. She thanked the WAIPA Chair, the Distinguished Parliamentarians of Cambodia, and all parties involved for convening the first WAIPA

Coordinating Committee meeting. She also thanked the panellists and Parliamentary Centre of Asia for their support.

The full text is appended as Annex Q.

The Closing Ceremony of the Virtual Meeting of Coordinating Committee on WAIPA commenced at 11.45 AM on Tuesday, 30 August 2022.

Chairwoman of the Commission on Public Health, Social Work, Veteran, Youth Rehabilitation, Labour, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng was invited to deliver closing remarks. She congratulated all delegates for making the meeting a success. In her concluding comments, she said female MPs must continue establishing an environment to help women and girls during crises and wars. She also urged AIPA members to build a gender-responsive post-pandemic recovery and advance Women, Peace and Security agenda. She also urges parliamentarians to increase women participation in politics as well as in decision-making levels in order to advance Women Peace and Security Agenda by possibly amending the AIPA statute from 20% (3 women parliamentarians out of 15 MPs) to at least (30%) 5 women parliamentarians to attend in the general assembly of AIPA in order to show commitment of WAIPA Committee which created more than 23 years and also to achieve the UN Agenda 2030 Goal 5.

The full text of the Closing Remarks of Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng is appended as Annex R.