

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

28th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum Canberra, Australia, 13–16 January 2020

1. At the invitation of the Parliament of Australia, the twenty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) was held in Canberra from 13 to 16 January 2020. Over 350 delegates from nineteen member countries of the APPF and ten observer countries (listed at Appendix 1) attended the Annual Meeting.

Executive Committee

2. The Executive Committee Meeting, held on 13 January 2020, under the chairmanship of the Hon. Tony Smith MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of APPF28, approved the agenda and program of activities.
3. The Meeting nominated Senator Deputy President Sue Lines as Chair of the Women Parliamentarians Meeting and the Hon. Kevin Andrews MP and Senator Dean Smith as co-Chairs of the Drafting Committee.
4. The Executive Committee Meeting approved 45 draft resolutions to be submitted to working groups and the Drafting Committee for consideration, and announced the Republic of Korea as the next host. The Executive Committee Meeting took note of the Thai correspondence informing the President that the Thai Parliament stands ready to host the 30th APPF Annual Meeting in 2022.
5. A second meeting of the Executive Committee was held to consider changes to the Rules of Procedure. The full report of the Executive Committee meeting is attached as Appendix 2.

Opening events

6. On 13 January 2020, Mr Wally Bell, Nggunawal elder, welcomed participants on behalf of the traditional owners of the land on which APPF28 was held.
7. The Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), sent a message to open the meeting and welcome participants to APPF28.
8. The President of the APPF, the Hon. Tony Smith MP, addressed the meeting and emphasised the importance of the work of the APPF in today's global environment. He noted that the region, and the world, faces significant challenges: social and political unrest continues to escalate; climate change and severe weather events are becoming more frequent; and free trade and investment are threatened.
9. The President also tabled a resolution of condolence for APPF founder and Honorary President Yasuhiro Nakasone, who passed away on 29 November 2019.
10. The leader of the Japanese delegation, Mr Hirofumi Nakasone, spoke in response to the resolution of condolence, emphasising Hon. Yasuhiro Nakasone's exceptional contribution and legacy in facilitating the establishment and development of the APPF as a forum for peaceful and constructive dialogue between the parliaments of the region, and supporting it for 27 years.

-
11. The meeting extended its sincerest condolences to Japan, the family of Hon. Yasuhiro Nakasone, and all APPF member countries.

The role of the President

12. The Annual Meeting resolved to appoint a President until the conclusion of APPF29 in 2021, and noted that the President shall serve in an advisory capacity and promote the role of the APPF as an international parliamentary forum.
13. The Annual Meeting further resolved to request the President and Executive Committee to: investigate the ongoing resourcing of the APPF; review the relevant Rules of Procedure; and report on both matters to APPF29 in 2021.
14. In addition, the Annual Meeting amended Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedures to provide that the Chairman of the Annual Meeting shall serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee.
15. Furthermore, the Annual Meeting appointed the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Australia as the President in the first instance.

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

16. The second formal meeting of Women Parliamentarians, since the amendment of the Rules of Procedures in 2018, was held on Monday 13 January 2020. It was chaired by Deputy President Senator Sue Lines. The meeting covered three topics: promoting gender equality for sustainable development and shared prosperity, realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; improving access for women and girls to education, innovation and technology; and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in decision-making at all levels.
17. The meeting stressed the importance of gender equality as a fundamental human right central to sustainable development and peace, noting that it is both a stand-alone goal and a cross-cutting issue in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It urged Asia Pacific countries to ratify, implement and monitor relevant international treaties and frameworks, and to work together in partnership to achieve gender equality.
18. The meeting urged APPF member countries to promote the meaningful inclusion of women in decision-making positions at all levels of government and within public institutions. It also noted the importance of women's inclusion in peace processes, humanitarian efforts and responses to climate change. It called upon members to support female economic empowerment, including through improving access for women and girls to education, innovation and technology, particularly in the focus areas of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM).
19. The meeting reminded APPF member countries of the importance of eradicating discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Plenary sessions

20. The first plenary session considered political and security matters, and focused on four topics: protecting the integrity of government and parliamentary institutions; enhancing parliamentary roles in promoting peace, security and prosperity in the region; addressing drivers of radicalisation; and promoting cooperation towards enhancing cybersecurity.
21. APPF members reaffirmed their support for regional peace, security and stability, the peaceful resolution of disputes and respect for international law; and noted the important role of parliaments in this regard. Delegates encouraged measures to strengthen the integrity and effectiveness of public institutions, and citizens' trust and confidence in them. Delegates called on the parliaments of APPF member countries to remain focused on threats of terrorism and radicalisation, and act as a driving force at the national level to address them, as well as working together at the regional level to prevent and counter

terrorism, violent extreme ideologies and radicalisation to terrorism. APPF member parliaments reaffirmed their commitment to protect freedom of expression and privacy, and their support for regional cooperation and capacity-building to enhance cybersecurity and combat cybercrime.

22. Delegates also expressed regional solidarity in support of denuclearisation and peace on the Korean Peninsula, and addressing the humanitarian plight of the Rohingya people.
23. The second plenary session considered economic and trade matters, covering three topics: strengthening institutions for trade and growth; food security and sustainable agricultural development; and improving participation in the digital economy and enhancing connectivity throughout the region. Delegates discussed the critical role of strong institutions in supporting rules-based trade and investment and long-term growth, and supported efforts to enhance prosperity in the region by embracing free and open trade and investment; facilitating the movement of goods, services and capital; and enhancing standards, rules and guidelines, including better compliance with and reform of WTO rules. They also recognised the importance of assistance and capacity building to enable smaller nations within the region to participate in multilateral trade.
24. APPF members encouraged cooperation to address food and nutrition security, strengthen agricultural development and combat illegal fishing in the region. They also endorsed continued cooperation to maximise the benefits offered by e-commerce and the digital and knowledge-based economies. Delegates noted the importance of parliaments, governments and the private sector working together to address these issues.
25. The third plenary session considered regional co-operation in the Asia Pacific region, and focused on three topics: enhancing parliamentary roles in response to climate change; promoting regional cultural diversity and tourism; and promoting sustainable development.
26. Delegates requested APPF member countries to work collectively on addressing, mitigating and adapting to climate change, including working effectively and in good faith toward the implementation of the Paris Agreement, taking into account the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of national circumstances. Delegates discussed a range of issues related to addressing climate change, including: the need for financial resourcing to assist developing countries with both mitigation and adaptation in accordance with the Paris Agreement; strengthening inclusive responses to climate change; supporting innovation in clean technologies and approaches; and enhancing energy efficiency.
27. Delegates committed to action in the Asia Pacific region and internationally to support clean, healthy and productive oceans and the 'blue economy' by promoting the sustainable use of marine resources; preserving ocean health and fish stocks; and addressing marine pollution, particularly from plastic. Delegates also recognised the increasing frequency and intensity of disasters and the importance of disaster risk reduction.
28. Delegates reaffirmed their commitment to review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, emphasising the importance of identifying and addressing the most marginalised and vulnerable people in order to 'leave no-one behind'. APPF members encouraged measures to increase sustainable tourism in the region, promote cultural diversity and people-to-people interaction.
29. In the final plenary session, Senate Deputy President Sue Lines delivered a Report on the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. Senator Dean Smith and the Hon. Kevin Andrews MP gave a briefing on the outcomes of the Drafting Committee. The meeting was also informed of proposed changes to the APPF Rules of Procedure, and the appointment of a President until the conclusion of APPF29 in 2021, and related matters.
30. The final plenary session adopted nineteen resolutions.

Appendix 1 – list of observer countries

Brunei Darussalam

Cook Islands

Kiribati

Nauru

Niue

Palau

Samoa

Solomon Islands

Tonga

Tuvalu

Appendix 2 – Report of the Executive Committee

Executive Committee Report

28th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

Canberra, Australia, Monday 13 January 2020

Introduction

The Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)'s Executive Committee meeting took place in Canberra on 13 January 2020. The meeting was chaired by the Hon. Tony Smith MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives and President of the APPF. The Chair made an acknowledgement of country, welcomed the delegations to Canberra, and expressed his hope for a successful and collaborative Forum.

Participants in the meeting included representatives of the following Executive Committee member countries: Japan, Indonesia, Laos, China, Russia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Canada. As the current and upcoming hosts of the APPF Annual Meetings, Australia and Korea were also present. Mr Smith advised that he had also invited Cambodia, as the previous year's host, to attend the meeting.

Approval of the agenda for the 28th Annual Meeting

The Committee considered the draft agenda for the 28th Annual Meeting, with the Chair proposing as an addition a condolence motion for the APPF founder, the late Hon. Yasuhiro Nakasone, to be moved during the opening ceremony.

The agenda, with the proposed amendment, was approved by the Executive Committee.

Proposed changes to APPF Rules of Procedure

The Chair noted that Japan had circulated proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure regarding the Honorary Presidency and Presidency, and invited Mr Hirofumi Nakasone to speak to the proposed changes. Mr Nakasone explained the reasons for the proposed rule changes, which follow the death of the Hon. Yasuhiro Nakasone, founder and Honorary President of the APPF.

The Chair invited questions and comments on the proposal from members of the Executive Committee, and discussion ensued.

Noting broad agreement with the principle of the proposed amendments, but requests for clarification on certain aspects and for time to consider and consult on the proposed changes, the Chair proposed that, in order to enable further consideration and consultation to take place, the proposed changes be referred to the Drafting Committee. It was noted that, if necessary, the Executive Committee could reconvene during the course of the forum.

Observer Countries

The Chair noted the presence of delegates from 10 observer countries in the Forum, and expressed his wish that delegations take full advantage of the opportunity to expand their parliamentary friendships.

Draft Resolutions

The Chair advised the Executive Committee that 45 draft resolutions from 10 countries had been received and published prior to 13 January 2020.

Chairs of Plenary Sessions, Working Groups and Drafting Committee

The Chair informed the Executive Committee of the Chairs of Plenary Sessions, Working Groups and the Draft Committee as follows:

- Drafting Committee – Hon Kevin Andrews MP and Senator Dean Smith
- Meeting of Women Parliamentarians – Deputy President Senator Sue Lines
- Women Parliamentarians Working Group – Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP
- Plenary 1: Political and Security – Hon Dr John McVeigh MP
- Political and Security Matters Working Group – Senator the Hon David Fawcett
- Plenary 2: Economic and Trade – Senator Amanda Stoker
- Economic and Trade Matters Working Group – Deputy Speaker Mr Kevin Hogan MP
- Plenary 3: Regional Cooperation – Ms Sharon Claydon MP
- Regional Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region Working Group – Mr Rob Mitchell MP

The Chair noted that it might be necessary on some occasions to vary these arrangements.

Implementation Reports

The Chair informed the meeting that Australia, Canada, Russia, Korea and Japan had provided implementation reports on previous resolutions pursuant to article 32 of the Rules of Procedure, and he tabled the reports.

Mr Chheang Vun from Cambodia reported on Cambodia's role as the host of APPF27 in 2019, acknowledging the work undertaken to support the meeting, highlighting the success of the Women's Parliamentarian Group, and thanking parliamentarians for their contribution.

Mr Konstantin Kosachev from Russia raised a concern regarding the relatively low number of countries tabling reports under article 32, and suggested that countries sponsoring resolutions should be encouraged to produce implementation reports. The Chair noted that the Drafting Committee could consider this matter in greater detail.

Membership of the Executive Committee

The next item of business concerned membership of the Executive Committee. Membership at the time of the 28th Annual Meeting was as follows:

- Russia and China (Northeast Asia)
- Indonesia and Laos (Southeast Asia)
- New Zealand (substituting for Australia) and Fiji (Oceania)
- Canada (the Americas)
- Australia (host country)
- Cambodia (guest of host)
- Republic of Korea (host of the 29th Annual Meeting)

-
- Japan (as designated by the Honorary President)

The Canadian delegation was asked to arrange the filling of the vacancy for the Americas sub-region, and New Zealand is substituting for Australia for the Oceania sub-region.

Future annual meetings

The Chair concluded the Executive Committee meeting by noting that Korea would host APPF29 in 2021, and that Thailand had offered to host the following meeting in 2022.

There being no further matters raised, the meeting adjourned.

Wednesday 15 January 2020

Consideration of proposals by Drafting Committee

On 15 January 2020, the Executive Committee reconvened to consider two resolutions proposed by the Drafting Committee, concerning the proposed new role of APPF President.

The Chair invited the co-Chair of the Drafting Committee, the Hon Kevin Andrews MP of Australia, to explain the position on the proposed resolutions reached by the Drafting Committee. Following discussion, the Executive Committee agreed the following resolution:

The 28th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum:

Noting the 28th Annual Meeting has resolved to consider amending the APPF Rules of Procedure to provide for the new role of President, with the objective of having a single President to advocate for and advise the APPF:

RESOLVES TO:

1. *Appoint a President for the period until the conclusion of APPF29 in 2021, noting that the President shall serve in an advisory capacity and shall promote the role of the APPF as an international parliamentary forum;*
2. *Request the President and the Executive Committee to:*
 - (a) *investigate ongoing resourcing of the APPF;*
 - (b) *review the relevant Rules of Procedure; and*
 - (c) *report on both matters to APPF29 in 2021;*
3. *Amend rule 12 to read:*

The Chairman of the meeting shall serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee;
and
4. *Appoint the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia, as the President in the first instance.*

The meeting adjourned.


31. The Hon. Tony Smith MP concluded the Forum by thanking the delegates for their time and commitment in travelling to Australia to attend the Forum, and for their engagement and co-operation through the meetings.

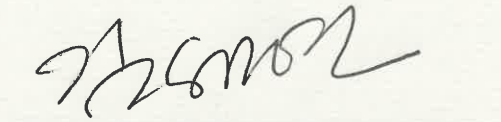
32. The Annual Meeting noted its gratitude to the Parliament of Australia for hosting a successful Forum. Delegates expressed particular appreciation to the Hon. Tony Smith MP, President of the APPF, for his hospitality, and to the staff of the Parliament of Australia for their hard work.

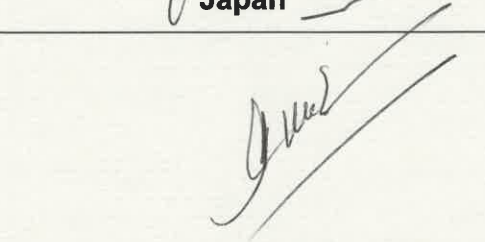
33. Australia then handed the APPF flag to the Republic of Korea as incoming host in 2021.

Signed in Canberra, Australia on Wednesday 15 January 2020

 Australia	 Cambodia
 Canada	 Chile
 China	 Federated States of Micronesia
 Fiji	 Indonesia

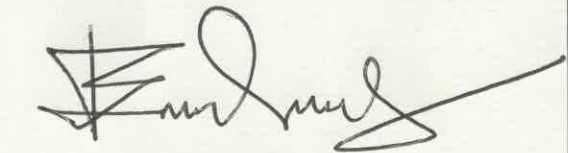

.....
Japan


.....
Korea

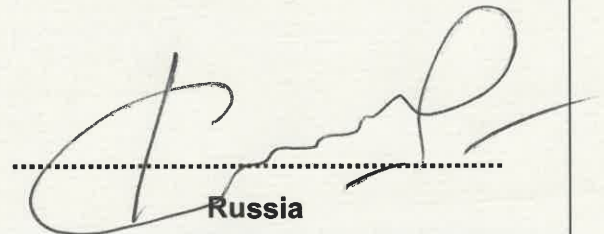

.....
Laos


.....
Malaysia


.....
Mexico



.....
Mongolia


.....
New Zealand


.....
Russia


.....
Singapore


.....
Thailand


.....
Vietnam