

29th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum

Seoul, Republic of Korea, 13-15 December 2021

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1. At the invitation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, the 29th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 13 to 15 December 2021. A total of 211 delegates from 22 Member Countries of the APPF attended the meeting, which took place virtually due to COVID-19.

Executive Committee

2. Two Executive Committee meetings were conducted by correspondence in August and November of 2021. The Executive Committee meeting in August approved the agenda and programme of the 29th Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee meeting in November approved 36 draft resolutions to be submitted to working groups and the Drafting Committee for consideration and appointed Hon. Hong Ihk-pyo as Chair of the Drafting Committee and Hon. Nam In-soon as Chair of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

3. The Executive Committee held a closed virtual meeting on 10 November 2021, chaired by the Hon. Tony Smith MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Australia and President of the APPF, to discuss amendments to the APPF Rules of Procedure. Member Parliaments present agreed on the amendments including abolishing the positions of Honorary President and President, changing the composition and the term of office of the Executive Committee and using gender inclusive language. The Executive Committee also confirmed the existing arrangement in which Chair of the Annual Meeting serves as Chair of the Executive Committee and each host country resources the Annual Meeting without a permanent secretariat.

4. The last Executive Committee meeting of the 29th APPF, conducted by correspondence on 10 December 2021, approved the amendments of the Rules of Procedure, the appointment of new Executive Committee members elected from each sub-region: Japan (Northeast Asia); Vietnam (Southeast Asia); and New Zealand (Oceania), the extension of the term of office of Canada (the Americas), confirmation of Thailand as the host country of the 30th Annual Meeting of the APPF, and the full membership of Brunei Darussalam.

Opening Ceremony

5. In the opening ceremony on 14 December 2021, Mr. Lee Choon-suak, Secretary General of the Korean National Assembly Secretariat, gave a progress report on the hosting of the meeting.

6. H.E. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, President & Chair of the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), and the Hon. Tony Smith MP, President of the APPF, delivered welcome and congratulatory remarks.

7. H.E. Park Byeong-seug, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea and Chair of the 29th APPF, gave opening remarks to welcome presiding officers and parliamentary delegations taking part in APPF29 for peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

8. The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was held on 13 December 2021, chaired by Hon. Nam In-soon. The meeting covered two topics: identifying ways to ensure a gender-sensitive crisis response after the COVID-19 crisis; and achieving gender equality by increasing women's participation and representation.

9. The meeting noted that the COVID-19 crisis exacerbated discrimination and exclusion faced by women and urged member parliaments to strengthen international and inter-parliamentary cooperation to build a more just and resilient society in the long-term and respond collectively using a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive approach to any such crisis in the future.

10. The meeting reaffirmed the 1979 UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the resolutions of the 27th and 28th APPF Annual Meetings on achieving gender equality and empowerment of women at all levels of decision-making, and urged Member Parliaments to ensure women's participation and representation to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality.

11. Member Parliaments recalled the 1993 Vienna Declaration, which put violence against women on the international human rights agenda for the first time, and emphasized the enforcement of policies to prevent and combat violence against women, which has worsened during the prolonged pandemic, and protect female victims.

12. Member Parliaments recalled UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace, and security and pledged to improve their legislations, budgets, policies, and national agenda and exert all diplomatic efforts to secure and expand opportunities for women to contribute to prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.

Plenary Sessions

13. The first plenary session considered political and security matters, and focused on three topics: parliamentary leadership for peace and security in the Asia-Pacific and beyond; strengthening regional multilateralism and addressing issues based on norms and rules of international law; and promoting people-centered cooperation.

14. Member Parliaments agreed on the need to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts based on international law, including the UN Charter, a comprehensive notion of security, development and democracy, supported the efforts to ensure maritime security and safety, freedom of navigation and over-flight in full compliance with international law in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in the interest of all, and called for continued parliamentary diplomacy efforts to maintain and secure peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

15. Member Parliaments emphasized multilateral cooperation to tackle trans-national challenges such as the pandemic, climate change, terrorism and extremism, ensuring reliable and safe supply of water, energy and food; and called on the Asia-Pacific regional community to develop universally agreeable principles in line with norms and rules of international law to this end.

16. Member Parliaments recognized that human security requires a comprehensive approach encompassing many different areas, including the economy, society, poverty reduction, health, climate change, and culture, and recommended cross-border cooperation to protect and restore each individual's life affected by COVID-19.

17. Member Parliaments recognized the efforts of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea to pursue an inter-Korean parliamentary meeting and those of the Republic of Korea for the Korean Peninsula Peace Process, including a declaration on the end of the Korean War and a peace accord, and reaffirmed the need for North Korea and related parties in the region to engage in dialogue and negotiation to achieve complete denuclearization and establishment of permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula and regional peace and stability.

18. Member Parliaments affirmed to strengthen cross-border cooperation to respond to terrorism and extremism, and make an active use of parliamentary diplomacy to discuss international anti-terrorist agenda and cooperation.

19. The second plenary session considered economic and trade matters, and focused on three topics: strengthening international cooperation for greater economic resilience and inclusive economic recovery; accelerating digital economy and enhancing connectivity; and the role of parliaments in enhancing economic integration and promoting trade in the region.

20. Member Parliaments emphasized the importance of inclusive digital transformation and digital infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region for a resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and agreed on the need to provide policy support to socially vulnerable groups such as

children, young people, the elderly, women, people with disabilities, and migrants, and the need to consider institutions to enable joint growth and win-win cooperation of large corporations and micro and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and achieve a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

21. Member Parliaments recalled the resolutions of the 27th and 28th APPF Annual Meetings on increasing regional connectivity through digital economy and e-commerce, and underlined the role and support of parliaments in strengthening security of and in the use of ICTs and protecting personal information for the development of digital economy through the promotion of e-commerce and digital trade.

22. Member Parliaments urged to advance the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP) and seeking of an optimal method for multilateral cooperation by developing institutions that promote regional economic integration and joint prosperity, such as the Regional Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (RCEP), the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (CPTPP), and the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) and by promoting participation in the framework of the Greater Eurasian Partnership and cooperation on its "integration of integrations"; encouraged to promote further a responsive, relevant and revitalized WTO.

23. The third plenary session considered regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region, and focused on three topics: the role of parliaments in balancing disease control, economy, and human rights, and ideas for inter-parliamentary cooperation; joint parliamentary action in pursuing response to climate change and for sustainable development; and improving understanding of cultural diversity in the Asia-Pacific.

24. Member Parliaments called on the international community to bolster solidarity and share their experiences and strategies in responding to emergency situations to balance disease control, economy, and human rights and for equitable access to vaccination and medication as a public good amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

25. In addition, Member Parliaments recalled the results of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Paris Agreement, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and invited each country to make efforts to maintain the goals of the Paris Agreement and continue regional and international cooperation to respond to climate change.

26. Member Parliaments reaffirmed the resolutions of the 27th and 28th APPF Annual Meetings on cultural diversity and development of tourism in the region, and agreed to devote efforts to protect and promote cultural diversity in the Asia-Pacific and bolster financial and institutional support to promote regional cultural and tourism exchange programs.

27. The final plenary session was chaired by H.E. Park Byeong-seug, Speaker of the National

Assembly of the Republic of Korea. The results of the Executive Committee meeting, namely the approval of reports on implementation of prior resolutions submitted by Member Parliaments, amendment of the APPF Rules of Procedure, appointment of new Executive Committee Member Parliaments from sub-regions, confirmation of the next host as Thailand, and elevation of Brunei's status from Observer to Member, were presented to the plenary and gained final approval with the agreement of participating members.

28. Hon. Nik Hafimi Abdul Haadii, Head of the Delegation of Brunei, expressed her appreciation to all Member Parliaments for their support of Brunei's accession to APPF and pledged commitment to actively work for the joint prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

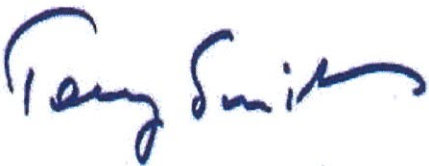
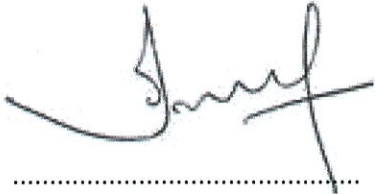
29. Hon. Nam In-soon delivered a report on the results of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and Hon. Hong Ihk-pyo, a report on the results of agreements reached at the Drafting Committee and on the Joint Communiqué.

30. A total of 13 resolutions and a Joint Communiqué were adopted in this Annual Meeting.

31. The host country for the 30th APPF Annual Meeting was declared as Thailand, which was followed by a promotional video and the acceptance speech by H.E. Chuan Leekpai, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Thailand.

32. In his closing address, H.E. Park Byeong-seug, Speaker of the Korean National Assembly, underlined that although the Annual Meeting was held in a virtual format, it was an opportunity for Member Parliaments to proclaim their commitment to solidarity and cooperation for the promotion of peace in the Asia-Pacific region and economic cooperation, and to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. Delegations of each country conveyed their appreciation to the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea for devoting many efforts to successfully host the meeting amidst the rapidly changing situation surrounding COVID-19.

Signed in Seoul, Republic of Korea on December 15, 2021

 Australia	 Brunei Darussalam
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 <p>Cambodia</p>	 <p>Canada</p>
 <p>China</p>	 <p>Costa Rica</p>
 <p>Fiji</p>	 <p>Indonesia</p>
 <p>Japan</p>	 <p>Lao PDR</p>
 <p>Malaysia</p>	 <p>Marshall Islands</p>
 <p>Mexico</p>	 <p>Mongolia</p>

 <p>.....</p> <p>New Zealand</p>	 <p>.....</p> <p>Peru</p>
 <p>.....</p> <p>Philippines</p>	 <p>.....</p> <p>Russian Federation</p>
 <p>.....</p> <p>Singapore</p>	 <p>.....</p> <p>Thailand</p>
 <p>.....</p> <p>Vietnam</p>	

박병석

Republic of Korea
Park Byeong-seug
 Chair of the APPF29

[Appendix 1]

Australia

Brunei Darussalam

Cambodia

Canada

China

Costa Rica

Fiji

Indonesia

Japan

Lao PDR

Malaysia

Marshall Islands

Mexico

Mongolia

New Zealand

Peru

Philippines

Republic of Korea

Russia

Singapore

Thailand

Vietnam

ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

RULES OF PROCEDURE

As amended in 2021 Annual Meeting in the Republic of Korea

The procedural arrangements in the APPF were set out in the 1994 Annual Meeting in the Philippines and are updated from time to time. They are as follows:

Structure and Role

1. The APPF will be loosely structured and non-exclusive forum of national parliaments of sovereign states of the Asia-Pacific region, in which parliamentarians will participate either as delegates of their parliaments or in their personal capacities.
2. The APPF will seek to provide opportunities for national parliamentarians of sovereign states of the Asia-Pacific region:
 - a. to identify and discuss matters of common concern and interest and to highlight them in a global context;
 - b. to deepen their understanding of the policy concerns, interests and experiences of the countries of the region;
 - c. to examine the critical political, social, and cultural developments resulting from economic growth and integration;
 - d. to encourage and promote regional cooperation at all levels on matters of common concern to the region; and
 - e. to play the roles of national parliamentarians in furthering in their respective countries a sense of regional cohesion, understanding and cooperation.

3. The APPF will operate on the basis of:
 - a. commitment to frank and constructive dialogue;
 - b. equal respect for the views of all participants; and
 - c. full recognition of the roles performed by governments, business communities, labour organisations, research institutes and others.

4. The APPF will act to promote greater regional identification and cooperation with particular focus on:
 - a. cooperation for the further advancement of peace, freedom, democracy, and prosperity;
 - b. open and non-exclusive cooperation for the expansion of free trade and investment, sustainable development and sound environment practices;
 - c. non-military cooperation which gives due consideration to issues relating to regional peace and security; and
 - d. preservation and promotion of the diverse cultures of the peoples in the region.

5. The APPF will maintain the closest relations with regional institutions, particularly the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC), and the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC), to ensure a free flow of information between the APPF and these institutions. APPF member parliaments will endeavour to have APPF views reflected in these institutions.

Membership and Observership

6. Membership of the APPF will in principle be open to all national parliaments of sovereign states in the Asia-Pacific region (in particular those of the member nations of ASEAN, APEC, and the PIF) which:
 - a. have an active interest in promoting dialogue among parliamentarians in the region; and
 - b. accept the objectives and principles of the APPF as reflected in the 1993 Tokyo Declaration and subsequent declarations and the Rules of Procedure.

7. Membership of the APPF will be reviewed from time to time.

8. National parliamentarians of sovereign states of the Asia-Pacific region and others invited as observers or in any other appropriate status may attend the APPF Annual Meeting.
9. Parliamentarians from member parliament delegations (hereinafter referred to as "participating delegates") will attend the Annual Meeting. In cases where a national parliament is represented by an official delegation, the attendance of other parliamentarians from that parliament in a personal capacity is allowed only with the advice and consent of that parliament.

Chair of the Annual Meeting

10. Deleted
11. The host country shall appoint a Chair of the meeting from the host parliament who shall serve as Chair from the conclusion of the previous meeting to the conclusion of the hosted meeting.
12. The Chair of the meeting shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee.
13. Deleted
14. Deleted
15. Deleted (replaced by amended Rule 11)
16. The Chair of the Annual Meeting shall direct the work of the meeting and see that the rules are observed. The Chair shall also open, suspend, and close the sessions, make known the results, and declare the meeting closed.
17. The Chair of the Annual Meeting may, with the approval of the Executive Committee, appoint deputies from among participating delegates to direct the meeting in place of the Chair, as necessary.

Annual Meeting

18. The APPF will meet annually.
19. The host, date and venue of each Annual Meeting will be determined by the plenary at the preceding meeting.
20. The host country will be proposed on the basis of discussion among those countries wishing to host the Annual Meeting. Priority will be given to those countries which have not previously hosted an Annual Meeting. Where no country wishes to host the meeting, the host will be proposed with reference to the order of hosting previous Annual Meetings.
21. The host of the Annual Meeting will make the necessary arrangements for the meeting including coordination of the provisional agenda of the meeting in consultation with the Executive Committee and for the provision of a secretariat for the Annual Meeting.
22. The host parliament will bear the cost of organizing the meeting and the participants will cover their expenses for attending the meeting. Membership of a delegation will be limited to a maximum of ten parliamentarians. This limitation shall not apply to the host parliament.
23. The host country will determine the provisional agenda in principle no later than four months prior to the opening date of the Annual Meeting and notify member parliaments.
24. The agenda shall be approved by the Annual Meeting on the advice of the Executive Committee.
25. Requests for supplementary items may be considered by the Executive Committee for inclusion on the agenda.
26. Member parliaments must submit draft resolutions to the host country in principle no later than two months prior to the opening date of the Annual Meeting. This time limit, however, will not apply to draft resolutions relating to supplementary items included in accordance with Article 25.
27. Draft resolutions must be relevant to the agenda items.

28. A proposed resolution must be made available for circulation to all participating delegates before it is moved.
29. All decisions of the APPF will be made by consensus at the Annual Meeting. When decisions are required on substantive matters, the principle of unanimity shall be observed.
30. While draft resolutions will be adopted on a consensus basis, the Chair of the Annual Meeting may allow mention to be made of partial reservations in the resolution document, and thereby permit minority opinions to be reflected.
31. Draft resolutions shall be discussed at the plenary session before examination by the Drafting Committee.
32. Where a resolution is adopted by the Annual Meeting, the country tabling that resolution shall provide the next host country with a written report on how that resolution has been put into effect no later than two months prior to the opening date of the next Annual Meeting. The next host country shall endeavour to gather information and report at the next Annual Meeting on the status of action in each country in relation to resolutions.
33. After the Annual Meeting, the host country shall send the adopted resolutions out to the relevant countries and international institutions for reference purposes.
34. Parliamentary delegations will be requested by the host parliament to submit motions for discussion at the next Annual Meeting by a specified date.
35. A participating delegate may, when called by the Chair, speak freely on any matter included in the agenda.
36. As a general rule, only current members of parliaments may voice opinions.
37. In inviting participating delegates to speak, the Chair of the Annual Meeting will be guided by the following two principles:
 - a. commitment to frank and constructive dialogue; and
 - b. equal respect for the views of all participants.
38. Priority to speak will be given to participating delegates. The

representatives of the parliaments attending as observers and other official participants may also speak with agreement of the Annual Meeting, when called by the Chair.

Executive Committee

39. Membership of the Executive Committee shall be open to all member countries of the APPF and shall comprise representatives of the following:
- a. The current Annual Meeting host country
 - b. The next Annual Meeting host country
 - c. The previous Annual Meeting host country
 - d. Countries elected from sub-regions.
40. Qualification for Executive Committee Members
- a. Executive Committee members must be current members of parliaments.
 - b. The countries of Executive Committee members may be re-elected.
41. In the election of representative countries from sub-regions as stipulated in Article 39, with due regard to balance in regional representation, the Asia-Pacific shall be divided into the following four sub-regions with two countries being elected from each sub-region.
- a. Northeast Asia (5 countries): People's Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Russian Federation.
 - b. Southeast Asia (9 countries): Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand and Socialist Republic of Vietnam.
 - c. Oceania (6 countries): Australia, Republic of Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Republic of the Marshall Islands.
 - d. The Americas (8 countries): Canada, Republic of Chile, Republic of Colombia, United Mexican States, Republic of Peru, United States of America, Ecuador and Costa Rica.
42. Duties of the Executive Committee
- a. The Executive Committee may submit recommendations to the Annual Meeting with regard to policy issues which the APPF wishes to address or APPF's management policy.

- b. The Executive Committee shall engage in coordination with the host country of the Annual Meeting concerning the draft agenda and schedule of the Annual Meeting.
 - c. The Executive Committee shall advise the host country of the Annual Meeting concerning the matters deemed necessary for the Annual Meeting.
 - d. The Executive Committee shall receive applications for membership in the Forum from each parliament, and submit the recommendations to the next Annual Meeting for determination.
43. The term of office for an Executive Committee member representing a sub-region shall be four years, from the conclusion of an Annual Meeting until the conclusion of the Annual Meeting four years later, subject to the following conditions.
- a. Half of the Executive Committee members representing sub-regions shall be re-elected every two years.
 - b. The method of election of Executive Committee members representing sub-regions shall be decided by each sub-region in order to respect its voluntary will. Sub-region representatives shall report to the Executive Committee when the Executive Committee member for their respective region has been elected.
 - c. If any Executive Committee member representing a sub-region is unable to attend an Executive Committee meeting, a parliamentarian from another country in that sub-region may be designated by those sub-region representatives present at the annual meeting to serve as an alternative member.
44. The term of office for an Executive Committee member representing the host country of an Annual Meeting shall be from the conclusion of the preceding Annual Meeting until the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting.
45. Reports of the Executive Committee on its work may be made orally or in writing at the Annual Meeting.

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

46. A Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting.

47. The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will seek to create a forum for all parliamentarians to discuss issues on women, children and to achieve gender equality.
48. The Chair of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians shall be a member of the host parliament.
49. The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians may elect Co-Chairs from among participating delegates.
50. The Meeting of the Women Parliamentarians will submit a report to the Plenary Session.

Drafting Committee

51. Drafting Committee will be established at the Annual Meeting on the advice of the Executive Committee to prepare draft resolutions and a draft joint communiqué for consideration, adoption, and release at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.
52. The Chair of the Drafting Committee shall be designated based on approval from the Executive Committee. The provisions of Article 17 shall apply mutatis mutandis to the appointment of deputy chairs to the Drafting Committee.
53. A participating delegate from each member parliament submitting a draft resolution shall participate in the Drafting Committee examination of that resolution.
54. The Drafting Committee, when in session, shall determine its own priorities. At the conclusion of its deliberations the Drafting Committee will report to the plenary session of the Annual Meeting.
55. Reports of the Drafting Committee on its work may be made orally or in writing at the Annual Meeting.

Working Groups

56. Working Groups may be established by the Annual Meeting on the advice of the Executive Committee:
- a. to examine specific issues referred for consideration and report on these to the Annual Meeting or to the Executive Committee; or
 - b. to create a new joint draft resolution in place of multiple existing proposals with similar content, and submit this to the Drafting Committee.
57. Working Groups examining draft resolutions will include but need not be limited to a participating delegate from each member parliament submitting a draft resolution.

Matters Not Covered by Rules

58. The Chair of the Annual Meeting shall decide on all matters not covered by these rules, on the advice of the Executive Committee.