



25th Annual Meeting of the
Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)



“Parliamentary Partnerships for Peace and Security: SDG 16”

15th – 19th January 2017, InterContinental Hotel, Natadola, Fiji

Joint Communiqué—18 January 2017

- 1.0 At the invitation of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji, the 25th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) was held at the Intercontinental Fiji Golf Resort, Natadola, Fiji from 15-18 January 2017 with a total of 266 participants—including 134 Parliamentarians—from 19 member countries, and an observer delegation.
- 2.0 Following the initial Meeting of Women Parliamentarians that was held in Vancouver, Canada on 17 January, 2016, the second meeting was then held on 15 January 2017. More than 30 Delegates from 16 different countries participated in the meeting which was Co-chaired by Fiji and Indonesia.
- 3.0 The meeting of Women Parliamentarians deliberated on significant themes that focused on various roles that women play in society both in professional as well as home life. Members from different countries came to a strong agreement that even though the resolutions from the first meeting that was held in Vancouver had contributed significantly towards the key theme, the goal was far from being achieved. Other related issues were also considered including the statistical evidence from individual countries that showed that equality had yet to be achieved and a gender gap remains.
- 4.0 The Executive Committee convened on 15 January 2017 where it approved the provisional Agenda and Programme for the Annual Meeting. The Hon. Senator Joseph Day from Canada was confirmed as the Chair of the Drafting Committee. Hon. Dr Jiko Luveni, the Speaker of the Fijian Parliament and the President of the APPF provided welcome remarks as well as Hon. Takuji Yanagimoto—Member of the House of Councillors of Japan.
- 5.0 The Hon. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama—Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji delivered the opening address in which he offered his full support to the APPF, highlighted the impact of Climate change on the Asia-Pacific region and expressed his firm belief in the APPF's commitment to realising the hope of a brighter future.
- 6.0 At the conclusion of the official opening of the plenary session, the provisional Agenda for the 25th Annual Meeting was adopted. The Hon. Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, Fijian Minister for Defense, National Security and Immigration assumed the role as the Annual Meeting's Chair assisted by Fijian Assistant Minister for Health, Hon. Alexander O'Connor and Opposition Member Hon. Mikaele Leawere.

- 7.0** The first session of the Plenary commenced with discussions on Political and Security issues in which the Delegates discussed a number of topics that were relevant to the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. The Plenary considered the ways in which parliamentarians can build tools of democracy including thorough initiatives that can enhance citizen engagement and parliamentary outreach to the public. The delegates reflected on the importance of implementing policies and developing strategies to combat the rise in criminal activities as well as the need to strengthen anti-corruption and anti-terrorism measures. Emphasis was also placed on the need for security on the Korean Peninsula and inter-parliamentary dialogue amongst related countries. The delegates stated that APPF can play a vital role in strengthening the systems of border control that in the end can contribute to strengthening the rule of law, security and development in combating human and drug trafficking.
- 8.0** The second plenary session concentrated on economic and trade issues. Discussions focused on regional efforts targeting the expansion of trade, investment and sustainable development. The delegates considered the need for further efforts to ensure that the benefits of global trade and economic development are inclusive and are able to benefit as many countries, communities and people as possible. Poverty and food security was classified as one of the many complex issues that the delegates come across in their respective countries and are making all attempts to ensure that citizens are able to earn a living for themselves through various reforms and policies. The role of social media was also acknowledged by the Members as a key player in delivering information in an effective way.
- 9.0** The third plenary session was dedicated to Regional cooperation. The delegates deliberated on the consequences of Climate Change, an issue that has significantly impacted on the Asia-Pacific region. Delegates called for more awareness and education on Climate Change due to its adverse impact on the lives of many people, the economies of many countries and the threat to the very existence of some states in the Asia-Pacific Region. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was used as citation when delegates put forward their recommendations to reduce the detrimental impacts of Climate Change.
- 10.0** On 16, 17 and 18 January, the Drafting Committee, chaired by Senator Day, thoroughly considered numerous draft resolutions that were submitted by APPF delegations, which culminated in the Committee's referral of draft resolutions it had adopted to the plenary for consideration and adoption. The Drafting Committee's work was greatly supported by the constructive engagement of delegates in five Working Groups oriented around the following themes: Border control; Human Trafficking and Peace and Security, Economy and Trade Sustainable Development, Food Security, Disaster Risk Management, Health and non-communicable and communicable diseases, and Gender Equality. As is customary, the Working Groups consolidated draft resolutions on related agenda topics into single resolutions on those topics that were considered by the Committee.

- 11.0** On 18 January the Drafting Committee was asked by the plenary to consider a proposal from the Indonesian delegation to formally amend the APPF Rules of Procedure to include a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians on the agenda of each Annual Meeting of the Forum. The Drafting Committee considered the proposal and there was strong support for the issue of providing for an annual Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. This issue had been discussed and supported in the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and was also endorsed in Resolution 21: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: Increasing the Political, Economic and Social Participation of Women.
- 12.0** However, as consideration of the procedural and technical aspects of this proposal was not possible in the short time-frame before the final Plenary Session, the Drafting Committee agreed that the Chair should report to the plenary that it recommended that a Working Group be formed (as enabled by Rule of Procedure 51) to consider an amendment to the Rules of Procedure to provide for the inclusion and operations of a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians as part of each Annual Meeting. The Working Group would report to the meeting of the Executive Committee at APPF 26, for finalisation by the Annual Meeting. The proposal for the formation of a Working Group was presented to the final plenary session.
- 13.0** In the final plenary session, the participants discussed the work and activities of the APPF as an institution, including with respect to the APPF Meeting of Women Parliamentarians which had been held in Natadola, Fiji following the first meeting in Vancouver, Canada in 2016. Throughout the week's proceedings, delegates expressed their delight at the success of the meeting.
- 14.0** Ultimately, the 25th Annual Meeting of the APPF adopted 21 resolutions (available on the official website of the 25th Annual Meeting).
- 15.0** In her concluding remarks, the President of the 25th APPF, Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, congratulated the delegates and commended them for their valuable contributions to the plenary sessions, Working Groups and Drafting Committee, thus ensuring a productive, cooperative and inclusive Annual Meeting.
- 16.0** All delegates wish to thank the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji for hosting the 25th Annual Meeting and express appreciation for the kind hospitality extended to all of us in the Republic of Fiji.

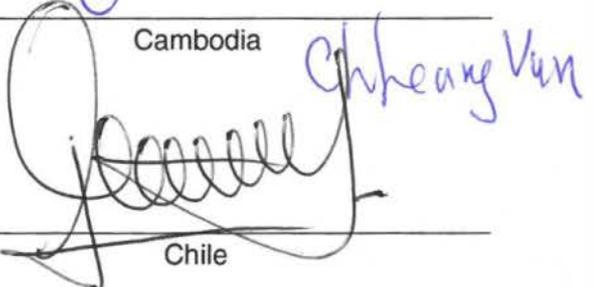
Signed at Natadola, Fiji on 18 January 2017.



Australia



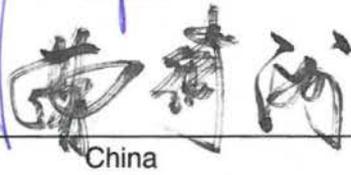
Cambodia



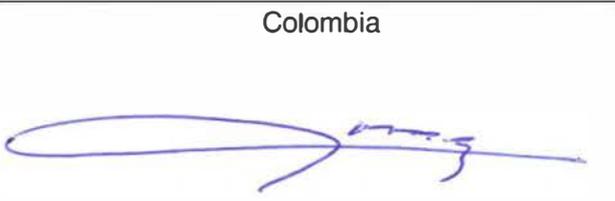
Chile



Canada



China



Colombia



Indonesia



Federated States of Micronesia



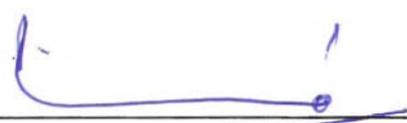
Japan



Republic of Korea



Laos PDR

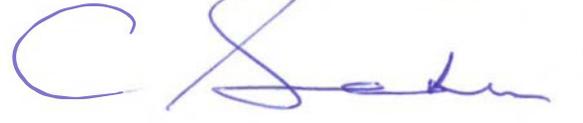


Malaysia

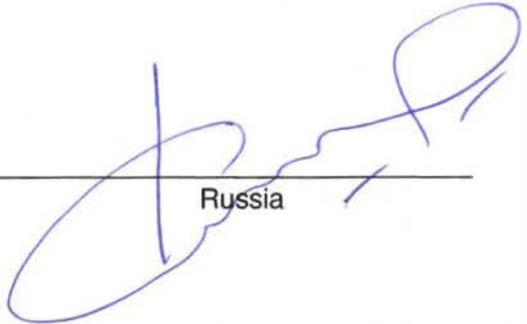
SRIJAYA KUALA LUMPUR SAMPAN



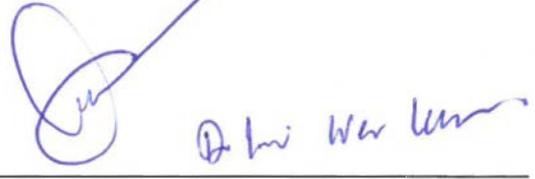
Mexico



New Zealand



Russia



Singapore

GEN *Greg Aint*
Thailand

Allenh
Vietnam

Kutuchoh
Fiji