

From the President of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum

As we progress towards the end of this difficult year, I would like to take this opportunity to cast your minds back to APPF28 in January 2020.

Amid ongoing challenges, it is important to look ahead to future forums and consider how we might continue to grow.



APPF28 Executive Committee meeting at Australian Parliament House

APPF28

APPF28 saw more than 340 delegates representing the parliaments of 29 countries across Oceania, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and the Americas.

For the past 27 years, the APPF has celebrated peaceful and constructive dialogue between parliaments of the region.

This year's forum was no exception.



Bilateral meeting between Japan (left) and Thailand (right)

The annual meeting achieved 19 resolutions addressing a broad range of political and security matters, economic and trade matters, and regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

The APPF continues to build a positive future for our region.

Pacific Observers

January 2020 marked the inclusion of nine Pacific Island nations.



Pacific observers from the Cook Islands attend the Plenary Session

In observer capacities, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu were all welcome additions to our 2020 proceedings. Encouragingly, several observers expressed their desire to join the APPF as permanent member countries.

I look forward to their continued involvement at future engagements.

Cultural Exchange

Serious business was not the only agenda item of APPF28.

Despite some recreational program elements being impacted by Australia's bushfires, we were fortunate to enjoy a final day of informal interaction and cultural activities showcasing all things Australian: barbecues; boomerangs; kangaroo-spotting; reptilian rapprochement and sheep shearing.



Final day cultural activities at Gold Creek Station, Hall

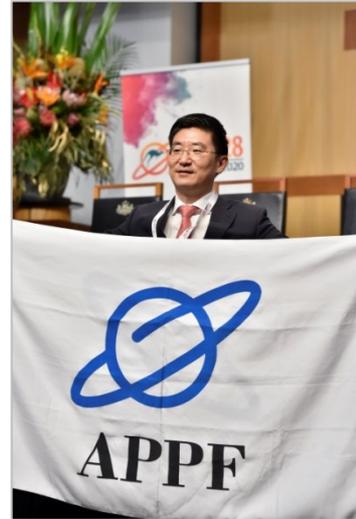
APPF29 — Republic of Korea, 2021

As APPF President, it is an honour to advance the charter of our late founder, the Honourable Yasuhiro Nakasone, and steer a path towards our next meeting: APPF29, scheduled to take place in the Republic of Korea in January 2021.



APPF President, the Hon Tony Smith MP (left), and Republic of Korea delegation leader, the Hon Kim Se Yeon (right)

I would like to reiterate my congratulations to the Republic of Korea on securing the next edition of this important fixture on our shared parliamentary calendars.



Republic of Korea delegation leader the Hon Kim Se Yeon

To our members and observers, again I thank you for making APPF28 a renewed success in 2020.

I look forward to both serving as your President until the conclusion of APPF29 and continuing to promote the role of the APPF as an international parliamentary forum.

APPF Secretariat

I am pleased to announce the Parliament of Australia will be establishing a Secretariat to support my work as President as we move towards our next formal gathering — physical, virtual or otherwise.

Collectively, we are all facing a period of tremendous uncertainty and strong connections between our parliaments will help us all respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the APPF community grows, so too does what we can achieve together.

*The Hon Tony Smith MP
President of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum
Speaker of the House of Representatives*

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