

TENTH ASIAN  
PARLIAMENTARIANS' MEETING  
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Beijing, China  
3-4 March 1994

Asian Population and Development Association  
(APDA)

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PROGRAM  
of  
The Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting  
on Population and Development

Date : Thursday, March 3 and Friday, March 4, 1994

Place : Beijing Media Hotel, Beijing, China

March 3, Thursday

10:00 - 11:30

Opening Ceremony

- Message of Congratulations

H.E. Mr. Li Peng

Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic  
of China

Read by Hon. Ms. Hao Yichun, Vice Chairwoman,  
ESCPH Committee, NPC

- Welcome Address

Hon. Mr. Zhao Dongwan

Chairman, Education, Science, Culture and Public  
Health Committee, the National People's Congress of  
China

- Opening Address

Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda

Chairman

Asian Population and Development Association  
(APDA)

- Address

Hon. Mr. Shin Sakurai

Chairman

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and  
Development (AFPPD)

- Statement

Dr. Hirofumi Ando

Deputy Executive Director

UNFPA

12:00 - 13:30

Luncheon hosted by H.E. Ms. Peng Peiyun, State Councilor, on behalf  
of Ministry of Public Health and State Family Planning Commission



[14:00 - 15:30] SESSION I STUDY ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
 14:00 - 14:30 1. "Basic Survey on Population and Development in Sri Lanka"  
 by Dr. Toshio Kuroda, Professor Emeritus, Nihon University  
 Population Research Institute

(Round table discussion for 15 minutes)

14:30 - 15:00 2. "Case Study on Population and Development in China"  
 by Ms. Peng Yu, Vice Minister,  
 State Family Planning Commission of China

(Round table discussion for 15 minutes)

<Coffee Break>

17:00 - 18:00 Courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Qiao Shi, Chairman of the Standing  
 Committee, NPC (at the Great Hall of the People)

18:00 - 20:00 Reception hosted by Hon. Ms. Lei Jieqiong, Vice Chairwoman, the  
 Standing Committee, NPC

March 4, Friday

9:00 - 11:40 SESSION II  
 "Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace -  
 Family and Housewife in Social, Economic and Demographic  
 Context"

9:00 - 10:30	Australia	Hon. Mr. Colin Hollis, M.P.
	Bangladesh	Hon. Mr. Shajahan Siraj, M.P.
	China	Ms. Li Qiaoyun
	India	Hon. Mr. Satish Chandra Sitaram Pradhan, M.P.
	Indonesia	Hon. Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, M.P.
	Japan	Hon. Ms. Kayoko Shimizu, M.P.
	Korea	Hon. Ms. Sun Young Kang, M.P.
	Malaysia	Hon. Ms. Siti Zainab Abu Bakar, M.P.
	New Zealand	Hon. Ms. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, M.P.

10:30 - 10:45 <Coffee Break>

10:45 - 11:15	Philippines	Hon. Congressmen Mr. Margarito B. Teves
	Singapore	Hon. Mr. Chay Wai Chuen, M.P.
	Sri Lanka	Hon. Dr. Neville Fernando, M.P.
	Thailand	Hon. Dr. Uthai Sudsukh, Senator
	Vietnam	Hon. Ms. Nguyen Thi Than, M.P.
	Syria	Hon. Dr. Eng. Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara, M.P.

11:15 - 11:40 Discussion

12:00 - 13:30	Luncheon hosted by Hon. Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD
14:00 - 15:40	SESSION III Slide Presentation and Discussion Slide Presentation “Women and their Challenges - Improvements in the Status of Women and Population in Japan” Discussion
15:40 - 16:00	<Coffee Break>
16:00 - 16:20	Closing Session Closing Remarks: by Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman of APDA by Mr. V.T. Palan, Regional Director of the East and South East Asia and Oceania Region, IPPF by Hon. Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD by Hon. Ms. Hao Yichun, Vice-Chairwoman of ESCPH Committee, NPC and Vice-Chairwoman of AFPPD
17:00 -	Press Conference
19:00 - 21:00	Reception hosted by Hon. Mr. Zhao Dongwan, Chairman of ESCPH Committee, NPC <at the State Guest House>

## OPENING CEREMONY

<3 March, 1994 10:00 - 11:30>

Message of Congratulation  
from  
H.E. Mr. Li Peng  
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China

Read on his behalf by  
Hon. Ms. Hao Yichun  
Vice Chairwoman, ESCPH Committee, NPC

On the occasion of the convocation of the 10th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development in Beijing, I would like to express, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our heartfelt congratulations and warm welcome to the parliamentarians of various countries, representatives of international organizations, experts and scholars who are attending the Meeting.

Asia is the most populous region with about 60% of the world's total population. On the other hand, Asia is also widely held to be the region with the most dynamic economic growth. Therefore, to study and address the population problem of Asia will contribute significantly not only to Asia's prosperity and stability, but also to global peace and development.

The question of population is, in essence, a question of development. Only when the interaction between socio-economic development and population control is given thorough and balanced consideration can the problem of population be tackled as its root. Given the fact that countries vary considerably in their national conditions such as the level of economic development, natural conditions, traditions, culture and religious practice, it is necessary for each country to formulate effective population and development policies in the light of its economic and social development and its other specific conditions and strengthen international cooperation on this basis.

Women are an important force for promoting human progress and social development. An enhanced role and improved status of women will surely facilitate a rational resolution to the population problem and, at the same time, exert a positive impact on the progress and development of the entire society.

China, which has the largest population, is also one of the fastest growing economies. The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the question of population and development and made family planning its basic state policy. While vigorously promoting socio-economic development, China has implemented family planning to bring congruity between population growth and socio-economic development so as to ensure prosperity for the country and a better life for its people. China is ready to continuously strengthen its exchange and cooperation with other countries and international organizations and work unrelentingly for the stabilization of population and for prosperity and peace in Asia and the world at large.

I wish the Meeting a complete success.

Welcome Address  
by  
Hon. Mr. Zhao Dongwan  
Head of the Delegation of China National People's Congress  
Chairman of the Education, Science, Culture and  
Public Health Committee (ESCPH), NPC

Your Excellency,  
Honorable Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman of APDA,  
Honorable Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD,  
Hon. Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn, Secretary General of AFPPD,  
Fellow Parliamentarians, Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour to extend my warmest welcome on behalf of the Local Organizing Committee and China Delegation to all the parliamentarians, experts, representatives of international organizations and diplomatic corps in Beijing, who are attending today's opening ceremony and may the 10th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development become a success.

Since their founding of APDA and AFPPD, with untiring efforts by parliamentarians and population workers from different countries, they have been playing an increasingly important part in curbing population growth of our region. My colleagues and I highly appreciate it. On this occasion, I would like to express my gratitude to UNFPA, IPPF, and other related organizations for their support to our population activities. I also hope to develop more cooperation programmes in broader perspectives in the years ahead.

Population and development issues have aroused greater concern of the Asian Parliamentarians. It is encouraging to note the fact that in many Asian developing countries population growth rates have been slowed down and the pressure of the rapid population growth on socioeconomic development is not as high as it was. The quality of life has also improved. Now in many developed countries, economic growth shows stagnation or even worse, whereas in many developing countries of Asia-Pacific region, the economy goes at a high pace steadily, meanwhile, on the basis of mutual support and benefit regional cooperation relations have been expanded.

In the recent decade or earlier, remarkable achievements have been made in China's economy and population control. With the development of social and economic life, the promotion for family planning, the overrapid population growth trend in China has been kept down, quality of human resources has been improved, and the population structure is undergoing considerable change.

The contradictions between overpopulation and economic and social development, resource utilization and environmental protection constitute obstacles to the development of China's economy, the improvement of living standards, and quality of our population. Although the fertility rate in China has dropped noticeably, the annual net increment of population is still estimated at around 16 million. Therefore, China must promote family planning to control population growth strictly, while developing economy. To realize sustainable and harmonious development which is thought to be a long and arduous task and the only

alternative for China in a quite long period of time.

We always stuck to the principle of giving top priorities to information, education and communication (IEC) programmes through various media popularizing the importance and goals of the population policy and family planning knowledge. Our aim is to make people understand that family planning practice is not only in the interests of the state and the people, but also of our future generations so that family planning would be a voluntary practice of the people.

China and many other developing countries in Asia share the common problems of unbalanced population and socioeconomic development. China attaches major importance to setting up friendly and cooperative relations with Asian countries. I sincerely hope, this meeting would have fruitful deliberation on population and development issues, particularly the status of women. As Parliamentarians, we shoulder the honourable mission of population and development. I am deeply convinced that parliamentary organizations may play an important part in this regard. Last October in Kuala Lumpur we adopted Kuala Lumpur Declaration which calls upon parliamentarians to support policies and programmes aimed at investing in family planning programmes, enhancing maternal and child health care and reproductive health care, empowering women, balancing rural and urban growth, alleviating poverty, providing security for the aged and mobilizing resources. Chinese delegates along with you would like to make this meeting a success in a common effort, and let it be one of important constructive inputs to the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo this September and exerts a positive and far-reaching impact.

May the 10th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development become a great success and wish you have a good stay in Beijing.

Thank you.

Opening Address  
by  
Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda  
Chairman  
Asian Population and Development Association

Your Excellency, Honorable Zhao Dongwan, Chairman of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Ms. Hao Yichun, Vice-Chairwoman of the ESCPH Committee of NPC and Vice-Chairwoman of AFPPD,  
Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA,  
Mr. Shin Sakurai, Chairman of AFPPD,  
Government representatives,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to say a few words on behalf of the Asian Population and Development Association at the opening of the Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development.

This meeting, being the tenth since we formed to seek solutions to one of the world's most vital problems, is an important milestone for the Association. Its significance is underlined by the fact that this commemorative meeting is held in Beijing, the capital city of China, which has the greatest population of all countries in the world and which, moreover, has achieved an unmatched success in population policy while proceeding with rapid economic growth.

This meeting in China has been made possible by the generous hospitality of our host country. We would like to express our deepest appreciation for the tireless efforts of Chairman Zhao, Ms. Hao, and all the members of the staff of the National People's Congress of China. On behalf of all those present, thank you very much indeed.

In September this year, the International Conference on Population and Development will be held in Cairo to work out policies on population and development up to the year 2015. This important conference will be the third in the ongoing series of high-level discussions on the population issues of the world, following those held in Bucharest in 1974 and in Mexico City in 1984. The conference will discuss various issues concerning population, the environment and development, mainly at a governmental level, and will serve as a forum to decide global population policies which will determine the future of mankind.

Asia is home to about 59 per cent of the world's population. This is why it is said that the management of population issues in the Asian region has a decisive influence on a global scale. Among Asian countries, China which is hosting this meeting now contains nearly a quarter of the world's population. This is as great a number of people as the entire population of the world barely a century ago. China has made great efforts to contain its population growth, while at the same time achieving an extraordinary rate of economic development. This is a clear proof that population and development are closely related. In recent years, numerous other Asian countries have also been achieving a dramatic growth in their economies.

However, there are many other countries in the region in which education, primary health

care, family planning and other criteria for successful population program have not yet been widely enough applied, although the situation might be better than in some countries in Africa or other parts of the world. Consequently, population growth rates have not yet been slowed down sufficiently. In rural areas, due to the deterioration of agricultural land, productivity has been dropping. Other major problems experienced in these countries include a heavy migration of people into urban areas, resulting in overcrowding, exacerbation of health conditions and the uncontrolled spread of slums. Residential environments and sanitary conditions are also getting worse. All these conditions require us to work harder and more seriously than ever on the connected issues of population, development, and environment.

The Asian countries are characterized by their complicated and diversified histories, traditions and cultures. For example, the world's largest religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam, were all born in Asia. We are living in a region of deep roots and tremendous cultural complexity.

Lamentably, however, we see that this wide continent with its rich heritage is also a stage for seemingly repeated conflict. And, sad to say, Asia is also a major marketplace for the world's arms trade. Under such circumstances, if our steps towards a solution of population problems in Asia are delayed, the even larger population problems on a global scale will be put back, as they say, to square one.

We need to recognize the importance of the Asian region as an integral part of the world, and instead of stressing the differences between societies, cultures and ways of life, let us refresh our determination to make common cause together to achieve our vital mutual objectives.

All of us are in positions of responsibility with regard to population problems, and it is widely recognized among us that we should pay particular attention to the situation of women. In any field related to population issues, whether they are problems arising out of medical, social or economic conditions, it is women who are faced with their strongest and most direct impact. With this in view, the Asian Population and Development Association would like to focus upon women for a series of three meetings of Asian Parliamentarians beginning with this meeting. The general theme for the series is "Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace."

This meeting, as the first of the series, is titled, "The Family and the Housewife in the Social, Economic and Demographic Context." We would like to ask all of you to take an active part in the discussion, so as to achieve the most fruitful results.

This afternoon, there will be presentations by Japanese experts describing the results of their studies in Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The Asian Population and Development Association is determined to continue its utmost efforts with a strong sense of mission to seek genuine solutions to population problems in Asia with the support and cooperation of UNFPA, IPPF, Asian parliamentarians, governments, research institutes and experts from all parts of the region. Your continued support is indispensable to the success of these efforts and will be deeply appreciated.

In closing, I would like to once more express our heartfelt thanks for the unstinting help and generous contribution of the people of China who have made it possible for us to be together here today.

Thank you very much.



Address  
by  
Hon. Mr. Shin Sakurai  
Chairman  
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

Your Excellency, Honorable Zhao Dongwan, Chairman of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Ms. Hao Yichun, Vice-Chairwoman of the ESCPH Committee of NPC and Vice-Chairwoman of AFPPD, Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA, Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman of APDA, Government representatives, Ladies and gentlemen,

As well as affording us great personal pleasure, we are deeply conscious of the significance of the fact that this landmark Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development is taking place in Beijing, the capital city of China, which has the greatest population of all countries in the world and which has achieved unprecedented successes in population policies with its "one-child policy".

On the way from the Beijing Airport to our hotel, I recalled that I had accompanied H.E. Mr. Takeo Fukuda, former Prime Minister of Japan, and the late Mr. Takashi Sato, former Chairman of AFPPD, to attend the General Assembly of AFPPD held in Beijing in 1987, and was also overwhelmed by witnessing the remarkable infrastructure development including the road and the lively atmosphere of Beijing. I would like to express my heartfelt respect which this aroused in me for the greatness of the Chinese government and the dedication of the Chinese people to their country.

For it to be possible for this superbly organized meeting to be held in Beijing, the Asian Population and Development Association, and above all, our host country China have worked very hard. Let me take this opportunity to express my admiration and gratitude to Your Excellency, Ms. Hao, Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda, and all the members of your staff. Thank you very much.

1994 is a very meaningful year for us to be working on population issues. In September this year, the "International Conference on Population and Development" will be held in Cairo, at which a basic framework of a population policy for the world until the year 2015 will be prepared.

At this momentous time in charting a course for the future of the human race, our conviction of the significance of the population issue is once more confirmed. We believe that as representatives of the peoples of our various nations we have to recognize most solemnly the vital importance of our task.

We in the AFPPD are keenly aware that the successful management of the population issue in Asia with its 60% of the world's population is a key factor for the future of mankind and of this planet. In order to contribute to the success of the ICPD in Cairo, we have made enthusiastic suggestions and announced declarations on such occasions as the ESCAP 4th Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bali in August 1992, the 9th

Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development in Hanoi in February 1993, and the 4th AFPPD Conference in Kuala Lumpur in October the same year.

Let me quote a well-known allegorical story for better understanding of the population problem.

"Once upon a time was a big pond, and growing in it was a single lotus root. Every month the lotus sprouted one more lotus from each root. So in the second month there were two, and in the third month they had increased to four. After a long time, half the pond was covered by the lotuses. People said that there was nothing to worry about because it would be a long time still before the whole pond was covered by the lotus. However, when they came to visit the pond the following month, they were astonished to find that it was now completely covered by the lotus plant. And then, in a few months, all the lotuses were dead.

Just as in this story, the human population will go through the roof while people are saying to themselves that they still have time. The story teaches us that nothing can survive beyond its proper limits. However, if we sprang from a lotus root, it would be possible for us to revive from the new shoots even when all its leaves and flowers were dead. But what would happen to the human race if there was no one left in the world because we had exceeded our limits? For human beings, "to live" means to live not only for themselves and the dignity of human beings can only be ensured in the context of society. Therefore, "to live" means to protect their dignity and at the same time, to live together with all others who share the earth with us.

Population problems are being discussed from many different viewpoints. When we look back at human history, we must ask ourselves if our ancestors were able to act unselfishly to protect the dignity of others even when their own were solely threatened or they were faced with annihilation? We need to look straight at the facts of history, and do our utmost to ensure the dignity and the survival of our kind by never repeating the mistakes of the past.

Now, as our exploding population poses a catastrophic threat to all the human beings, it becomes ever clearer to us that all of us on this earth are in the same boat. Both the huge waste of natural resources in the advanced countries and the continuing rapid population increase in the developing countries are rapidly becoming problems of vital importance which must be solved if the human beings and the planet that sustains us are to survive and live together. Through these pressing and closely connected issues of population and environment, we must be fully aware that the human race and the earth itself are mutually dependent members of the same community and share a common destiny.

We have to stop and give deep thought to our situation with our eyes focused clearly on the future, and then have the resolve to take whatever measures necessary to meet the challenge of this worst predicament that mankind has ever faced in its entire history. The international society has no choice now but to concentrate massive and unstinted efforts in the fields of population, development and the environment.

At present, many countries are severely troubled by structural adjustment, economic recession and increased military expenditures. Under such circumstances, when solutions to the problems of population and environment are vital tasks facing the whole world, it should not be tolerated that nations spend vast amounts of money and precious resources on something so unnecessary as the expansion of their armed forces. We should never again allow ourselves foolishly to repeat our long history of conflict or to respond to

hatred with hatred between nations.

Will it be possible for us as we approach the 21st century to protect the earth and the future of the human race? Will we have the wisdom to be able to pass on to our descendants the planet which we inherited from our ancestors? The fact is that we have allowed ourselves to be driven into a corner where there is no choice left to us as to the way we must take.

Under the severe and menacing conditions in which we face the future this is the heavy responsibility imposed on us as parliamentarians.

As members of the global community, we have to keep faith with each other and live and work together with mutual respect to achieve lasting peace on earth. To fit ourselves for this noble mission, let us mobilize our wisdom and passion and make a vow to commit ourselves to it with all our strength.

This APDA meeting focuses upon issues affecting women, which is one of the most urgent tasks that confront us concerning population. I trust that you will contribute your most intense efforts to produce fruitful results through your participation in the discussions which follow.

Thank you very much.

Statement  
by Dr. Hirofumi Ando  
Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA  
Representative of Dr. Nafis Sadik,  
Executive Director, UNFPA

Your Excellency,  
Honorable Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most pleased to have this opportunity to address the Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on behalf of Dr. Nafis Sadik. Because of conflicting commitments, Dr. Sadik regrets that she is unable to be here and has asked me to convey to you her best wishes for a successful meeting. She was especially pleased that you have decided to focus your discussions on the subject of women, population and development.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Asian Population and Development Association, the Asian Forum and the host government, particularly the national organizing committee of China for hosting this meeting in Beijing. I would like to, in particular, thank the national organizing committee for the warm hospitality and valuable assistance extended to us.

One of the themes of the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), with choices and responsibilities as its subtitle, is the achievement of sustainable development — that is, the management of population, environment, natural resources, production and consumption factors in such a way as to equitably ensure the well-being of present and future generations. Certainly, it is widely recognized that this goal of sustainable development can only be reached with the full involvement of women.

In many, if not most societies, women are still considered less valuable than men. Despite their significant roles in the home, the workplace and in the community, women's social and economic contributions are often overlooked and undervalued. All too often, women have little or no voice in decisions made within or outside the household.

If the countries of Asia are to attain their social and economic development goals, it is essential that they invest in women. Investing in women means widening their choices and opportunities. It means removing the barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential. This implies establishing their effective personal and political rights and assuring them access to education, employment and to quality reproductive health service and family planning information and services.

Education of girls is perhaps the key intervention in the empowerment of women. It can release them from the oppressive hold of traditions. It is also a key factor in reducing fertility levels and infant mortality rates and in improving the overall well-being of the family.

UNFPA involvement in the area of women, population and development has been a hallmark of the organization since its inception in 1969. The Fund has always encouraged Governments to address this concern in their population and development planning.

Women's equity and empowerment concerns will be important goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) that will take place in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994. At this Conference, the International Community will draw up a plan of action regarding key population and development issues in accordance with universally recognized principles of human rights and national sovereignty.

Women's reproductive health and rights will be a central concern at the Conference since without reproductive freedom, women cannot exercise fully their other rights such as those in education and employment. At present, about 50 per cent of couples in developing countries use some method of family planning. This represents a nearly five-fold increase since the 1960s. However, over 120 million women who would like to use modern family planning cannot, because they do not have access to such services.

All of us involved in the preparations for the ICPD are keenly aware of the valuable input that the Population Conference will provide for the Fourth World Conference on Women, which will take place here in Beijing in September 1995. The Cairo Conference will ensure that the rights of women, as recognized by the Conference on Human Rights which was held in Vienna last year, will be key elements in the programme of action for future initiatives in the area of population and sustainable development.

The Declaration of Kuala Lumpur, adopted by the Fourth General Assembly of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, clearly articulated that Parliamentarians have a particularly crucial role to play in empowering women. This Declaration called upon representatives working through their national legislatures to:

- strengthen women's access to productive and remunerative employment;
- protect women from all forms of discrimination, including economic discrimination, and all forms of violence;
- remove all remaining legal, administrative and social barriers to women's rights and economic independence, including the right to own property and obtain credit;
- establish and enforce laws guaranteeing equal employment and equal pay for equal work;
- incorporate gender consideration in all aspects of development planning;
- formulate policies and programmes that promote the status, equality and well-being of the girl child and that instill in the boy child behavioural norms and values consistent with gender equality.

I am sure that in your discussion over the coming few days you will address many of these areas.

In closing, I would like to reiterate the good wishes of Dr. Sadik for a successful meeting and to affirm how pleased I am to be able to participate in this meeting.

Thank you.

## SESSION I

### STUDY ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

<March 3, 14:00 - 15:30>

Basic Survey on Population and Development in Sri Lanka  
by  
Dr. Toshio Kuroda  
Director Emeritus,  
Population Research Institute, Nihon University

I am very much pleased to be given the opportunity to present some results of the survey which we conducted in Sri Lanka. We had a wonderful survey on population and development in Sri Lanka. We could achieve very successful work because our friends in Sri Lanka including parliamentarians and government officials gave us sufficient arrangement and very excellent services and guidance to make a survey.

I am going to make a very brief report on the survey. I would like to point out some specific points which may be interesting to you on the basis of summary data. I would like to point out something which characterize Sri Lanka. The final conclusion I found out is that Sri Lanka offers the best lesson in connection with the demographic transition. What they have achieved in Sri Lanka in terms of the demographic transition may be defined broadly as a kind of social development with a particular focus on fertility and mortality.

Table 1 shows the demographic transition index and GNP per capita in Asia, 1992 as defined by the United Nations. The demographic transition can be expressed on the basis of two factors: One is fertility and another is mortality. But, in this case, it is better for us to take TFR (total fertility rate) in the case of crude birth rate and also the expectation of life at birth, which expresses mortality situation more clearly and exactly than the crude death rate. By taking up and combining the two factors, we can calculate the demographic transition index.

The first column of Table 1 shows that the demographic transition index of Sri Lanka is 0.86, nearly 90%. 90% means that the demographic transition has been approaching the final stage. If the index comes to be 1, it means that the demographic transition has completed. It means a very low fertility and a very long longevity. So, compared with other countries in South Asia, Sri Lanka is so much outstanding. This is of course due to the very low TFR and also longer expectation of life at birth. You can find out that the TFR in Sri Lanka is 2.5 and longevity is 71.5. The last column shows a kind of economic growth, GNP per capita. This will be discussed later. You can also see the demographic transition index in other countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia.

Table 2 shows the child mortality under 5 per 1,000 live births. I think all of you are concerned with mortality and morbidity. Sometimes, it is a very good indicator to show how many children will die before the age of five. In particular, WHO and UNICEF are talking about the usefulness of the under-five mortality rate (mortality of children under five). This is very interesting. WHO made a very interesting statement on the under-five mortality rate. Of course, this under-five mortality rate is widely accepted as the key indicator of development. Of course, in this case, it is more likely to emphasize social development. But, not only social development area, but the under-five mortality rate is more than just a measurement of survival. It is also the best single guide to the quality of life. I think that this is a very much interesting difference. Also they say many aspects of national life are reflected in this statistics including the income and education of parents, the prevalence of malnutrition and diseases, availability of clean water, effectiveness of

health services and health and status of women. In this sense, I think it is a very simple indicator, but must be very useful in talking about social and economic development, and also the important duty of women in general in connection with this kind of single indicator, under-five mortality rate. In this sense, you can see what happened in Sri Lanka in Table 2. In Sri Lanka, the under-five mortality rate is only 21 and that in South Asia as a whole is 131. It is very low compared with those of other countries in South Asia as well as East Asia.

Table 3 shows per capita GNP below \$1000 and under-five mortality below 70. So, it means Sri Lanka is not highly economically developed because its per capita GNP is \$500 and its under-five mortality rate is 21, remarkably low compared with other countries. It means that even though it has not much developed economically, under this kind of less developed country or area, it could remarkably reduce the mortality. This is a very important point.

Table 4 shows halving child deaths (under-five mortality rate) in only 10 years. You can find that the mortality rate in Sri Lanka came down from 52 in 1980 to 21 in 1991, more than halved in only 10 years.

Table 5 shows GNP and schooling reaching grade 5. This shows the effect of education in terms of schooling reaching grade 5 after entering the primary school. This rate in Zimbabwe in Africa is 94%. Sri Lanka is the second with 91%. Also, the GNP per capita in Zimbabwe is \$620 and that of Sri Lanka is \$500, not so high. This indicator also shows that, even under the condition of rather low economic development, they could raise their educational level.

Table 6 shows maternal mortality rates in Asia. This is also important. The maternal mortality rate in South Asia as a whole is 490. But, that of Sri Lanka is 80, which is just 1/6th, very low compared to other countries in the region. Even that of East Asia is 160. Sri Lanka has reduced the maternal mortality rate so much compared to other countries in the same region.

These are the points that I wanted to mention very briefly. Sri Lanka could achieve so much social development even under such a low level of development. Then, don't we need to achieve economic growth? Of course, yes. Economic growth can accelerate the social development factors. I can find this kind of cases in Kerala State of India, Sichuan Province in China, Singapore and Korea. Their cases are also very interesting in the sense that they could achieve very rapid economic growth and also in parallel, they could reduce fertility rates and mortality rates. It is much better for a country to accelerate economic growth. That is a very good factor to promote the demographic transition, too. But, this is a very controversial question even in the academic circle. But, this is just an experience having been achieved in Sri Lanka, Kerala, China and Singapore. We can, of course, find out some difference of socioeconomic background and speed of the demographic transition. Any way, we can see that economic growth, social development, and population size can go hand in hand. In that case, the demographic transition comes much more rapidly. But, on the other hand, even though a country has not economically so much progressed, they can achieve the demographic transition, which means to reduce the mortality and fertility. This depends on individual particular situation in terms of economic, social and demographic conditions. Any way, Sri Lanka is a pioneer in demographic transition in this region.

We can also compare with the countries in Southeast Asia and East Asia. Then, I think this kind differential progress of socioeconomic development never happened before in the Western countries. In Asia as a whole, we can find so much differential socioeconomic



development. It means that we can mutually cooperate and assist in many points and accelerate socioeconomic development. This is a kind of stage theory. Some countries are suffering from very high fertility and high mortality. Some countries have very low fertility and low mortality. So much different stage of the demographic transition also means again that we can see the different stage of economic development. What I presented about the Sri Lanka's case, my judgment and understanding might be mistaken. If so, kindly point out and correct my observation.

Table 1. Demographic transition index and GNP per capita in Asia, 1992

Country and territory	Demographic transition index	TFR	Expectation of life at birth (both sex combined)	1990 GNP per capita (US\$)
<b>South Asia</b>				
Afghanistan	0.07	6.8	43.3	—
Bangladesh	0.39	4.8	52.7	210
Bhutan	0.24	5.8	48.4	190
India	0.58	3.9	60.2	350
Iran	0.49	5.8	66.9	2,490
Maldives	0.38	6.2	61.3	450
Nepal	0.34	5.5	53.3	170
Pakistan	0.35	6.2	58.8	380
Sri Lanka	0.86	2.5	71.5	470
<b>East Asia</b>				
Japan	1.00	1.5	79.0	25,430
Hong Kong	0.99	1.2	77.9	11,490
Taiwan	0.93	1.7	73.8	7,332
South Korea	0.88	1.8	70.6	5,400
China	0.88	2.2	70.9	370
North Korea	0.85	2.4	70.7	—
Mongolia	0.54	4.7	63.3	—
<b>South-east Asia</b>				
Brunei	0.85	3.1	74.3	—
Singapore	0.90	1.8	74.5	11,160
Thailand	0.85	2.2	68.1	1,420
Malaysia	0.75	3.5	70.7	2,320
Indonesia	0.68	3.0	60.1	570
Philippines	0.63	4.0	64.9	730
Vietnam	0.63	3.9	63.9	—

Source: 1992 ESCAP Population Data Sheet

Note: Taiwan is from "The Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of China 1991". The formula to calculate the Demographic Transition Index is as follows:  $DTI = 0.5[(7.6 - TFR)/5.5] + 0.5[1 - (79 - e)/36]$ .

Maximum TFR is assumed to be 7.6, expected to go down to the replacement level, lowest, and the longest life expectancy at birth to be 79 years, for both sex combined, shortest in 43 years. If the TFR falls below the replacement level and life expectancy at birth reaches 79 years, then demographic transition index comes to be 1.0 (0.5+0.5).

Table 2. Child Mortality Rate (under 5 mortality rate per 1000 live births)

Country and Region			
South Asia	131	East Asia	57
Sri Lanka	21	Hong Kong	7
India	126	Singapore	8
Nepal	132	South Korea	10
Bangladesh	133	Malaysia	20
Pakistan	133	North Korea	34
Bhutan	205	Thailand	35
Afghanistan	no data	China	43
		Vietnam	52
		Philippines	61
		Mongolia	82
		Indonesia	111
		Lao P.D.R.	148
		Cambodia	no data
		Myanmar	117

Source: United Nations Children's Fund:  
The Progress of Nations 1933, pp. 8-9

Table 3. Per capita GNP below \$1000, under-five mortality below 70

Country	GNP per capita (\$)	Under-five mortality rate
Vietnam	240	52
China	370	43
Sri Lanka	500	21
Honduras	570	60
Philippines	740	61
Dominican Rep.	950	53
North Korea	970	34

Source: United Nations Children's Fund:  
The Progress of Nations 1933, p. 11

Table 4. Halving Child Deaths (under-five mortality rate)

Country	1980	1991	% fall
Colombia	59	20	66
Oman	95	33	65
U. Arab. Emirates	54	23	64
Jamaica	39	15	62
Portugal	31	12	61
Egypt	180	72	60
Sri Lanka	52	21	60
Tunisia	102	42	59
Algeria	145	61	58
Mexico	81	36	56
Cuba	26	12	54
Morocco	145	66	54
Greece	23	11	52
Jordan	66	32	52
Malaysia	42	20	52
Saudi Arabia	90	43	52
Iran	126	62	51
Kuwait	35	17	51
Vietnam	105	52	50
Uruguay	42	22	48

Source: United Nations Children's Fund:  
The Progress of Nations 1993, p. 12

Table 5. GNP and Schooling Reaching Grade 5

Country	GNP Per capita 1991	% Children reaching grade 5	Country	GNP per capita 1991	% Children reaching grade 5
Zimbabwe	620	94	El Salvador	1070	45
Sri Lanka	500	91	Gabon	3780	50
China	370	85	Colombia	1280	55
Indonesia	610	83	Morocco	1030	60
Egypt	620	75	Thailand	1580	63
Philippines	740	75	Botswana	2590	66
Ghana	400	74	Paraguay	1210	67
Cameroon	940	73	Ecuador	1020	67
Kenya	340	71	Saudi Arabia	7050	68
Togo	410	70	Rumania	1340	79
Brazil	2920	41			

Source: United Nations Children's Fund: The Progress of Nations 1993, p. 29

Table 6. Maternal mortality rates in Asia

South Asia	490	East Asia	160
Sri Lanka	80	Hong Kong	6
India	460	Singapore	10
Pakistan	500	South Korea	26
Bangladesh	600	North Korea	41
Afghanistan	640	Thailand	50
Nepal	830	Malaysia	59
Bhutan	1310	China	95
		Philippines	100
		Vietnam	120
		Mongolia	140
		Lao P.D.R.	300
		Indonesia	450
		Myanmar	460
		Cambodia	500
		Papua New Guinea	900

Source: United Nations Children's Fund: The Progress of Nations 1933, pp. 38-39

Note: Maternal mortality rate means that number of women who die from causes related to pregnancy or giving birth for every 100,000 births.

## Discussion

### **Chairwoman Ms. Hao Yichun:**

Thank you, Prof. Kuroda.

Now do you have any comments or questions concerning his presentation?

### **Dr. Neville Fernando, Sri Lanka:**

I must thank Prof. Kuroda for the interesting paper he presented. I also must thank APDA for having conducted two surveys in Sri Lanka last year: one on labor migration and another on social welfare and family planning.

I am happy that Sri Lanka has been able to attain the demographic transition up to .86. I think that they are not a success story that begun just a few years ago. But, it was a sustained action from the early 1950s. Up to that time, we had a high growth rate. But, in the early 1950s, the government really got involved in family planning together with the private-sector family planning association which took the leading part in family planning. It was led by professor of obstetrics and gynecology and professor of pediatrics in the 1950s.

Also, one reason for the low TFR is, I believe, education of women. In Sri Lanka, education is compulsory and equal opportunities are given to girls and boys. There is no discrimination so that now we have a high level of literacy among women, almost coming up to about 90%. With that, more women are getting into careers and are becoming professionals so that there has been delayed marriage. They get married fairly late. As a result, their fertility goes down because they have a very small family. They are more concerned about improving their careers and they get married late. I think that one reason is because of education.

Another one is family planning, especially sterilization. It is voluntary. Everything is voluntary. No one is forced to accept any family planning method. Then, about infant mortality, I must say that we had a very high mortality rate some time back mainly due to perinatal mortality. But, that came down with more improved premature baby units coming into practically most of the hospital units. And, also prior to going to labor during the period of pregnancy, they are looked after well. They have to attend the antenatal clinic. That is more or less compulsory. There, their blood pressure and urine are checked. And, any complications of pregnancy are avoided. So, both the maternal mortality and infant mortality have come down because of that. And we have the system of free health services. All the government hospitals are free so that they can go to any hospital and get free medical services. Of course, there is also the private sector which is fairly expensive. Those are the reasons that helped us to bring down the infant mortality rate and also the total fertility rate.

About GNP, I think it has gone up to about \$550 per year. And also, about economic growth, the government itself is now keenly interested in improving industries. The funds are freely available. There was the time when Sri Lanka had a very closed economy where no one came and invested money in Sri Lanka. Now, we have liberalized during the last 15 to 20 years and the economy has been liberalized. A lot of foreign investment are coming mainly from Japan, Korea and European countries.

I think we could have done much better if not for the terrorist activities in the northern and eastern parts of the country. 20% of our budget is spent on defense because it is not, as

our President said, a question of ethnic balance, but it is actually terrorism. If it is ethnic, you will be surprised that more than 70% of the Tamils live among the Singhalese in peace. There is absolutely no discrimination. Where employment is concerned, they live among us. But, the terrorist leaders will somehow carve out parts of the island. Because India is now supporting the government of Sri Lanka to wipe out the terrorism because the biggest victim of the terrorism in Sri Lanka was India. Because their late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by the Tamil terrorists so you know to what extent the terrorists go. Our President Premadasa and former Minister of Internal Security were killed by the Tamil terrorists. Unfortunately, as Mr. Sakurai said in the morning, Japan is one country that does not deal with arms. But, there are countries that sell weapons to the terrorists. These are the people who encourage the terrorism in our part of the world. If you look at who is helping, none of the East Asian countries or Asian countries are helping the Tamil terrorists. But, all that comes from the European countries and the United States. Funds are collected in those countries and weapons are bought because they have more weapons than the government. So, this is something that I think countries like Japan and China could look into and help wipe out terrorists not only in Sri Lanka but all over the world. Then, the world will be a better place to live and we can all attain the economic development we are aiming at. Thank you very much.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Thank you, madam chairman. Thank you, Prof. Kuroda, for your interesting presentation. But, because the theme of this meeting is the “Women in the 21st Century”, I was quite disappointed or surprised actually that there are not much data desegregated by the agenda except for the maternal mortality rate and the life expectancy. Of course, low death rate and low total fertility rate are important indicators, but we are much more concerned about quality of life. Especially as the theme of this meeting is the “Women in the 21st Century”, I would like to ask you how you foresee this demographic transition of low fertility rate and low infant mortality rate will impact women in the 21st century, especially the quality of life. As we see the life expectancy in Sri Lanka, that of female is four points higher than male while the others are about the same, which means that more elderly women will be living alone afterwards. How does it impact the quality of life? What do we have to anticipate?

**Dr. Neville Fernando, Sri Lanka:**

That is a good question you put. Because we are now facing the problem of lonely women living alone and the serious crime against them. Recently, quite a number of attacks against the lonely women were reported in the papers. That is one important thing that we have to face — how to look after them daily as time goes on. Because of various reasons, they may remain living alone and some of them are murdered because they have money. So, that is going to be one of the biggest problems that we have to face.

**Mr. Chay Wai Chuen, Singapore:**

Maybe, I could just add a little bit to the views expressed. Maybe, from the point of view of Singapore, we may have a little bit of experience in that respect. We have this problem of demographic development and so on. At the same time, we have the phenomenon of the rising single women because of professional attainment and delayed marriage. The other reason why you have this problem as pointed out of a lot of women living alone is also the age, the life span. Women generally live longer than men. So, you also have this problem. One of the things we have been all the time trying to impart to the population is the concept of living together as a family. So, while you have the problem of women

living alone because of being a widow and of the daughters not marrying because they are attaining their own professional status and so on. One of the things we have been trying to do is to bring in this concept and reinforce the Asian concept of the family — togetherness. While everybody is trying to have their own apartment, at the same time to bring them together to try and stay with parents if possible and to have a bigger network of family members. That is one of the ways I think we can arrest this development trend to come along with.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Could I comment on that, Madam Chairman? That is interesting for Singapore as an urban island actually. But, for our countries where rural and urban difference is still very big, and where most of the single women are those that migrated to the cities while families stay in the rural areas. That may be another problem. So, for those women who do live alone and in urban areas away from their families, that concept, although I agree that it is a very good concept, may not be applicable.

**Dr. Eimatsu Takakuwa, Japan:**

I appreciate the very interesting report by Prof. Kuroda. Also I would like to pay a great respect to Sri Lanka. Very recently, I made a statistical survey and reported it to the Japan Racial Hygiene Society last November. I would like to report two correlations which I found. One is between infant mortality rate and the birth rate. There is a significant correlation. The correlation rate is 0.83. This is nearly perfect. This means that high birth rate may prevent high infant mortality rate. The second is between infant mortality rate and adult female literacy rate in 1990. The correlation rate is -0.921, which is a significantly high correlation. I don't say the cause of infant mortality rate is due to women's education rate. But, this is very important. Promotion of infant mortality rate is very necessary for adult female education.

**Mr. Zhu Yu, China:**

The data from Sri Lanka sounds nice and impressive. They are relatively better than those in my country. What I would like to ask is, besides education, what kind of special measures or programs you have to reach such good results. Another question is the budget. How much percent of the total budget of your country does the budget for population control and maternal and child care comprise?

**Dr. Neville Fernando, Sri Lanka:**

The budget for family welfare and population control is given to the Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs which is about 6 or 7% of the budget last year. Population comes under the Health Ministry. They are the people who sustain family welfare. Family welfare association and family planning association are given government subsidies. In addition, the government itself has the medical officer system where family planning is promoted. In most hospitals, gynecologists and obstetricians are involved in sterilization after the second and the third child, of course, only if the parents want it. Nothing is done compulsorily. If the mothers want it after the second child, not before the second child. After one child, they are not allowed to do sterilization. Even if they want, doctors are reluctant. After the second child, of course, they are given a chance, but after the third, they are advised to get sterilization done. All that is free so that it is also incentive because now most of the poor women who get married feel the large number of children is difficult to feed and look after. They also now believe in a better physical quality of life.

They feel that a small family can be looked after better than the large family. Earlier it was the other way about. They thought that a big family would bring a big income. They thought more heads will bring bigger income. But they find more mouths to be fed is also expensive. I think those are two or three reasons why we have been able to bring our birth rate down.

**Mr. Mahendra Prasad, India:**

Sri Lanka is a lovely country. I visited almost 75 countries of the world. Last year, I visited Sri Lanka and was so much impressed by the way they are progressing and developing in every sphere of life. So far as India is concerned, India is always on her help. Had President Premadasa listened to the advice of President Jayawardene, Premadasa could not have been killed. Probably Rajiv Gandhi of India could not have been killed. So, we believe in better understanding and the present government is prepared to give any help and assistance filled to fight terrorism in Sri Lanka without interfering sovereignty and independence of Sri Lanka. I also had an appeal to see Sri Lanka is helped in fighting terrorism so that the beautiful country will emerge stronger and more beautiful.



# Case Study on Population and Development in China

by

Hon. Ms. Peng Yu

Vice-Minister,

State Family Planning Commission

Ms. Chairperson,  
Distinguished Parliamentarians,  
Ladies and gentlemen, and friends,

First of all, I wish to express my thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, for providing me an opportunity to speak on this important occasion. As is known to all, the excessive population growth has adversely affected the process of socio-economic development. Since the Bucharest World Population Conference in 1974, various countries, especially some relevant developing countries have made great efforts to slow down the rapid population growth in accordance with the principle and targets of the World Population Plan of Action.

However, with an ever-widening base, the present annual growth rate of 1.7% would lead to a formidable figure in net increase of the world population. As is estimated, the world population will increase from the present 5.5 billion to 6.3 billion by the end of the century. As the population in Asia makes up 60 percent of the world's total and its trend would inevitably affect the prospects of the world population.

China is a developing country with the largest population of any country in the world. By the end of 1993, its population on the mainland exceeded 1.185 billion. For China, the issue of population can not be separated from the issue of socio-economic development. The Chinese government pursues an integrated program of development which promotes family planning and improved population quality (in terms of health and education), and adjusts the population structure, while also actively encouraging the development of China's economy. The goal is to ensure that population growth does not outpace social and economic development, the availability of natural resources, and environmental protection efforts. In this way we hope to make our nation stronger, our country more prosperous, and improve the quality of our life.

## I. Rapid Population Growth Slows Socio-economic Development

China is confronted with certain national conditions: a huge population, a limited amount of arable land, comparatively inadequate natural resources, a low level of economic development and education, and unbalanced economic development among different areas. China has to support 22 percent of the world's population on only 7 percent of the world's arable land. The available per capita arable land is only 0.086 hectares which is far lower than the world average.

China's population is characterized by a large base number, a high proportion of fertile age group, a relatively fast rate of increase, extremely unbalanced geographic distribution and large percentage of rural people. During the 43 years from the end of 1949 to the end of 1992, the population on China's mainland more than doubled. According to the data of the Fourth Population Census of 1990, people aged 0 - 14 made up 27.70 percent, those aged 15-59 made up 63.0 percent and those aged 60 and over made up 8.59 percent of the total population, of which women of childbearing age reached 27.10 percent. The median

age of China's population is 25.25 years. This age structure indicates that China's population will remain at a high level in the next ten years or more. Distribution of the population in China is very unbalanced: 94 percent of the population inhabits in the south-east part of the country, which represents only 45 percent of China's territory. About 74 percent of the population live in rural areas. The population density in 1990 was 118 people per square kilometer. Ninety percent of the world's people live at altitudes below 400 meters above the sea level. In China, however, 20 percent of the people live at altitudes higher than 500 meters, where the geographical conditions for subsistence are not good. Because the base figure of China's population is so large, and despite the family planning program, China, in the past few years, still had a net annual increase of about 14 million.

China's rapid population increase has led to a sharp reduction of arable land, destruction of forests, overgrazing of grasslands, over-exploitation of resources and destruction of the environment. In the past ten years, the population of China increased by over 100 million. In this period, the arable land of China decreased at a rate of 300,000 hectares annually. The available per capita arable land decreased from 0.18 hectare in 1949 to 0.086 hectare in 1990, only one-fourth of the world's average. China's per capita fresh water resources are only one-fourth of the world's average. Shortage of fresh water has, to varying degrees, affected people's daily lives and industrial production in over 300 cities. Shortage of water is responsible for reductions in grain production of over 5 billion tons each year. In the rural areas, 50 million people and over 30 million heads of livestock do not have adequate drinking water.

From 1952 to 1989, the total output of grain increased by over 100 percent, but due to population growth, the average amount of grain per capita has decreased in some years. Grain per capita was 394 kilograms in 1984 but decreased to 362 kilograms in 1988. China had a very good harvest in 1990, but per capita grain was still less than that in 1984.

Rapid population growth has also affected China's capacity to provide employment, education, housing, transportation, health care and social welfare. More than 20 million young people enter the labor market every year. Due to inadequate job opportunities, there are more than 100 million surplus laborers in rural areas. According to the data from the 1990's Census, 15.88 percent of the total population aged 15 and over are illiterate or semi-illiterate, the majority being women living in rural areas. In 1990, each person averaged only 6.7 square meters of living space. For every 10,000 people there were only 5 public transportation buses, 23 hospital beds and 15.6 doctors. Squeezed living conditions, crowded public transportation, difficulty in finding jobs and access to health care make one keenly aware of the pressure of overpopulation in China. In 1990, there were about 119 counties, representing 16 percent of China's 1894 counties, where annual per capita income was less than Chinese yuan RMB 250 (US\$43). These poor counties are mainly located in mountainous and remote areas.

Rapid population growth has also exacted a toll on the accumulation of funds for economic development. Every year, one-fourth of the increase in national income is offset by population increase, which has restricted the speed of economic development and progress in education, science and technology.

China's fundamental way for solving the contradiction between population and development is to maintain her open policy and develop the productive forces on one hand and control her excessive population growth on the other. China could not afford to wait for the natural decline of the population growth rate with the gradual development of economy as those western industrial countries experienced in the past. China couldn't either rely upon external assistance for solving her population and development problem. The country's

basic conditions have determined the special significance in carrying out a national family planning program. This is the only choice left for the Chinese Government in this particular historical period.

## II. Family Planning Policy and Population Plan of China

China initiated the practice of family planning from the mid-1950's and tried a family planning program in some cities and a few rural places in the 1960s. Since the 1970s, the Government has promoted family planning program on a nationwide scale. Since the 1980's, the government has adopted as its basic national policy to promote family planning so as to control population quantity and improve its quality (in terms of health and education). The Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates that the state promotes the practice of family planning so that population growth may be in keeping with socioeconomic development (Article 25), and that both husband and wife have the obligation to practice family planning (Article 49). The same obligation is also stipulated in the "Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China". According to the national conditions, the Chinese Government has gradually perfected the policy. The main points of the policy are: to promote late marriage and later, fewer but healthier births with prevention of genetic and birth defects; to advocate widely the practice of "one couple, one child" and to persuade rural couples with difficulties who wish for a second child to have proper spacing. Family planning regulation in rural areas inhabited by minority groups are formulated by their respective provincial and autonomous regional governments.

The "Ten-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development" and the "Guideline for the 8th Five-Year formulated by the Central Government, provides that the average annual national population growth rate should be controlled at 12.5 per thousand or lower in the ten years from 1991 to 2000. According to this plan, the annual natural population growth rate should decline continuously to 10 per thousand or lower, and the total population on the mainland of China should be limited within 1.3 billion by the year 2000. It is expected that China's population would be stabilized at between 1.5 to 1.6 billion by the middle of the next century.

Due to the conditions that vary widely from place to place regarding economic situation, cultural and educational background, as well as the concept about childbearing, the family planning program has developed in an uneven way in different areas. Therefore, the state offers different family planning policies to the different localities in accordance with the specific conditions. When setting their targets and policies, the Central and lower level Governments take into consideration both the requirements of the national socioeconomic development plan and the degree of people's willingness and acceptance. Generally speaking, the policy is more flexible in rural areas than in urban areas, and for minority groups than among the Han people. Couples in rural areas usually have two children. In areas inhabited by minority groups, farmers and herdsmen still have three or four. To advocate "one couple one child" does not mean that all couples should have only one child. In urban areas, it is easier for couples to respond to the call of the Government and accept the small family norm because they have a higher level of education and enjoy more social welfare benefits. Moreover, in urban areas, it costs more money to raise and educate a child. High employment and better social security plans also contribute to the high proportion of one-child families in urban areas. In rural areas, however, the family planning program encounters more difficulties. A number of factors contribute to farmers' desire for more children: labor-intensive farming methods, low agricultural productivity, lack of old age support, traditional ideas about childbearing, comparatively high infant mortality, and low level of education. Therefore, it is more difficult to promote family planning program in rural China.

In the course of the implementation of the family planning program, the Chinese Government has consistently relied on publicity and education, free distribution of contraceptives and the integration of family planning with various other kinds of services. Apart from that, the program also includes a system of incentives and disincentives, with an emphasis on incentives. In urban areas, the incentive schemes include: families who voluntarily have only one child are awarded a monthly stipend for their single children, mothers are entitled to a half-year maternity leave after delivery with full pay and without any effect on their promotion or increase of salary. In some areas, one-child families are also given preferential treatment in housing, employment and enrollment in nurseries and elementary schools. In rural areas, one-child families are entitled to more contracted land or are required to turn over less of what they produce as tax. Some also enjoy priorities for obtaining agricultural loans, fertilizers, pesticides, housing plots and so on. These families will also have priority in participating in poverty alleviation programs, which would help them become better-off at an earlier date.

Disincentives are social welfare fees collected from families with more children. In China, the Government pays most medical care, education, and some other social welfare benefits. More births create a heavy burden for the state, and in a sense form an obstacle to the achievement of long-term economic development. It is impossible for the state to supply subsidies and services equitable for all families if some have many children. The amount of the social welfare fee is decided by local governments based on local conditions. The Central Government does not specify a standard fee, but it is clearly stipulated that the amount should not significantly alter a family's standard of living or interfere with their means of production, and that the funds should be used for family planning and social welfare services.

It is a firm policy of the Chinese Government to prohibit any kind of coercive action in implementing family planning. In October 1991, China put into effect the ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE LAW, which forbids the abuse of their powers by Government officials, and provides all citizens with the right to sue abusive Government officials.

For some farmers, there still exists a gap between their fertility desires and the present family planning policy. But in general, people understand and support the policy because it serves the basic and long-term interests of the people and the country, while at the same time taking into account their practical difficulties. China now has over 324 million women of childbearing age who are also the main part of the labor force. If the family planning policy were contrary to the will of this group of people, the economy would surely have suffered and the society would have been destabilized. Without the support and voluntary involvement of the people, China's family planning program could not succeed.

### III. Major Measures in Family Planning

Since the 1970's, China has taken a series of measures to promote family planning. The major measures are as follows:

#### 1. The Commitment and Leadership from Government at Various Levels

Government officials are required to play a key role in the promotion of family planning. Every year the State Council (the Central Government) convenes a national family planning conference whose participants are mainly government leaders from each province, autonomous region and municipality directly under the central government. The

governments at various levels incorporate population programs into their overall plans for socioeconomic development. They draw up plans to strengthen the population education of all government officials and help increase their population awareness. All government officials, especially those in leading positions, are required to take the lead in practicing family planning.

## 2. Public Education as the First Priority of Family Planning

An extensive information, education and communication program has been carried out to enhance the people's understanding of the importance of family planning for the happiness of future generations.

Public education is provided, concentrating on the following three areas:

First, information is widely disseminated regarding the serious population situation compared with limited natural resources in various rural villages, townships, counties, provinces and the whole country so as to enhance all the people's understanding of the great importance of family planning to the nation's prosperity.

Second, patriotic education is conducted. This is designed to encourage support for the interests of society and future generations rather than just individuals' immediate interests.

Third, basic knowledge on population and family planning is disseminated in spare-time population schools set up in both rural and urban areas. It is designed to encourage people to change their ideas about childbearing, to practice family planning, and to promote prenatal care for safer motherhood and healthier children. The population schools also provide couples of reproductive age with reliable contraceptive information. Education on population and family planning is also conducted among students in high schools and universities to help them gain population awareness and adopt a correct attitude towards love, marriage and childbearing.

## 3. Contraceptives Research as an Important Part of China's Family Planning Program

There has been a range of contraceptives and birth control techniques basically suitable for the present promotion of family planning in the country. But in order to offer even safer, more effective and more convenient contraceptives and birth control techniques, research continues as a top priority.

Since the major part of China's family planning program is being carried out in rural areas, it is essential to disseminate birth control information among rural people with the emphasis on long-term contraceptive measures. Family planning service networks have been established with part-time and full-time family planning workers working in most counties, townships and villages. These workers are the major force to carry out population education, and provide contraceptives and birth control services.

The family planning departments are also required to offer premarital examination, counseling on healthier births including prenatal and postnatal care, and also advice on early education for children.

## 4. Integration of Family Planning Program as a Key Element of Socioeconomic Development

The Government's integrated approach combines the family planning program with

economic development, education and health services, maternal and child health care, social welfare and security system and enhancement of women's status. The understanding and support from the entire society has created a positive atmosphere for the program's implementation. It is required by the government that relevant social and economic policies enacted by government organizations should be in compliance with the policy of later marriage and later, fewer but healthier births.

Great emphasis has been put by both the government and social organizations on the integration of family planning with economic development. Accordingly, numerous integrated projects of local relevance have developed such as the "integrated project of production, life and childbearing" in Jilin Province and "the project to make families with fewer children become better-off earlier" in Jiangsu Province.

In recent years, great emphasis has been placed on the integration of family planning with the program of poverty alleviation by offering preferential assistance to those who chose to have fewer children. In some poverty-stricken area, an overall strategy has been developed to coordinate population, agriculture and ecology programs.

The Chinese Government has also adopted measures to enhance women's social status, to protect women and children's civil rights and to expand pre-school education and old-age care systems. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women adopted in 1992 stipulates that the women's legal rights to control their fertility are protected by law. This Law is of great importance to the improvement of women's status, as it furthers the realization of gender equality and the mobilization of women's involvement in social development activities.

The drive to "learn more knowledge and technical know-how to make greater achievements" launched among rural women by the All-China Women's Federation has made a notable impact on women's involvement in socioeconomic development activities. It has been also lessened the influence of traditional childbearing practices and increased voluntary family planning.

In rural areas, farmers worry most about their old-age support. The Government has been working to develop a rural social security system. An old-age insurance system is being tried out by the Government and non-governmental organization in some rural areas.

## 5. Organizational Guarantee

In 1981, the Chinese Government established the State Family Planning Commission. The Commission, in turn, has helped set up local family planning commission at various levels. Their main task is to supply family planning services (including publicity, education, and relevant technical services). In addition, the China Family Planning Association and some other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played an important role in the implementation of the family planning program.

The China Family Planning Association motivates volunteers to conduct family planning activities through self-education, self-management, and self-service. At present, the Association has nearly 900,000 local branches with about 50 million volunteers to help offer family planning services. The Association has focused its attention on rural areas, disseminating information on population and family planning, and also helped people to solve practical problems in their daily life and production.

#### IV. Accomplishments of the Family Planning Program

In 1949, the total population on the mainland of China was only 540 million. With social stability, development of the economy and improvement in medical care, the birth rate increased while mortality declined. This resulted in a sharp increase in the population growth rate of a scale and rapidly never experienced in the now developed countries.

Since the early 1970s, with better understanding of the seriousness of excessive population growth, the Government has carried out a national family planning program in earnest. Public education on family planning has been conducted and contraceptive services provided free of charge throughout the country.

Since then, due to socioeconomic development and a strong family planning program, the natural growth rate of the population has gradually declined and the excessive population growth has been basically brought under control. From 1970 to 1992, the crude birth rate declined from 33.59 per thousand to 18.24 per thousand and the natural growth rate dropped from 25.95 per thousand to 11.60 per thousand.

In the 1950s, China's total fertility rate, the number of children a woman is expected to bear in her life time, was as high as 5.87. For the 1960s, the average was 5.68 and in the 1970s and 1980s, it was further reduced to 4.01 and 2.46 respectively. Comparing the average total fertility rate of the 1980s with that in the 1960s, there was a reduction of 56.7 per cent.

Population experts estimate that if China had not promoted family planning in the past 20 years, at least 200 million more births would have been added to the population. Thus, the family planning program helped the country save resources for use in its social and economic development programs. China's family planning efforts also made a global contribution. In 1990, for all developing countries, the crude birth rate was 31 per thousand, the natural growth rate was 21 per thousand and the total fertility rate was 4.0. If recalculated for all developing countries excluding China, the crude birth rate was 35 per thousand, the natural growth rate was 24 per thousand and the total fertility rate was 4.6.

China promotes family planning not only to alleviate pressure on economic development, but also for the benefit of individual families and the health of mothers and children. Being able to limit births enables women to secure more opportunities to participate in economic activities which in turn raises women's status.

The family planning program has helped change people's concept of marriage and childbearing. From 1970 to 1988, the average age at first marriage rose from 20.82 years old to 22.18 years old. The average age at first childbearing rose from 22.58 years old to 23.42 years old between 1981 and 1989.

Parity composition, or the proportion of total births represented by first births, second births, and so on, has also undergone great changes. Before 1970, the majority of the births belonged to third or higher parities while first and second parity births represented a small proportion of total births. Beginning from 1970, when the family planning program started, the proportion of first and second parity births increased and that of third and higher parity births decreased.

In the 1950s and 1960s, only a small proportion of couples were using contraceptives because information about family planning and services were poor. Since 1970, with the development of the family planning program and improvement in contraception techniques,

more and more couples have adopted contraceptive measures. At present, the contraceptive prevalence rate in China is about 72 percent.

With improvements in China's economy, better education and better medical services, the health status and life expectancy of the Chinese people have been greatly improved. Before 1949, China's mortality rate was as high as 20 deaths per 1000 people; in 1990, it was 6.67 per 1000. In the late 1949's, the average life expectancy for the Chinese people was only 35 years. By 1987, it had increased to 69.5 (male 67.3, female 70.65), one of the world's fastest increases in life expectancy. Undoubtedly, the family planning program played a positive role in attaining a longer life span.

Infant and neo-natal infant mortality rates have also been declining. Available data show that between 1944 and 1949, the infant mortality rate of China was as high as 200 deaths before age one per thousand live births. Since 1949, the infant mortality rate has declined sharply. The average infant mortality rate between 1981 and 1987 was reduced to 38.28 per thousand, representing a drop of 81 per cent since the 1940s. Neo-natal infant mortality (occurring within the first seven days after a live birth) also dropped by 76 percent from 92.55 per thousand to 22.4 per thousand during the same period of time.

In 1990, 94 percent of birth deliveries were attended by trained birth attendants. Maternal mortality (deaths associated with pregnancy and childbirth), which was as high as 1,500 per 100,000 live births in the early 1950s, dropped to 94.7 per 100,000 in 1990. Furthermore, the overall health status of women and children throughout their lives has been continuously improved.

## V. Current Problems

China has made notable achievements in population control, yet it is still confronted with many knotty problems caused by the present population situation. Firstly, the huge absolute number of people born annually, which exceeded 20 million a year in 1991 and 1992, will consume about a quarter of each year's newly-added GNP, imposing a heavy burden upon China's social and economic development. Secondly, it will take a long time to change China's socio-economic situation and people's ideas about childbearing. Thirdly, fertility rate and family planning efforts vary from urban to rural areas, among various sizes of cities, different races, and among coastal, inland and remote areas. Fourthly, China is entering with a relatively fast pace into an aged society. The large number of aging population calls for appropriate social measures.

China has benefited from and has been inspired by the exchange of experience with other countries including advanced statistical methods and new contraceptive techniques. China will, in the course of its own modernization, continue to contribute to the stabilization of the world population and to the promotion of the international cooperation in the population and family planning field.



Table 1. Total Population, Crude Birth Rates, Crude Death Rates and Natural Increase Rates of China, 1950-1992

YEAR	Total Population (in ten thousands)	CBR (per 1000)	CDR (per 1000)	NIR (per 1000)
1950	55196	37.00	18.00	19.00
1951	56300	37.80	17.80	20.00
1952	57482	37.00	17.00	20.00
1953	58796	37.00	14.00	23.00
1954	60266	37.97	13.18	24.79
1955	61456	32.60	12.28	20.32
1956	62828	31.90	11.40	20.50
1957	64563	34.03	10.80	23.23
1958	65994	29.22	11.98	17.24
1959	67207	24.78	14.59	10.19
1960	66207	20.86	25.43	-4.57
1961	65859	18.02	14.24	3.78
1962	67295	37.22	10.08	27.14
1963	69172	43.60	10.10	33.50
1964	70499	39.34	11.56	27.78
1965	72538	38.06	9.55	28.51
1966	74542	35.21	8.87	26.34
1967	76368	34.12	8.47	25.65
1968	78534	35.75	8.25	27.50
1969	80671	34.25	8.06	26.19
1970	82992	33.59	7.64	25.95
1971	85229	30.74	7.34	23.40
1972	87177	29.92	7.65	22.27
1973	89211	28.07	7.08	20.99
1974	90859	24.95	7.38	17.57
1975	92420	23.13	7.36	15.77
1976	93717	20.01	7.29	12.72
1977	94974	19.03	6.91	12.12
1978	96259	18.34	6.29	12.05
1979	97542	17.90	6.24	11.66
1980	98705	18.21	6.34	11.87
1981	100072	20.91	6.36	14.55
1982	101654	22.28	6.60	15.68
1983	103008	20.19	6.90	13.29
1984	104357	19.90	6.82	13.08
1985	105851	21.04	6.78	14.26
1986	107507	22.43	6.86	15.57
1987	109300	23.33	6.72	16.61
1988	111026	22.37	6.64	15.73
1989	112704	21.58	6.54	15.04
1990	114333	21.06	6.67	14.39
1991	115823	19.68	6.70	12.98
1992	117171	18.24	6.64	11.60

Source: 1950-1990, "China Statistics Yearbook, 1991".  
1991, 1992, Data of "Survey on Population Changes".

Table 2. Total Fertility Rate of Chinese Women, 1950-1992

Year	TFR	Year	TFR	Year	TFR
1950	5.81	1965	6.08	1980	2.24
1951	5.70	1966	6.26	1981	2.63
1952	6.47	1967	5.31	1982	2.86
1953	6.05	1968	6.45	1983	2.42
1954	6.28	1969	5.72	1984	2.35
1955	6.26	1970	5.81	1985	2.20
1956	5.85	1971	5.44	1986	2.42
1957	6.41	1972	4.98	1987	2.59
1958	5.68	1973	4.54	1988	2.52
1959	4.30	1974	4.17	1989	2.35
1960	4.02	1975	3.57	1990	2.31
1961	3.29	1976	3.24	1991	2.20
1962	6.02	1977	2.84	1992	2.00
1963	7.50	1978	2.72		
1964	6.18	1979	2.75		

Source: 1982-1987: Results of the "National Sample Survey on Fertility and Contraception".

1988-1989: Adjusted from data of the "Fourth Population Census of China".

1990: Calculated from Data of the "Sample Survey on Population Changes of 1990".

1991 and 1992: According to Sample Survey conducted by the Department of Statistics and Planning of State Family Planning Commission of China.

Table 3. Population Growth of China vs. the World

	CBR (per 1000)	CDR (per 1000)	NGR (per 1000)	TFR
China	21	7	14	2.3
World Average	27	10	18	3.5
Developed Countries	15	9	5	2.0
Developing Countries	31	10	21	4.0
Developing Countries Excluding China	35	11	24	4.6

Source: China Sample Survey on Population Changes of 1990.

Others: 1990 Population Data Sheet of U.S. Population Reference Bureau Inc.

Table 4. Standardized Average First Marriage Age of Chinese Women in Selected Years Since 1970

Year	1970	1980	1982	1984	1986	1987	1988
Nationwide	20.82	22.84	22.41	22.28	22.13	22.16	22.18
Urban	22.97	25.37	24.66	24.38	24.05	24.10	24.04
Rural	20.24	22.13	21.77	21.63	21.56	21.53	21.60

Source: Sample Survey on China's Fertility and Contraception, 1988.

Table 5. Composition of Birth Orders in China since 1970 (%)

Year	Rate of 1 Child	Rate of 2 Children	Rate of 3 Children
1970	20.73	17.06	62.21
1977	30.86	24.59	44.55
1980	44.15	28.36	27.49
1982	50.59	26.09	23.32
1984	51.89	28.21	19.90
1986	50.74	32.69	16.58
1989	51.95	32.50	15.55
1990	51.87	31.47	16.66
1991	53.40	33.80	12.80
1992	51.87	31.47	16.66

Note: Data of 1977 are from One Per Thousand Sample Survey on Fertility.

Data of 1980-1988 are from Sample Survey on Fertility and Contraception.

Data of 1989 are from Sample Survey on Population Variation.

Data of 1991 and 1992 are from Sample Survey conducted by the Department of Statistics and Planning of State Family Planning Commission of China in 1992.

Table 6. China's Infant Mortality Rate, 1949-1987

Year	IMR (per 1000)	Year	IMR (per 1,000)	Year	IMR (per 1000)
1944-49	203.60	1970	51.95	1983	41.37
1950	197.93	1975	48.05	1984	38.41
1955	107.64	1980	42.76	1985	37.38
1960	109.92	1981	37.33	1986	37.14
1965	72.13	1982	36.42	1987	39.92

Source: Sample Survey on China's Fertility and Contraception, 1988.

Table 7. China's Neo-Natal Mortality Rates, 1949-1987

Year	NNMR (per 1000)	Year	NNMR (per 1000)
1944-1949	92.55	1970-1974	29.14
1950-1954	67.96	1975-1979	24.36
1955-1959	51.01	1980-1984	22.90
1960-1964	46.94	1985-1987	22.40
1965-1969	35.52		

Source: Sample Survey on China's Fertility and Contraception, 1988

Figure 1. Birth, Death and Natural Increase Rate for China, 1950-1992

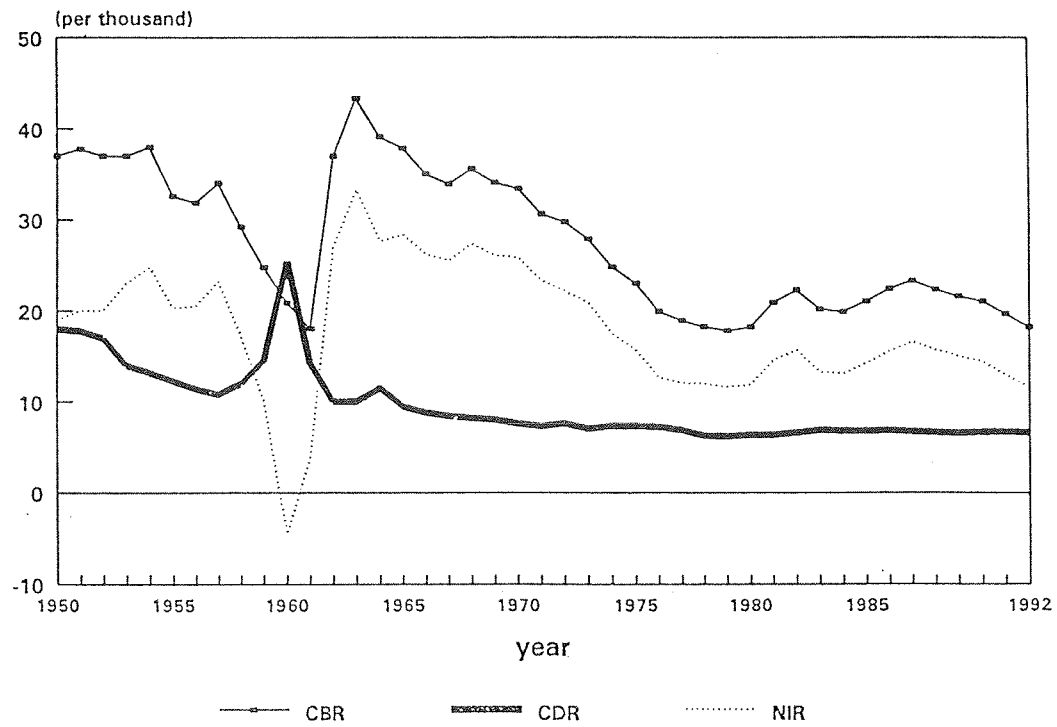
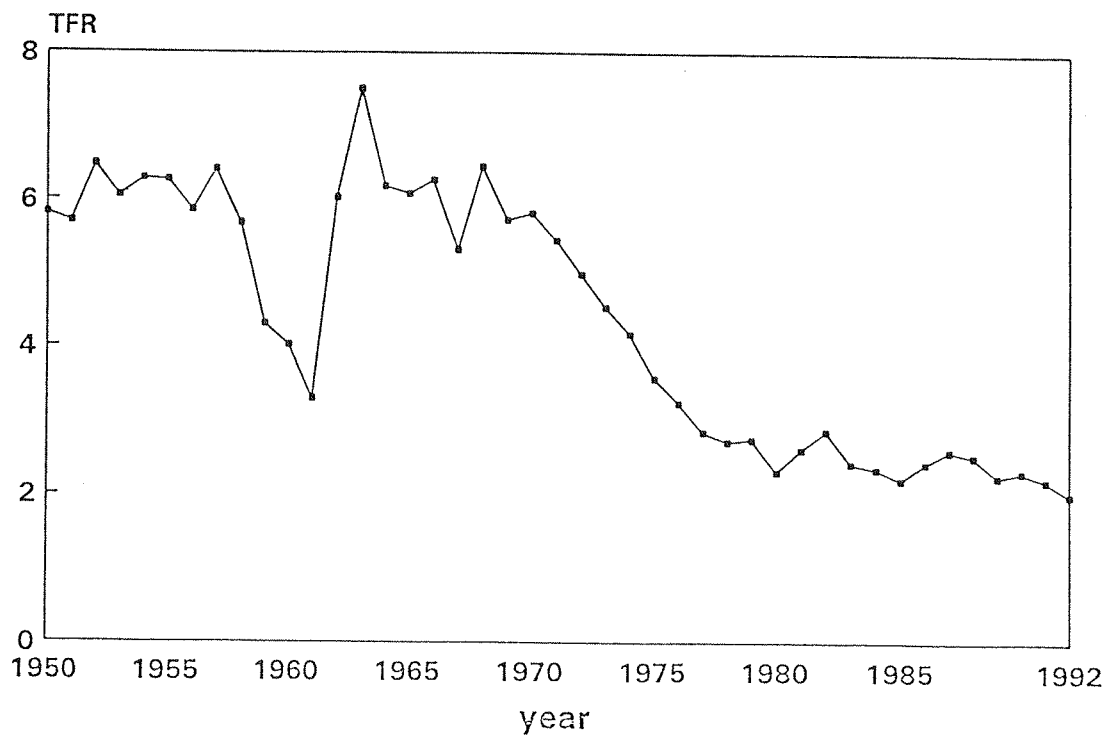


Figure 2. Total Fertility Rate for China (1950-1992)



## Discussion

**Chairwoman Ms. Hao Yichun:**

Thank you, Ms. Peng. Now the floor is open for discussion. You can raise your comments or questions concerning here presentation.

**Mr. Chay Wai Chuen, Singapore:**

I would like to ask you to clarify the one-child policy in the rural areas of China. As pointed out by you, one-third of the families of China now have got one child in the family. You also said that many farmers are very worried when they get old what will happen to them. You have the state security system coming up for welfare assistance. How is this one-child family, especially in the rural areas going to affect the farming output, the agricultural produce of China?

**Ms. Peng Yu:**

We advocate one couple one child. Now, most of such couples are in urban areas. In rural areas, we have several regions where we allow them to have the second child. In the suburbs of urban cities and in the big provinces, we do not give them many preferential treatment. For instance, in Jiangsu and Sichuan Provinces where the population density is very high, they don't have such a preferential treatment. In other provinces they can have the second baby if the first one is a girl. For the overwhelming parts of rural areas, they are allowed to have the second baby. So, the one-child phenomenon is mostly within urban areas.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

I am very much impressed about your presentation as well as your program itself, especially because we outside China have actually read a lot about your one child one family policy and always related it to human right problem, especially about the stories that if one child is a girl, she will be killed because the Chinese culture still prefers male children. Could you give us clarification or explanation on what the situation is now because I am sure the cultural values have changed because of implementation of this policy. But, how does that influence the gender perspective and the gender preference in this country?

**Ms. Peng Yu:**

With regards to family planning and human right problem, our feeling is that we should protect and respect the human rights of our people. We should respect the human rights. But, these rights should help improve their quality of life including the better life for the future generations. China is adopting an open policy. In the past, we did not know what was going on outside. Now, many people visit overseas and have witnessed improved living standards in other countries. So, they have a strong desire to see rapid economic development and improved livelihood for our own people. I think you know that in the 1970s we were in the blue sea. Everybody was wearing blue. But, now, you can see even men wear stylish clothes. So, you can see that our own people have the desire to ensure that the human rights could promise a better quality for their life. They don't want to improve this at the expense of over-exploitation of natural resources. They don't want to have more children or have babies luxuriously at the expense of economic development, environmental protection and others. This is the understanding. But, traditionally speaking, they would like to have a boy. I think so far such a mentality has been improved. But, among some people, this is still a problem. Judging from the current change, in urban

areas as a result of economic development, gender equality is better practiced. Some families even feel more delighted with a girl because they can have better relation with the son-in-law than with the daughter-in-law, but in the rural areas they want to have a boy. So, given such a circumstance, we particularly advocate that in the rural area the role of women should be brought in a better place, that is, women can get a status in economic development. If they can have a status in economic development, then they can have a say in the family. In this way, the gender preference can be improved. If they have no economic position, they have to be subject to the order of men. So, we have to improve the status of women in rural areas. Judging from what is going on in the rural areas, the status of women has been greatly improved. But, they are not yet fully equal with men. And, I think such a preference also exists in foreign countries. They have the coverage on the irrational proportion between the boys and girls. We also attach great importance to this problem by doing some surveys and organizing experts to do study. According to what we have found out, quite a large number of girls are not registered in the files. They don't want to register the birth of girls. So, about 3/4 have not been registered. Now, they use X-ray to detect beforehand whether the baby is a boy or girl. Then, they can have abortion to avoid giving birth to a girl. This is the past practice, and is not a very serious problem now. I think it is only a very small amount of cases. In most of the cases, they will have a girl baby but without registering them. What we are trying to do now is to work out the regulation if the mother of the girl is mistreated, the law-breaker will be punished in accordance with the law. We would also disseminate the information that girls can also pass down the family line, and will let them know that girls are equal to boys. Thirdly, we will improve the economic status and production. In rural areas, women's organizations would back the girls and women and give them new ideas so that they would not be discriminated against. And women can turn to the All Women's Federation if they have any difficulties. I think in the process of this development, people will gradually reverse the old mentality of boy preference.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Please give us some figures about the number of male and female population in China. I have not seen it in the data aggregated by gender here. If it is true as you have said that 3/4 of the girls are not registered in rural areas, that means sufficient unreliability of the data presented. How does it affect the policy if you are working from the data that are biased?

**Ms. Peng Yu:**

I have not given you the gender ratio in my presentation. According to the survey that we conducted in 1989, the sex ratio was 100 girls versus 112.75 boys. The figure of boys was higher. The actual figures for the girls may be higher. In our survey, we have discovered that some registrations for the girls were not made. So, we corrected that in our actual work doing the survey.

**Mr. Shajahan Siraj, Bangladesh:**

I have heard that, I don't know if it is true or not, one can not marry without taking permission of the government.

**Ms. Peng Yu:**

In China, we have the marriage law which provides that there is freedom in marriage. So, boys and girls are free to fall in love and get registered for marriage so that their marriage is protected by the law.

**Mr. Margarito B. Teves, Philippines:**

My question is related to the incentives provided by the Chinese government with respect to family planning program. I was wondering if there has been a separately conducted study to determine the cost and benefit of this incentive versus other forms of support to the family planning program such as the budgetary support to education, health and services. I think, to the policymakers like us, it would be interesting to determine how effective this benefits are in relation to the traditional sources of indirect supports such as education, health and services. My question is whether such studies have been conducted and whether the results indicate that it is a more effective instrument in attaining certain objectives such as reduction of fertility rate and other indicators versus the traditional sources of programs such as the budgetary support to health, education and other form of services.

**Ms. Peng Yu:**

Concerning the first point on marriage, when the couple goes to the registration office, as long as the two young people can meet the conditions according to the Marriage Law, they don't have to get permission from the government. They just get registered. That's all. Now, we don't have the national survey on the cost-effectiveness of the incentives. But, the local places may have. The incentive schemes are also different for urban and rural areas. In urban areas, we usually give a symbolic amount of money to the couples practicing one child. In the rural areas it is difficult to come out with cash to support the couples with one child. So, in the rural areas it would be a support in kind. For instance, those one-child families may get preferential treatment in the supply of fertilizers and seeds. They can also be exempted from some compulsory services that they must provide to the local community. And the support may also come in the form of preferential considerations to those one-child families where they can carry a piece of land or orchard. These are the general practices. In this regard, we feel that if one requires the government to come up with a large amount of money, it will be difficult for the government. What we are doing is just in the process of encouraging them to get rich first through all kinds of ways. In this process, one-child families would be involved and they will receive preferential treatment of all kinds. In other words, in the production process and in the after-harvest service areas, the one-child families will receive preferential treatment. But, we are still considering measures of improving this practice. Just now, we heard the good experience of Sri Lanka. This is an area from which we should learn from Sri Lanka. In terms of budgetary assistance, right now the government actually provides 6 billion yuan to the family planning program. However, in the implementation of the program, we find this 6 billion yuan is not enough. Still, we expect that in the next five years we should increase the per capita program expenditure from one yuan to two yuan.



# Survey on Rural Population and Agricultural Development in Vietnam

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## 1. Introduction: The farming industry as a key industry in Vietnam

In this report, I shall attempt to shed light on the current situation concerning population in the rural areas of Vietnam and to point out the challenges to be faced in the development of the farming industry. The report is based on surveys conducted in Vietnam by the Asian Population and Development Association: one in 1992 which looked at population problems, mainly in the rural areas; and another conducted in 1993, which addressed issues related to the development of the farming industry.

A majority of the population in Vietnam is composed of those who make their living by farming and those living in rural areas which are related to the farming industry. In order to raise income levels in Vietnam it is paramount that development of the farming industry be accelerated, subsequently increasing and improving production capability as a whole including other industries. Furthermore, it is expected that the increase in population and the rise in income levels in Vietnam will further expand demand for food; and from this perspective also the pre-eminent importance of pushing forward development in the farming industry, especially as it is centered on the production of food, is well illustrated.

## 2. Problems concerning rural population in Vietnam

The population of Vietnam, as of 1993, was 71,700,000. The population in or related to the farming industry was estimated to be 56,360,000, which is 78% of the total population. The rate of population growth which stood at the high level of 27‰ in the 1975-1980 period has gradually declined; however, it still stands at a level of 22‰, with a high population growth reported mainly in the rural areas. While the total fertility rate in the urban areas is said to have just about reached the replacement level at 2.2, in not a few parts of the rural areas the total fertility rate is still higher than 4.

In the areas where we were able to actually conduct a survey (1992), the results have also shown a high rate of population growth:

Province	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Natural Growth Rate (‰)
Tien Giang Province	27.6	7.1	20.5
Dong Nai Province	28.4	4.9	23.5
Nam Ha Province	25.4	4.0	21.4
Hoa Binh Province	30.7	7.2	23.5

The reason for the high natural growth rate despite high contraception prevalence rates in the areas where the survey was conducted (60% in Nam Ha Province and 45% in Tien Giang Province) is that while the annual birth rate of Vietnam in the 1990-1995 period stands at 30.3‰, the death rate has been reduced to a low level of 8.2‰. In other words, while the birth rate which stood at 42‰ in the 1955-1960 period declined to a level close

to 30.3‰, there was a larger decrease in the death rate which went from 25.6‰ to 8.2‰ over the same period.

As a result, the average life expectancy in Vietnam has risen from 42.9 years (1955-1960) to 63.5 years (1990-1995). On the other hand, a sudden increase in the population will also result, in the short term, in a rapid increase in the population of younger age groups and an increased burden in bringing up the young.

The current annual per-capita GNP in Vietnam is estimated at \$230. In order to raise the level of per-capita GNP, the immediate and foremost task must be to increase and to improve production capabilities mainly in the farming industry where a majority of the population make their living.

### 3. The Five Year Plan for agriculture

Under the socialist planned economy which was introduced after reunification of Vietnam, production and distribution of materials and goods were strictly controlled by the government. Since 1986, when Vietnam adopted the so-called Doi Moi (Renovation) policy, and the enactment in 1988 of a new foreign-currency law, fiscal and monetary reforms, and the beginning of reform of state enterprises, the economic system has been revamped. In a five-year plan for agriculture, production goals for farm products, livestock and fisheries has been set for the 1990-1995 period. (See Table 1.)

On the other hand, the official goals set in the agricultural policy of Vietnam may be summarized as follows (Association for International Cooperation of Agriculture and Forestry, Agriculture in Vietnam (Betonamu-no-Nogyo), 1991.

- (1) Self-sufficiency in food
- (2) Repayment of foreign debt and acquisition of foreign currency through export of farm products.
- (3) Continued leadership role of cooperative unions and state farms
- (4) While maintaining the consumption level in the urban areas, to secure a certain level of income in the rural areas.
- (5) Protection of the environment

Thus, the agricultural policy aims to realize self-sufficiency in food, while at the same time to contribute to the development of the Vietnamese economy by securing the export of farm products. The numbers set for production goals in the five year plan most probably take into account both the production for domestic consumption and export, although the breakdown of the numbers is not available. On the domestic consumption side, the nutritional intake per person for the projected population of 71.7 million in 1995 is set at 2,431 kcal per day, with consumption of protein and fats set at 48 grams and 24 grams per day, respectively. The projected nutritional intake is a considerable improvement compared to what was the actual nutritional intake a little more than ten years ago in 1990, but also compared to that of 1990. It can be expected, however, that the rise in the level of income would quite naturally lead to a large increase in the domestic demand for food.

In order to achieve these goals, the projected total sown area has been set at 10,800,000 hectares, the total production of paddy rice at 20,542,000 tons, and the paddy yield at 3.2 tons per hectare. An increase in meat and fisheries production is also projected. In any case, an annual growth rate of nearly 3% is projected for grain production; while the growth rate of meat production is estimated to be even higher. The reason for the higher projected growth of meat production is that the rise in the level of income would stimulate even more strongly the demand in meat.

#### 4. Issues facing the development of the farming industry in Vietnam

The task, then, is how to realize these goals. Quite frankly, the goals that have been set are very ambitious, and considering the experiences of other developing countries, the realization of these goals would not necessarily seem to be easy. In theory, there are two approaches that would achieve their objectives.

The first lies in the effect of the Doi Moi policy. What this means is an assumption that even when the total amount of input which determines the net material product of the economy (including such factors as the labor force, seeds, fertilizers, agricultural chemicals, and the extent to which agricultural machinery is used and put into effect) may be constant, the effective utilization of those input, which was made possible by the relaxation or removal of former rigorous government regulations, would allow for better production methods and the possibility of an increased output under the Doi Moi policy.

In 1989, Vietnam was able to export an unprecedentedly large quantity (1,800,000 tons) of rice. The increase in the output of rice has been attributed in no small part to the effect of the Doi Moi policy. This can basically be explained by the argument presented above. However, it remains to be answered how the Doi Moi policy has specifically changed each process of production, sales and distribution.

In Hoa Binh Province, it was reported to us: "Since our land was not suited to growing rice, we began converting it to growing vegetables. The low labor cost, the soil and the climate are all suited to this kind of production."

In a separate case, it was also reported: "Because of Doi Moi, farmers who in the past had to contribute a specified amount of rice every year to the agricultural corporation, would now pay a levy on land use directly to the government. The levy is divided into seven categories based on the production capacity of the land. Furthermore, the burden of taxation has been reduced to about a quarter of what had been paid in the form of rice, and this has been important in improving the production capacity."

However, in order to answer the question raised above, since a reduction in revenues from land use would be likely to reduce the government's supply of rice for export, it would have to be explained how, after accounting for the reduction in government revenues — and consequently, one would assume, in the supply of rice for export — there had been a sufficient rice in the output of rice to permit an increase in the export volume. There seems to be no clear explanation, unless it was simply a matter of an unusually rich harvest. But then again, how did the Doi Moi policy specifically affect the relationship between, say, production and distribution, and to result in increased output? Even more specifically, how did it affect such process of seed selection, sowing, transplanting, fertilization, water management, methods of cultivation, harvesting and the post-harvest process, and how did it change the condition of the farmland? Unfortunately, we were not able to fully find the answers to these questions from the limited time we had to carry out the survey. However, it seems to be true that there were changes in production progress on a large scale, and that those changes are still currently in the making. To pursue what we have undertaken effectively, it would be necessary to study further the relationship between the Doi Moi policy and its effect on agriculture.

The second approach would consider adjusting the amounts of the various kinds of input, their combination, and the techniques required of their combination, in order to collectively increase output and improve production capacity. With regard to this approach, it was reported in each province where the survey was conducted that finding solutions to the

many existing problems would contribute to further increase and improve production capabilities. Broadly speaking, the main problems are a lack of funds and of qualified staff to manage financial matters. In the southern region, it was reported that there was a shortage in the electricity supply. In Tien Giang Province, a shortage of pineapple processing plants and facilities was mentioned; and in Dong Nai Province, a lack of irrigation in the highlands and the spread of malaria were some of the problems. It has also been pointed out that the high rate of illiteracy in poor families posed a problem when introducing new techniques.

In general, the second approach in Vietnam's case would probably mean a further development in the method of rice cultivation to increase production; in areas where rice cultivation is not suitable, to place an emphasis on the production of tea, coffee, fruits and vegetables, as well as on the production of feed such as corn, and to consider using a part of the yield for processing and export; and for the projected expansion of the meat production such as pork and poultry to meet the increasing domestic demand for meat, as well as to consider acquisition of foreign currency through exports.

It has been pointed out that the most needed forms of international cooperation are: (1) infusion of capital to the Asian Development Bank so that a higher ceiling on lending in this country can be set; (2) introduction of new breeds or strains; (3) widespread implementation of programs for agricultural education; and (4) improvement in the infrastructure such as the water system.

The conditions required for the development of agriculture in Vietnam are numerous, and it would not be possible to realize all of them. Of prime importance is how much public effort would be expended on the improvement of some of the basic criteria, such as land conditions, the water system, energy supply, introduction of new techniques, matters related to distribution, and organization of a financial framework. The success of such efforts would depend on to what extent and in what ways international cooperation would be made, and on how each farmer would make the best use of such conditions.

To conclude by summarizing, although it cannot be denied that a difference in the level of the economy would remain between the climatically harsh northern Vietnam, and southern Vietnam where it has the blessings of the Mekong Delta, the prospect for development looks very optimistic. The revolution has abolished the system where small subsistence farmers worked for large landowners, and the right to long-term use of land has been secured. What is more, the generally high standard of education in Vietnam and the hard-working nature of the Vietnamese people give a very bright prospect for the future. It is hoped that through internal and external efforts - including active international cooperation - a lasting success will be secured for Vietnam.

Table 1. Targets for Five-Year Plan (1990-1995)

	Unit	Estimate			Pro- jected 1990	Pro- jected 1995	Annual Growth (%)		
		1980	1985	1988			81-85	86-90	91-95
Total population	millions	53.7	59.9	n/a	65.8	71.7	2.2	1.9	1.8
Total sown area	1,000ha	8,139	8,557	8,845	9,750	10,800	1.0	2.6	2.1
Total grain production	1,000t	14,351	18,231	19,572	20,986	24,042	4.9	2.9	2.8
Paddy rice	1,000t	11,647	15,875	17,014	18,286	20,542	6.4	2.9	2.4
Paddy yield	t/ha	2.1	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.3	6.0	1.8	1.7
Industrial crop area	1,000ha	628	1,010	1,208	1,407	1,747	10.0	6.9	4.4
of which: annual crops	1,000ha	372	600	658	757	1,037	10.1	4.8	6.5
Meat production (live weight)	1,000t	456	747	886	1,150	1,451	10.4	9.0	4.8
Beef	1,000t	65	65	78	90	111	.0	6.6	4.3
Pork	1,000t	292	561	652	800	1,000	13.9	7.4	4.6
Poultry	1,000t	99	121	156	260	340	4.2	16.5	5.5
Fisheries production									
Aquaculture	1,000t	160	230	270	300	350	7.5	5.4	3.1
Capture fisheries	1,000t	399	627	640	700	750	9.5	2.2	1.4
Forestry									
Closed-cover forest area	1,000ha	89	140	128	120	120	9.4	-3.0	.0
Reforestation area	1,000ha	15	14	3	5	5	-1.0	-18.6	.0
Annual cut of logs	1,000m <sup>3</sup>	1,578	1,425	1,301	1,400	1,500	-2.0	-.4	1.4
Nutritional implications									
Energy per capita	kcal/day	1,823	2,025	n/a	2,104	2,436	2.1	0.8	3.0
Protein per capita	g/day	35	39	n/a	42	48	2.3	1.3	3.1
Fat per capita	g/day	12	17	n/a	20	24	6.2	3.5	3.8

## SESSION II

Women in the 21st Century -  
Strategy for Prosperity and Peace - Family and  
Housewife in the Social, Economic and Demographic  
Context Country Papers

<March 4, 1994 9:00 - 11:40>

Remarks by  
Senator Prof. Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn  
Secretary General of AFPPD

Everyone, today is the second day. It is more or less the day for AFPPD. I would like to alert all speakers for country reports that we allow you only seven minutes and you can leave your papers for distribution. So, please bear in mind about the time limit. I would like to convey to you my message as the Secretary General on behalf of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.

Four years ago in March 1990, Women parliamentarians took the first step at the meeting in New Delhi. It happened to be that I was the only man there because President Mr. Sato was not present. As you all know, women plays a very significant role which we society do not recognize at the level it should be done. They are actually responsible for our current status. What we are today is the result of the tender care of our mothers and sisters, who sacrificed a lot for our development. They are increasingly playing an important role in the national political and social life also.

There are times when only a mother's faith can help us  
on life's way and inspire in us  
the confidence we need from day to day.

It is used to be said that women's faults are many. Men has but two. Everything they say is No. 1. Everything they do is No. 2.

Women make up half of the world's population but they are a largely unused resource in some ways - a potential for development that is often entirely ignored, yet investment in women yields high returns both economically and socially. Women are a resource in which it is essential to invest if societies are to grow and develop. As we all realize, good deed is the only investment that never fails.

We are all now geared towards the International Conference on Population and Development to be held at Cairo.

Asian Forum in cooperation with our Inter-American group and APDA of Japan are planning to organize a one-day forum of parliamentarians on population and development at Cairo. Therefore, I would encourage you to get yourself included in the government delegation to Cairo.

As the Secretary General, I would like to thank our host Madam Hao Yichun of China and her colleague for making excellent arrangements. I also thank APDA, UNFPA and IPPF for their continuous support for AFPPD.

This year 1994 - "UN Year of Family"

As I say, a house is made of bricks and stones. Home is made of love alone.

And believe me,  
behind every successful man,  
stands a woman telling him that he's wrong.  
Again - wisdom in the man,

patience in the wife,  
brings peace to the house  
and a happy life.

I wish you all - happiness, happy home and happy family.

Now, it is the official presentation of country reports. We will begin from Australia.



## Country Paper Australia

### Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace - Family and Housewife in the Social, Economic and Demographic Context

by

Hon. Mr. Colin Hollis, M.P.

#### Status of women in the home

Women in Australia remain the primary care givers in families and the main providers of unpaid services, despite 'Sharing the Load' education campaigns. About 70 per cent of unpaid work in the home is done by women, yet women make up 42.1 per cent of the Australian labour force (at December 1993). Thus many women have the double burden of paid and unpaid work.

At the United Nations World Conference for Women, 1985, held in Nairobi to mark the end of the first Decade for Women, the issue of recognition and remuneration for the economic services provided by women at home was strongly canvassed. The issue of including (usually women's) unpaid work in the home in the GDP of countries has been continually raised over many years in countries including Australia.

Despite a focus on initiatives to help women in the work force, such as the provision of quality child care and workers with family responsibilities initiatives, the Australian Government has been aware of the need for support for women who work in the home. From January 1993 social security child-related payments such as Family Allowance and Family Allowance Supplement have been paid directly to the primary carer (98.7 per cent of these recipients were women in 1992). In line with this move, a new Home Child Care Allowance is to be paid to carers of children in the home, replacing the former Dependent Spouse Rebate which until now has gone to the taxpayer, mostly men. This allowance will be approximately \$60 per fortnight and represents a shift from the concept of 'dependency' resented by many hard working women in the unpaid work force. Carers pensions and other assistance are also available to the carers of the frail, aged and disabled.

#### Family structure

Of all Australian families with dependent children in December 1993, 17.9 per cent were one-parent families.

16.0 per cent of Australia's dependent children were in one-parent families in December 1993. Of Australia's one-parent families, 88.0 per cent were headed by a woman in December 1993. Sole parent families are overrepresented in any measure of poverty: for example, 63 per cent of one-parent families were in the lowest 20 per cent of family incomes compared with only 12 per cent of couple-families with children (1986 figures).

In this, the International Year of the Family, attention is being focused on the needs of families with dependent children.

## Rural and urban families

Transport and communications are primary concerns of women in remote or isolated areas, women in suburban areas with young children and women who are carers of frail, aged or disabled. Support for rural women is provided through the rural access program grants for community services, and counselling and other services.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women shoulder a great deal of community and family responsibility. Government initiatives include programs aimed at improving health, education and community facilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

## Family Planning, Australian aid and Population and Development concerns

Australia admits some problems and shortcomings in its own family planning and reproductive rights strategies. Federal and State Government funding is available to Family Planning Associations in each State and Territory to deliver services through the provision of clinical services, counselling and education for clients, and professional education for general practitioners and nurse practitioners. Rather than offer integrated programs to suit the needs of all with a complete range of family planning and birth control advice, Australia chooses to fund separately family planning services provided by the Catholic Church of Australia which are based solely on natural methods of regulating conception. Also Family Planning programs within Australia do not always reach significant major community groups: rural women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women of non-English speaking background are poorly served.

However, the Australian Government recognises that the education of girls and the involvement of women in democratic decision-making are crucial not only to the status of women generally but to long-term population planning issues. This is consistent with the stand taken by the Parliamentarians for Global Action in identifying basic issues at an international parliamentary workshop in May 1993:

Women's education is the single most important variable in population planning. Education affects their social and cultural status as well as their fertility and the health of their children. The right of women to have access to an education needs to be universally recognised.

Australia also recognises that providing women with a choice of quality family planning methods, in culturally appropriate ways, is both more effective in limiting population growth than coercive approaches and more in keeping with democratic and status of women ideals: any development, population and health programs that solicit the involvement of, or attempt to deliver benefits to, communities should be based on the direct participation of women. In particular, they should not assume that information exchanged with or resources delivered to men will necessarily reach women.

Control over fertility is an aspect of reproductive choice and as such is now widely viewed as a basic human right: this realisation is necessary to open up a range of other choices for women. It is thus important from a human rights perspective that development assistance be targeted to ensuring that quality family planning services are made available to even the poorest citizens of the world. It is also important that human rights considerations provide the framework and starting point for nations' population programs and provision of family planning services.

In supporting Australia's contributions to family planning programs overseas, the Chair of the Australian Medical Association and president-elect of the World Medical Association Professor Priscilla Kincaid-Smith has stated that:

The unavailability of contraception in parts of the developing world is not only fuelling the world's population explosion, but is also causing misery for millions of women.

Australia recognises that population programs for the future must acknowledge the close interrelationships that exist between improved reproductive health and choice and women's status, as well as the changing patterns of sexual and family relationships. More than with any other public policy, population policies cannot be successful without the guidance and influence of women. All population strategies should therefore aim to promote equality of opportunity, increase the status and participation of women and broaden the choices available to them - in education, employment, and democratic representation as well as in family planning.

### Conclusion

In every preparatory and expert group meeting, every aid agency and Women in Development document in recent years and every government report, the need for women to play a prominent role and to influence the decision making in these areas is stressed. Yet in the choice of policy makers, representatives and committee members Australia has chosen very few women and often has not given them the major role.

Australia has a total of 841 Federal and State parliamentarians, of whom 128, or 15.22 per cent are women. The Prime Minister has given his support to 'half by 2000' campaign to have far greater representation of women in Australian parliaments.

## Country Paper Bangladesh

### Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace - Family and Housewife in the Social, Economic and Demographic Context by Hon. Mr. Shajahan Siraj, M.P.

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is a developing country of South Asia with a very high density of population. It has about 110 million people, living in an area of 148,395 square kilometers, giving a population density of 740 people per square kilometer. The sex ratio is 106 males for 100 females. Bangladesh has 68,000 villages and a total of 20,187,000 households of 5.44 persons. The percentage of female-headed households may be placed at around 10% of total households.

There are both nuclear and extended type of families in Bangladesh. The former are predominant in urban areas while the latter are predominant in rural areas, where 80% of our total population is living. Families in Bangladesh have recently been subject to change in structure as well as in economic and social functions because of modernization; yet they must educate, train, motivate and support their individual members.

The family constitutes a basic unit of society in Bangladesh, where a housewife or woman can be compared as a nucleus or centre of the unit.

#### STATUS

Unfortunately, an overwhelming majority of women in Bangladesh are illiterate, malnourished, poor and deprived by tradition and culture. They enjoy lower status than men. The discrimination starts at birth and continues through different stages of life. The distribution of authority and assets between sexes are determined by the family organizations and stratification of society.

According to 1989 estimate, only 16% of women are literate in contrast to 30% of the boys and primary school enrollment of boys and girls were 77.7% and 61.4%, respectively. Moreover, the drop-out among female children at the primary stage is twice compared to that of male children.

By tradition, the life of a woman in Bangladesh is shaped by the patriarchal nature of the social system. A women's father or husband, in their absence, son or a male relative, resumes the responsibility of safeguarding her welfare. After marriage, a woman is transferred to her husband's family. In the case of a divorced, widow or abandoned women, the responsibility for her protection reverts to her parents' family. Moreover, where the birth of a son is heralded in muslim families with a loud 'Azaan', the birth of a girl baby is frequently greeted with silence and disappointment.

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Most of the women in Bangladesh are caught between two vastly different worlds - one that confines their activities inside homestead and the other that forces them outside into wage employment for economic survival (World Bank 1990).

In households, women are responsible for preparing food, taking care of members of her family including the elderly and disabled and maintain nutrition of the family. The ideal women, as a housewife, is one who caters to the needs of others, putting herself last.

But, the traditional roles of housewife in Bangladesh are changing fast due to increasing landlessness, poverty and male out-migration. Women are entering the remunerative employment market as a sole or joint income earner of the households. They are now working in diversified fields covering all sectors of the economy. In spite of traditional gender-based division of labour, the involvement of women in post-harvest agricultural, livestock, poultry, fisheries, forestry and off-farm formal sectors is substantial. In urban sectors, women's sectorial activities are concentrated on low-paid informal sectorial activities in recently emerged labour-intensive industries.

In addition, a housewife has to exert her reproductive role as well. To fulfill this role, a daughter must be married off very early and she needs to consolidate her position in the family by giving birth to one or more children.

## RIGHTS

The Constitution of Bangladesh, promulgated in 1972, embodies specific provision for the rights of women in addition to its declaration of equality and justice for all citizens. Article 28 explicitly expresses the equality of the rights of women in all areas of life and prohibits any obstruction to the admission of women to public places and educational institutions.

The Constitution guarantees the rights to practice freely individual religious law pertaining to marriage and family matters. The minimum age for marriage is 18 years for women and 21 years for men. A muslim marriage is only valid if a woman consents to it.

Dowry taking is prohibited by the Dowry Prohibition Law of 1980. But, the Islamic law does not allow women the same right to divorce as men although judicial divorce can be obtained under specific circumstances.

The Inheritance Law which is based on the religious law also deprives women. According to the 'Sharia Law', the daughter inherits only half of what the son will inherit. Moreover, if there is no son, the daughter will inherit only a portion and the rest will be divided into other male relatives.

But in reality, an obvious and significant gap persists between the legal declaration of rights of women and their full realization in daily life due to entrenched opposition of the male-oriented society. Violence against women is commonplace in Bangladesh, in most cases linked with the dowry system. It is an important cause of female morbidity and mortality leading to psycho-social trauma, depression, injuries, suicides and even murder.

## SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION

Very few studies have been done about satisfaction and dissatisfaction of housewives in

Bangladesh. As it appears, the housewives feel mentally satisfied by keeping all the members of their family happy, healthy and prosperous. They think very little of their own. With growing consciousness, only a negligible percentage of women in urban areas think about their mental and physical satisfaction. This consciousness sometimes results in the loss of family peace as the counterpart tends to dominate.

#### FERTILITY AND MORTALITY

An woman in Bangladesh gives birth to 4.3 children in average with a mortality rate of around 6 per thousand. Life expectancy for women is 54 years while it is 56 years for men, reflecting a striking difference between the statistics for men and women.

Around 30,000 women die from pregnancy-related causes every year. Other important causes are septic abortions, haemorrhage, toxæmia and obstructed labour. The high mortality rate results in multiple marriage of husband leaving the lives of children from the first wife into uncertainty and hamper the total family peace.

Generally speaking, women in all the socio-economic groups had lower calorie consumption in terms of their needs than men. In addition, parents take girls to the health centre less often than boys.

Women are the main users of contraceptives in Bangladesh. Age at marriage is one of the important demographic determinants of women's contraceptive and reproductive behaviour, which also shapes the role and status of women.

#### MOBILITY

Diverse phenomena of migration, agrarian change, urbanization and population growth have varying effects on the family. With the trends towards nuclearization and migration from rural to urban areas, many people now feel less responsibility for family relationship. In many cases, the abilities of families to meet basic needs have been weakened by circumstances beyond their control.

Since the 1980's women have started to emerge from the households and join the work force. Women members of landless and near-landless families are being increasingly allowed by husbands or male guardians to take paid employment outside the home.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, all.

## Country Paper China

### The Development and Utilization of the Resources of Women in Beijing

by Ms. Li Qiaoyun  
Chairwoman, Women's Federation of Beijing

Respected Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Parliamentarians,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to have this opportunity to give a brief account about the situation on the development and utilization of the resources of women in Beijing.

The Constitution of the People's Republic of China stipulates in an explicit term that women enjoy equal rights with men in political, economic, social and family fields. The stipulation has put women on an equal footing with men legally and provided the possibility for the utilization of the resources of women. The utilization of the labour force of women has received its due attention, and therefore, women have their dual roles: they are not only housewives, but also an important labour force for social production. The Chinese women have played an increasingly important role in social production and the family life owing to the considerable progress made in the development and utilization of the labour resource of women.

#### I. The Further Development of the Labour Resource of Women in Beijing

Since the introduction of the policy of reform and opening to the outside world in the country, the changes taking place in the relations of production and the continuous enhancement of productivity have pushed socio-economic development to a new level, laying a material basis for improved women's status. As far as the capital Beijing is concerned, there is now a broader prospect for the development and utilization of women human resources. In the urban areas of Beijing, there are 1.733 million functionaries and workers (making up 38.1% of the employed population), which is 361 times the number of the employed women in 1949 and the current employment rate of women is a bit over 65%. Due to the improvement in the educational and professional levels, the number of women professionals in science and technology, medical services and health care, and enterprise management have increased rapidly. At present, there are 3,060 women professors, accounting for 28.3% of the total. In the rural areas, women labour accounts for 79% of the total rural labour force. They are playing a very important role in farming, raising domestic animals and breeding fishes as well as in township enterprises and the diversified family economy. Therefore, women have become a vital new force for the comprehensive development of the rural economy. The women involved in social labour not only double and redouble in number, but also their scope of economic activities extends to all industries and sectors of the national economy.

And moreover, the proportion of the income earned by professional women to the total family income is increasing, which becomes an indispensable source of the family income. The income earned by women makes up 34% of the family income, according to a sampling

survey on 142 rural women. The average monthly income of urban women was 86% of that of men.

The establishment and improvement of the socio-economic status of women enable their family status to be further consolidated and improved. As a result, women are playing an increasingly important role and enjoying more rights in the family.

## II. The Development of the Resources of Women in Beijing Tends to Be More Rational

In recent years, with the continuous development of productivity and the steady improvement of their own quality, the fertility pattern of women in Beijing has experienced a qualitative change from one of early childbearing, births with close spacing and multiple births to one of deferred, spaced and fewer births.

From 1987 to 1988, the rate of first marriage for urban women aged 23 and above rose from 84.5% to 87.7% while that for rural women of the same age rose from 49% to 49.8%. Findings of a survey on childbearing intentions of women show that the proportion of urban women preferring to have one child is 83.4% while that for rural women 78.6%. This is the result of various factors. The educational attainments of women are in a reverse correlation with the fertility rate of women. Women with higher schooling usually bear fewer children while those manual labourers with poor education have more births. Economic development and the improvement of medical and health care are also reversely correlative with the fertility rate. Only when education, medical service and health care, and economy develop to a certain extent and the differences between urban and rural areas are reduced, can people's mentality be in keeping with the trend of the social development and the stabilized and sustained development of families and the society be finally achieved.

## III. Social and Economic Development has brought about a significant impact on the development and utilization of the resources of women

The socio-economic development has accelerated the migration and mobility of women labour and provided guarantee for the wide introduction of continued education for women. Population migration has exerted a significant impact on women and the family. Since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, population migration and mobility, along with the process of births and deaths, have exerted a great impact on socio-economic development in Beijing. The impact of female immigration on the status of women can be perceived from the following facts. Recently, about 63,000 girls from other provinces moved to Beijing and got employed as domestic help in 184,000 families. As a result, more women of Beijing have been relieved from their household chores. Those immigrant got the opportunities to expand the scope of social activities so as to improve their economic self-reliance and independence with more income under their own control on the one hand, and on the other they have raised their own status on the labour market.

Education is another factor of great importance to the development and utilization of the resource of women and plays a positive role in stabilizing the family.

Education can be classified into school education and social education. Social education is more comprehensive as well as more specific. The Women's Federation of Beijing, as a non-governmental organization, has done a lot of fruitful educational work in this area. The Federation has carried out the following activities: 1) "Five merits families" with emphasis on family education in the social context; 2) Dissemination of knowledge about child care and 3) To encourage women to take part in economic development and reform, and to raise their status through learning and working. In this way they will have a deeper



understanding of various policies, increase their general and professional knowledge as well as skills for production so as to make greater contributions to the building of both material and cultural progress of the country.

In conclusion, while efforts are being made to tap the potential of women, there are still some outstanding problems. There are differences not only between the urban and rural areas, between sexes, but also between mental and manual labour. And we have just started to bring into full play the role of women as valuable resources. But with further socio-economic development, there will be further social and intellectual development of women.

## Country Paper India

### Women in the 21st Century - Strategies for Peace and Prosperity - Family and Housewife in Social, Economic and Democratic Context

by

Hon. Mr. Satish Chandra Sitaram Pradhan, M.P.

In the context of the changed international scenario after the end of the cold war, the focus in the ensuing century - the much talked of 21st century - will be on Asia in general and the developing countries in this continent in particular. Inhabiting 60 per cent of the world's population, most of the Asian countries' population continues to grow rapidly despite the avowed objective of almost all these countries to control this growth of population. It is necessary to control this growth to save posterity from facing innumerable problems of inadequate means of livelihood, quality of life and environment. The question that arises in the mind of all right-thinking people is: how can we do it?

Without doubt, "investing in women is one of the most cost-effective ways of promoting development. As mothers, as producers or suppliers of food, fuel and water, as traders and manufacturers, as political and community leaders, women are at the centre of the process of change." (from Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland's Rafael M. Salas Memorial Lecture, New York, 1993).

The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralising the cumulative socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them. The Fundamental Rights, among others, ensure equality before law, equal protection of law, prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and guarantees equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment.

The hierarchical structure of Indian society with diverse and complex socio-economic institutions, organizational patterns and cultural values makes it difficult to introduce uniform policies and programmes to be equally effective on different groups. Therefore, even the planned interventions launched through Five-Year Plans could not bring forth the expected changes in the socio-economic status of women in India. Thus, the situation remained more or less the same till early '70s. It was in the 1971 that a breakthrough was made when a Committee on the "Status of Women in India" was set up to undertake a comprehensive examination of all the questions relating to the rights and status of women in the context of changing socio-economic milieu in the country and problems relating to the advancement of women.

The status of women in society and in the household exerts a powerful influence on her capacity to take decisions about her reproductive health. The complexity of variables which enhance a woman's decision making ability such as female literacy, age at marriage and participation in economic activities has improved over the years.

Some of the more important legislations enacted to make de jure equality of women with men into a de facto one are: the Equal Remuneration Act; Dowry Prohibition Act; Child

Marriage Restraint Act; Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act; Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act; Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act.

The government has also been creating an enabling policy environment in which women's concerns can be reflected, articulated and redressed by the government, the voluntary sector and the corporate world. As part of this effort, the following are some of the more important policy instruments that have been brought forth: the National Plan of Action for Women; the National Perspective Plan for Women (1988-2000); the National Resource Centre for Women; 30 per cent Reservation for Women in Grassroots Democracy (Panchayati Raj institutions).

In keeping with the democratic traditions of the country, the Government has played the role of a facilitator by providing a vast infrastructure of sub centres, Primary Health Centres and Community Health Centres to provide family planning services, thus enabling people to plan their families after choosing a contraceptive suiting them.

The Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-1997) which was launched in 1992, promises to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors do not bypass women, and special programmes will be implemented to complement the general development programmes. Therefore, the flow of benefits to women in the three core sectors of education, health and employment will be mentioned with a greater vigil. Women must be enabled to function as equal partners and participants in the development process. This approach of the Eighth Plan marks a further shift from "development" to "empowerment" of women.

In order to meet both the increasing and challenging needs of women and children, there has been a progressive increase in the Plan outlays over the period of last four development decades. The outlay of Rs. four crore in the First Plan has gone up to Rs. 2,000 crore in the Eighth Five-Year Plan.

The various developmental plans, policies and programmes over a period of four developmental decades have brought about perceptible improvement in the socio-economic status of women in the country. Hopefully the status of women will improve further as a result of governmental interventions and special initiatives pertaining to education, employment, training, health and welfare.

During the remaining years of the nineties and the 21st century the strategy will be to ensure that special programmes with greater gender sensitivity are implemented to complement the general development and family welfare programmes. Employment and income generation activities including self-employment with training for upgradation of skills will be a major intervention for raising the status of women.

There are marked variations in the impact of the Family Welfare Programme from state to state. On one end of the spectrum, there are states like Kerala, Goa and Tamil Nadu, which have performed very well, and on the other are the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan which continue to have high fertility and mortality rates. It calls for concerted efforts to bring about improvement in their demographic parameters. For revitalising the Family Planning Services an innovative approach spread over a period of 10 years is being adopted to achieve the objectives of reducing Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and increasing Couple Protection Rate (CPR).

Although the problems facing poor women in India are daunting, the combined efforts of the government and NGOs have created an ambience of concern for women and heightened sense of gender perspectives. Whether it is education and literacy, health and environment,

sanitation, training and income generation, science and technology, media and advertising or even legislation and judicial reforms, women's concerns are fast getting flagmarked. These issues have not only entered into the rhetorics of planning, but are today reshaping conventional paradigms of development and growth. Today, these have become also part of the global development debate. The challenge before us today is to translate this concern at the level of government and voluntary organizations into a wider societal awareness which in turn can shape praxis at all levels whether the household or society, as a whole.

I want to conclude by adding here what the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, had said about educating women. He had said that if you educate a man, you educate only an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a family.

## Country Paper Indonesia

### Women in the 21st Century: - The Indonesian Family and Housewife in Social, Economic and Democratic Context

by  
Hon. Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, M.P.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Like many other countries of the world, the Republic of Indonesia is going through a process of change unrivaled in its history and profound in its impact, both direct and indirect. For Indonesia the most conspicuous challenge of the last 25 years of the 20th century was building a sense of national identity and creating systems to make possible feeding, clothing, educating and housing its people. The most critical challenges of the first half of the 21st century will grow out of a combination of success (for example, spread of education, health services, dramatically improved physical infrastructure) and “unfinished business” (for example, pockets of hard core poverty which have been resistant to change, unintentional nonetheless real inequities in access to public services, etc.) remaining from the late 20th century.

Addressing problems such as these will be complicated by the disparities in national life and the ever growing ease of international communication and mobility which have led to globalization of the world economy and evolution of an international “pop” culture which influences the Third World as both producer and consumer.

It is the purpose of this paper to review, briefly, the current situation in Indonesia, look ahead to the 21st century and consider how selected trends and patterns will resonate in the lives of Indonesian women and their families and how this, in turn, may influence achievement and maintenance of Indonesia’s long-standing national development goals; equity, growth, and stability (Trilogi Pembangunan). Because of limitations in size it has not been possible to discuss urban- or rural-specific details of women’s lives in the body of the paper. For those who are interested, a set of annexes has been attached with data disaggregated by sex and location.

The ideas in this paper are proposed in the belief that in the 21st century it will not be possible to achieve the peace and prosperity to which we aspire without acknowledgment of gender differences in the family, the community, and in public life which otherwise will continue to limit women and men in their daily lives long after our physical development goals are achieved.

#### II. INDONESIA: now and into the 21st century

Indonesia, with a population of 186,500,000 (Central Bureau of Statistics 1992 estimate) is the fourth most populous nation in the world after China, India and the United States. The country occupies the largest archipelago in the world (13,000 islands) straddling the equator for 5,100 km. between the southeastern mainland of the Asian continent and Australia. Many of the Indonesian islands are volcanic in origin, mountainous and fertile

though some areas (south central and south eastern islands) which fall outside of regular rain zone are barren and dry.

Three particularly significant national phenomena which will influence the shape of society, the economy, and thus, women and family life into the 21st century are demographic change, urbanization, and changes in economy and make up of the work force.

**Population and demographic change:** The population of Indonesia is unevenly scattered across the islands with total numbers of women and men being almost exactly equal. The balance varies considerably from one area to another influenced by both economic and social-cultural factors. Some regions have a tradition of male out-migration leaving women de facto responsible for sustaining family and community. However, in other areas economic pressures sometimes give birth to new patterns of permanent or cyclical (seasonal) migration on the part of men or women or both — a fact worthy of note by those concerned with family and community welfare or the lives and life-styles of women.

A combination of national policy and individual behavior (including widespread acceptance of family planning and postponement of marriage) have combined to initiate a dramatic demographic transition. Within approximately 25 years the shape (age distribution) of the Indonesian population will be radically different from today. Whereas in 1990 11.95% of the population was under 5 years of age and only 3.41% over 65, by the year 2020 it is expected that the per cent of the population under five will have dropped to 6.94% and that of the population over 65 will have risen to 7.31%.

**Urbanization:** Historically, like many other nations in the region, Indonesia was a village-centred society supporting itself with an agricultural economy. However, the transition to a more diversified economic base and more equal distribution of people between rural and urban areas is moving rapidly. In 1961 only 14.5% of Indonesians were living in urban areas, by 1990 the proportion had risen to 30.9% or 55.4 million people, 27.8 million of whom were women. In the decade between 1980 - 1990 Indonesia's annual urban growth rate was one of the highest in the world at 5.4% per year. Authorities agree that some time between the year 2000 and the year 2020 urban population will equal and finally pass rural totals.

The nature of the urban phenomenon and the existence of strong urban ↔ rural linkages have influenced (and will continue to influence) both the process of urbanization itself and, importantly, the numbers of people — men and women — affected directly or indirectly by city life and values.

**The economy and labour force:** A final aspect of the next 25 years which will have profound impact on women and family life will be the changing nature of the economy and labour market, in particular, the increasing feminization of the labour force. Growth in off-farm employment is undergoing rapid expansion and in 1990 "for the first time", the number of women employed in agriculture (12.69 million) was less than those employed in all other sectors of the economy (13.10 million) (ILO 1993). While in numbers women still lag behind men in the work force in the decade of the 1980s rate of increase of women (5.5% per annum) was higher than the men (3.55% per annum). According to the ILO, the increase was especially great among young adult women (age 20 - 39). In addition, it is still generally agreed that there may be some under-reporting of women who are working, particularly women in the informal sector. Notwithstanding various problems with female labour statistics it is clear that there is already a marked trend toward increased female participation in work outside the home and one must assume it will continue, perhaps accelerate still further in the coming 25 years.

### III. WOMEN AND GENDER ISSUES

#### A. The concept of gender:

In discussing women and women's place in the Indonesian society it is important to use the concepts of "gender" and "gender roles" for analysis as well as examining quantitative information about the situation of women and their contribution to the family and national life. The terms "gender" and "gender roles" are used in this paper to refer to the roles, personal characteristics, and behaviors which society assigns and reinforces for men and women in every day life (personal, familial and public lives).

While gender roles in some cases have originated from the biological differences between women and men, over time some of those roles, which were originally functional distinctions, became universal lifelong expectations regardless of whether or not they were still functional. Solidified over time, they become gender stereotypes which are rigid and take on moral value thus they become extremely difficult to change. In the end, they have the effect of limiting life-choices of both women and men.

In a multi-cultural society such as Indonesia (250 languages, 300 ethnic groups) gender expectations are multilayered. There are the specific expectations of a person's ethnic community and religion as well as more broadly held views common to most people in most parts of the nation. While gender roles are always undergoing a process of change and modification as society itself changes, the process is slow, often considerably slower than changes in everyday life. Frustration, friction, even conflict in the household and society can (and often does) arise easily when the demands of every day life and the respective gender expectations of husband and wife no longer coincide, when rhetoric and reality get further and further apart.

In the search for equity and justice both of which are essential to the achievement of peace and prosperity in the family, in the nation or between nations, "gender analysis" — identification of patterns of differences in the experience of men and women in development and their causes — is an important tool. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, gender analysis can highlight problems and help point the way to more effective alternative solutions. In the remainder of the paper we will highlight what we believe to be a number of unresolved gender issues requiring attention in the coming years.

#### B. Extended life expectancy and women:

Life expectancy has been increasing steadily for the past 30 years and will continue to extend in the future. The importance of this fact for women lies not only in the addition of absolute number of years but in the change of the relative balance among the several phases of life. The women born in 1960 (life expectancy 48 years) was of reproductive age for most of her life. In the face of high infant mortality and absence of family planning information and technology many women, perhaps most, would have spent most of their adult lives actively bearing and caring for children.

The woman born in the year 2020 (life expectancy projected as 70 years) will be of reproductive age no more than 1/2 of her life. The additional years, combined with rising marriage age and the control over reproduction made possible by family planning reduces dramatically the portion of a woman's life dominated by her reproductive function. Many girls will have a new more extended period of adolescence and young adulthood before marriage and women may have as much as 30 years after they have completed their active child bearing.

The challenge in addressing this new era is to ensure that whether married or single the years added to a woman's life are years of satisfaction and dignity not years of deprivation, worry, conflict or ill health.

In dealing with these "cycle of life" issues, priority will have to be given to activities such as those preparing pre-adolescent and adolescent girls to deal with as much as 8-10 years of post-school, pre-marriage life as members of family, community, and the work force on their own, not as wives and mothers. At the other end of life there will also be new opportunities and problems for older women. This will be a major change in the social make-up of society and cannot be properly addressed by dealing only with the girls and women concerned. It will also require reevaluation and reorientation of community facilities, social services, systems of recruitment, training, supervision in the workplace, etc.

#### C. Four influential aspects of a woman's life:

As we have seen, social-cultural, political, economic factors in the macro setting influences the lives of women through their effect on natural life (some discussed above) and extension of life expectancy changes the balance of concerns during the life cycle. We believe there are also four particularly important aspects of a girl/woman's personal life which act on her individually and in her housewife role: her health, education, marriage, and employment. These four factors are always in a dynamic relationship as they influence the woman, interacting with each other, and with the macro setting in different ways throughout the life cycle. The situation of the woman can best be understood by visualizing her in the center of concentric circles representing, at the first level, the life cycle, at the second, the four aspects of her life which we choose to highlight here, and the third level, the macro factors.

1. Health: With longer life expectancy, health issues take on particular importance. For at least the next 25 years Indonesia will be facing a full spectrum of health problems — at the one end are problems which may be found in the pockets of poverty and deprivation of extremely isolated rural areas or densely packed urban squatter communities with difficult access to water, sanitation, and health services. At the other end the most modern, urban, industrial problems will arise — toxic fumes, traffic accidents, polluted water and life-styles of opulence, over indulgence, and stress leading to drugs/substance abuse. Finally, there are increasing risks of random violence, particularly in urban areas, stemming from social jealousy, competition for scarce resources and frustration from the exhausting effort to meet urgent daily needs.

Gender constraints to good health maintenance: Maintenance of good health throughout life will become increasingly important as life expectancy is extended. Good physical condition and health-habits will contribute significantly to ensuring comfortable older years. In this regard, those concerned with the health and welfare of women must recognize three gender based obstacles to be overcome:

First, women, particularly more traditional women, are not accustomed or to complain about themselves or problems in their own physical condition. If possible women keep going no matter what. This tradition can have long term detrimental results. Early care and treatment of many conditions (for example, urinary tract infection, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis) is comparatively easy, can prevent much unnecessary suffering, and is highly cost effective. Action later on is often more expensive. If left unattended, the condition may cause irreversible damage.



Secondly, research in Indonesia indicates a discouraging tendency of some health professionals to be little symptoms of physical problems reported by women as “just a woman’s complaint” or “she is just tired” thus reinforcing the woman’s tendency not to take her own problem seriously.

Thirdly, research shows that urban and rural women’s access to information — including good health information — is more limited than men’s. This results in part from more limited mobility, in part from lower educational levels, and in part because gender sensitive health information (aside from family planning and some issues of reproductive health) is, in fact, in limited circulation. For example, information about aging, is scarce even for those seeking it!

These gender constraints to good health development and maintenance will need to be addressed directly among women individually and within their own groups, but they will also need to be addressed within the community and among professional health care providers. Without some change to facilitate women’s more direct involvement in monitoring their own health and taking action to receive assistance when needed investment in health care activities will be less effective and efficient.

New fields demanding more attention: Five special fields of health which will need increasing attention in the next 25 years are

(i) Gender specific occupational health concerns as more women move into the work force and for longer years. Particular attention is now needed and will still be needed in the 21st century to work-related health problems of women in the informal sector where conditions are often particularly hard on woman un-protected by legislation on worker safety and welfare.

(ii) Health problems of aging women: Special efforts are needed to provide women with access to appropriate health information and care relative to their older years. This will ensure their being independent, happy, healthy, and productive as long as possible. Community service institutions, including those concerned with health care, must also be sensitized to the special needs and growing numbers of older women in society if they are to play their role effectively in this effort.

(iii) Violence against women both in and outside of marriage: Little is systematically known about marital violence in Indonesia, but in both urban and rural areas one can find traditions and circumstances which would permit it’s existence — inequities in rights, authority, and autonomy between men and women; the tradition in most communities of women’s silence on marital problems; rapid urbanization with accompanying relaxation of social control and increasing heterogeneity in the community; comparatively high levels of marital instability within poor urban communities. If the popular notions of “the good woman” — the woman whose primary concern is her family and with a man to protect her — do not change, there will continue to be special problems of safety for women of all ages who join the work force. They will be seen as “fair game”, women “falling short of the ideal” and they may be subject to harassment and casual violence on the way to and from work or on the job.

(iv) Drugs and substance abuse: The international literature of development shows this problem to be one that often grows with urbanization. It is particularly evident in the setting of modern life at both ends of the socio- economic spectrum. For the rich substance abuse is recreation — part of a certain “life-style”. For the poor they

provide temporary relief from the frustration and exhaustion of poverty. The negative effects among women are multiple and can be disastrous to the woman herself as well as carried into the next generation by children she may conceive and carry while under the influence. Her immediate family and the community in which she lives are affected as well. From drugs to sex abuse and violence is but one small step.

Little is known about this phenomenon in Indonesia but we would advocate monitoring and research be undertaken to respond quickly if this pattern begins to appear among Indonesian women.

(v) Sexual health of women: "Sexual health" — a field including conventional reproductive health concerns as well as a broad spectrum of physical, social and psychological issues related to sexuality, its management and expression throughout a woman's life time — will become increasingly important in the 21st century. Women need information about the risks of sexually transmitted diseases, including the new threat of AIDS. They need to learn more of "sexual negotiation" and the potential for treatment of problems related to sexual health. A field almost unknown today, we suggest it is one which can make a significant contribution to women's welfare and family life in the years to come. It is a field, however, which should not be confined exclusively to issues arising in the family setting. The primary emphasis should be on helping women understand and fulfill themselves whatever setting they choose.

The housewife as home nurse: Aside from a woman's personal health concerns it is the nature of Indonesian tradition that women bear heavy responsibility for family health (a gender expectation) — ensuring its maintenance and providing care when there are problems. Given women's projected increasing involvement in employment outside the home this is likely to become an area of increasing stress and conflict as women, torn between this gender assignment and the reality of their daily lives. Their productive work may use the same amount of time as their men (or more), but their family maintenance and management responsibility is invariably more time consuming.

In summary, women's health will be more important than less in the 21st century although indications are that the health risks to which women are exposed will diversify — new diseases, new kinds of employment, increased personal mobility, etc. On the other hand many factors — personal, social, cultural, economic — will make it possible for women to become more active in their own health maintenance if we can improve their access to appropriate and effective health information.

2. Education: There are some significant education-related issues which need consideration in looking to the 21st century and considering the family and housewife in the social, economic, and demographic context.

Educational enrollment of boys and girls in primary and high school is quite similar through the gap between boys and girls increases as one moves from primary to high school. In junior high school there is a gap of 3.9% in favor of the boys. By senior high school the gap has grown to 6.6%. At university the gap is greater still and the completion rate of boys is higher than girls.

Given the existing national commitment to full education one can assume that female enrollment rate will continue to improve. The primary concerns about education as

we approach the 21st century thus are not issues of enrollment, rather they are concentrated with the skills and values consciously or unconsciously taught.

Gender and education: Bearing in mind the demographic and economic changes which are underway one concludes that the content and experience of education must be directed to giving or assisting girls and young women to acquire the skills, values, and confidence they will need for a longer life. In most cases much of it will be spent married and as part of the productive work force (formal or informal); some of it possibly without a male partner because of postponement of marriage, divorce, abandonment or death. A few women begin to opt for the single life but all indications are that for the foreseeable future that will be a rare pattern. In short, women of the early 21st century will need to be accomplished managers to juggle the competing demands of their lives as well as be self confident members of society moving in a more dynamic and unpredictable world than their mothers or grandmothers.

Accomplishing this goal will necessitate on-going curriculum reevaluation and enhancement of opportunity for girls as well as boys — appropriate training for the full diversity of the existing and projected job market. Boys and girls must both learn new attitudes, patterns of behavior and interaction if the family is to survive the challenges of the 21st century, including employment by both husband and wife; and if Indonesia is to make the best use of existing human resources. One important place to start learning and practicing is in school.

Continuing education for women: A gender-sensitive approach to education will also provide to women expanded opportunity for continuing education. Experience in many parts of the world has been that in any society there are significant numbers of gifted women who by force of circumstance (for example, early marriage, loss of supportive parent, unexpected pregnancy, etc.) are unable to finish school in the normal course of events. Programmes of continuing education make it possible to go back to school for professional reasons, for personal fulfillment or some combination of the two. For Indonesia such programmes will be of great importance in the 21st century.

While changing notions of gender will call for involvement of many components of national life, the family and experience in school will be the primary, and for many, the decisive influences. we should argue that the educational establishment, thus, has particular responsibility for helping address this social issue directly and creatively, for helping to provide new flexibility to allow evolution of new gender roles for the benefit of both wife and husband.

3. Marriage: Research into Indonesian women's attitudes and expectations in life has shown commonalty across social classes on the issue of marriage. Nearly 100% of women, in fact, hope and expect to marry and assume that with marriage goes primary responsibility for child rearing and homemaking. Given the importance of "family", as a widely held social value in Indonesia, it seems likely that marriage will continue to play a central role in the life-span of most young Indonesian women well into the 21st century. However, urban or rural, most young women will enter marriage later than before and together with their husbands, they will choose to have a smaller family than a generation ago.

In contrast to the marriage age which seems to be changing, there is, thus far, little sign of any change in the traditional household division of labour. Men are expected to do the best they can to provide economically for their family. Women are

expected to care for the family and take on extra work if one income is not sufficient to meet a family's needs. The importance of her earnings gives most women little latitude to choose whether or not to enter the work force. In some ethnic communities the women control the money they bring into the house and research invariably shows it goes to improve the quality of family life — better nutrition, home repairs, etc. In some area, however, all family money is turned over to the man.

Marital stability: Bits of research and public records indicate on an anecdotal basis that some women are running out of patience with current patterns and more women dare "take action". They choose divorce as a better alternative.

Research suggests that causes for separation and divorce among urban couples vary at different socio-economic levels. One study among upper and middle class Jakarta women indicated difference of opinion between husband and wife over roles and responsibilities within marriage were a significant casual factor for divorce. In poor urban communities marriages seem to be entered and dissolved somewhat more casually. In fact, there are indications that marital ties are often relatively loose and that woman may not always be certain of their marital status.

Indications are that whatever the socio-economic status of family, women on their own — whether through divorce, abandonment or death — tend to end up carrying the heavier burden after the husband is gone. They are left managing children as well as meeting financial obligations. Furthermore, in the middle class, where divorce is more frowned upon, loneliness and social disapproval are often added to the other burdens. In poor families where a dual income was essential to staying above the poverty line family welfare can be the immediate victim.

Statistics suggest that men seem to suffer less and certainly more briefly from the collapse of marriage. They almost universally remarry and start a new family.

Women heading households: Divorce, long term migration of husbands for employment (or other reasons), casual abandonment and death all add to the total number of women living without male partners at any one time. Numbers of divorced and widowed women are higher in rural areas but their percentages are higher in urban areas. Often they function as household heads. This seems to be particularly true among older women who have been widowed and for some combination of reasons choose to form their own household.

A landmark study of women heading households (1991) found city life made it more possible for both married and unmarried women to become heads of household. Having examined various aspects of the families headed by women, their ethnic origins, means of support, etc., the study concluded that poverty was the outstanding characteristics of women heading households when compared with men in the same situation. These findings would indicate special attention should be given to any emerging pattern of single parent families and special assistance provided in order to avoid such families becoming nothing more than a launching pad for hard core poverty in the 21st century.

How the current more conservative Muslim resurgence will change or reinforce traditional views on women, family, and home making is not yet clear nor is it yet predictable how wide its influence will be.

For Indonesia, the early years of the 21st century will be important. There is considerable consensus — popular and in national policy — that the family is the essential building block of society. On the other hand, as we have seen, economic, educational, and socio-cultural changes are introducing strains into that institution. The conflict between the notions of what is “good and right” and the way a married couple must live life will introduce tensions into personal and family lives which are resolved only at considerable emotional and psychological cost, sometime with a loss of self esteem by one partner or the other. The tensions may, in fact, disrupt the family or affect the health and productivity of family members.

Recognizing the importance of this issue, the fact that the basic work of development progresses unevenly, and the necessity to know, on a family basis, what has been accomplished and what remains to be done to achieve the level of family welfare to which the nation aspires, Indonesia has developed and is now using a new system for data collection and mapping family welfare status. Criteria for measurement have been grouped at five levels — (1) families which have not yet been able to meet basic physical needs; (2) those which have met those physical needs but not yet the basic social- psychological needs including education; (3) those who have achieved the welfare goals of 1 and 2 but have not yet fulfilled all “development needs” including the ability to save, good access to information; (4) those who have achieved a full level of internal family welfare but are not yet contributing to the community either personally or materially. The final level to be achieved includes both fulfillment of internal family needs and active participation in community affairs — recreation, religion, social welfare, sports, etc.

This new “tool” holds great promise for promotion of family welfare and reinforcement of the family as the primary unit in society as Indonesia enters the 21st century.

4. **Employment:** For most married women who work — regardless of whether employed in a high priced profession or squatting by the roadside selling beetle nuts — a woman’s productive life is second only to marriage in influencing the shape of her personal and family life. It limits how she uses her time and, in return, it may give her some money and some self respect. On the other hand labour force statistics and studies of women’s employment tell us that most conspicuous characteristics of women’s employment are that, in general, women tend to be employed in lower status work and receive lower pay than men for the same work. Much of the work which women perform is monotonous (factory work), dangerous (working with chemicals or producing organic), degrading (prostitution), or physically exhausting (heavy market work, endless piece work), etc. All of these characteristics have negative impact on ability to create and sustain a good family experience.

Worries of working women: The two most perennial problems for working women in Indonesia (as elsewhere in much of the world) are (i) inequities in compensation and advancement and (ii) worries related to child care — what is to become of the child while mother is working? These two problems have been with the working poor since time immemorial though they were seldom articulated. Only recently, as general educational levels have begun to rise and professional women have suffered the same problems in their work have they risen to the agenda of development problems to be addressed.

A third issue related to women’s employment bears careful monitoring — the growing international flow of Indonesian [women] workers through both formal and informal

channels. The implications for the women, themselves, and the families from which they come and to which they return are not all positive. If the women are well and regularly paid there is economic benefit. On the other hand, the situations to which they go are difficult to monitor and the potential for exploitation and abuse is ever present. Unlike the men who almost always go in groups, women generally go into unskilled, personal service positions where they are alone, often know no one and have few allies. Nonetheless, in Indonesia the outflow women formally registered as contract labour is considerably higher than that of men.

Studies of the international labour market seem to agree that the informal flow of women to take employment in other countries, particularly countries within Asia region far outstrips the formal contract labour and the risks, in turn, are also higher. Projections are that with the growing labour force and limited job market, there will be a steady supply of women ready and able to go, particularly, those who have less education and no marketable skills.

We are confident this is not a problem for the women of Indonesia, alone. We would suggest, therefore, that the issue of the conditions of international contract labour by women might be taken up for further consideration and action among Parliamentarians and ultimately governments in collaborations with appropriate international agencies.

In short, as we enter the 21st century there are a number of key issues related to women's employment and home life: the structure, nature and compensation for the work; the circumstances (from the family perspective) time away from home and the need for child care; inequities in advancement and the pattern of women's involvement in low paying, low skill, low status, unregulated work.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A strategy for prosperity and peace in the 21st century must be built up to encompass many aspects of national life and ultimately provide a framework for dialogue both internally and internationally. In this paper we have focused attention specifically on the Indonesian woman as housewife and examined briefly the complexity of her life as she juggles her productive and reproductive responsibilities. Based on this survey of her situation and review of national development projections into the 21st century we offer a set of recommendations to guide Asian Parliamentarians in an effort to help reorient people and systems to a more gender sensitive understanding of development.

##### A. WITHIN PARLIAMENT

As Parliamentarians it is important that we inform ourselves and our fellow Parliamentarians of the real situation of women as citizens, as members of the labour force, as housewives; that we sharpen our own understanding of gender issues (regardless of whether they originate in national policy or popular opinion or somewhere in between) which hamper women in their efforts to advance their own welfare and that of their families. Finally, as representatives of the people we need to raise in public fora and with the press questions highlighting the situation of women. In this way we hope to help narrow the gap between the rhetoric of women's programmes and the reality of women's lives in Indonesia and Asia, today and into the 21st century.

## B. LOBBYING/ADVOCACY WITH GOVERNMENT

Within the context of our on-going dialogue with government two clear messages must be given priority:

- > Integration of women not separate programme: Gender issues cannot be fully and accurately understood or women effectively reached if separated from the rest of the community. The women who are our concern, their families, and their lives are embedded in society. Equity is their right as full and valuable members of a complex society. "Women's" programmes should be replaced by gender-responsive activities.
- > Support doesn't burden the women: Programmes intended to help women in their daily lives must be designed with them giving full honor to the priorities they identify. Only in this way can we avoid burdening women with new and irrelevant activities which waste resources and fail to achieve their objectives.

## C. OTHER ALLIES: domestic and international

- > Research about women and their lives: There is much we do not know about how women live their lives, how they experience their womanhood in the midst of the multiple productive and reproductive tasks which make up their lives. Research has an essential role to play in developing new and more effective ways to work with the women of Indonesia as we move into the 21st century and help them to improve their daily lives and those of the communities in which they live.
- > Disaggregated data on women: Indonesia is fortunate in the existence of a data base on development much of which has for many years been disaggregated between urban and rural communities and in recent years has been disaggregated by sex. We recommend that creation, collection and dissemination of such data be strengthened and expanded.

## D. TO PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ASIAN REGION

- > Legal review and reform: Let us make common cause on behalf of the women in our respective countries. Specifically let us initiate a review of law to identify gender-specific impact of law which disadvantage women and, to propose reform, as needed. I urge that we exchange information, insight, and experience. In this way we will build new bridges of understanding among our countries thus strengthening the basis for regional peace and prosperity and benefiting women and their families throughout the region as well.

## V. CONCLUSION

The peace and prosperity of nations depends on the peace and prosperity of their people individually and in the family. This paper has presented a brief overview of the situation of the Indonesian women and some threats to her peace of mind and physical welfare in the social, economic and demographic context of daily life. We have highlighted particularly the tension between her productive and reproductive life and suggested various steps which need to be taken to address these problems as we enter the 21st century.

In facing this task Indonesia is fortunate to have just launched a new nationwide programme for promotion of family welfare. This programme will provide a logical vehicle for examination on the local and individual family level issues such as those we have identified

and make possible an effective search for solutions at the level of the individual women and her family.

Our study has made clear that rare, indeed, is the full time housewife — the working wife will be the woman in center stage in the 21st century. As representatives of the people we Parliamentarians must stand with her, feet firmly planted in the reality of today and together work for a more equitable, humane, and caring society in the future.



## Country Paper Japan

### Japanese Family and Housewife in Social, Economic and Democratic Contexts

by

Hon. Ms. Kayoko Shimizu, M.P.

#### 1. Changes in Japanese family

##### (1) Changing family structure, smaller families, increased aging

In the course of many changes and development of economy since the end of the Second World War, the Japanese family has entered a stage of low fertility and low mortality. With large families on the decline and increased nuclearization and aged single households, the family structure has changed dramatically. In 1992 there were 41.21 million households in Japan consisting of 2.99 persons on the average. The breakdown of household structure shows that nuclear family and single household are on the rise while three-generation family on the decline. It is no longer tenable to expect child-rearing support from grandparents or to have generations of wisdom passed down. For example, aged persons above the age of 65 years old account for 80.7% in three-generation households while they account for 20.8% of single households and 17.0% of nuclear families suggesting that in every type of household one can see that the problem of old age is serious.

##### (2) Marriage, childbirth, late marriage, rising divorce rate and declining fertility

In 1992 the average age of female first marriage was 26.6 years old, the highest to date. The man's was 28.4 years old. Single status for those in the first half of the twenties is 85.0% and that of the second half of the twenties is 40.2%. The late marriage and the decline in the rate of married women in their twenties are said to be the main reasons for low fertility. As a consequence total fertility rate (TFR) is down to 1.50. There is even radical prediction that if the TFR will continue to decline at this rate in one hundred years the Japanese population will be half of what it is today. Average number of children born per couple remain unchanged at 2.2. A survey of wives indicate that while the "ideal number of children is three in reality (they) will have two". The reason cited are: high cost of child-rearing, high cost of education, physical and psychological burden of child-rearing, small living space, as well as impediment to career. It is necessary to provide economic assistance during child-rearing and improved social services.

##### (3) Working wife ... more wives at work than at home

According to a 1992 survey, the women's labor force is 26.79 million accounting for 40.7% of the total labor force. Women account for 38.6% of the employed. The characteristic of female labor is that it is older and more educated. (ratio of those entering university or junior college: female students 40.8%, male students 37.0%) Approximately one third of female wage earners are engaged in part-time work, working less than 35 hours a week, and two thirds are engaged in the services and other tertiary industry with a growing rate. Working wives (16.63 million) are greater in number compared to those who stay at home (15.53 million). Women's labor force participation by age shows, as in

figure 1, a typical M curve implying that women return home for childbirth and rearing and returning to work after completing child-rearing. In a sense the pattern demonstrates the difficulty of women managing both marriage, child-rearing and career.

In the rural and farm areas approximately 60% of the agricultural work, 30% of the forestry work and 20% of the fishery work is borne by women. Most of these work are family operated and lack protective regulations which are routinely provided by employers. They are usually overworked and not properly appreciated for their contribution to farm management. They are not given opportunities to speak up in public and are kept to relatively low social and economic positions. Families and villages have strong conventional attitudes towards fixed division of labor between man and woman. All in all social participation of rural women lag behind their urban sisters.

- (4) Division of family responsibilities ... most housework borne by wife, economic independence of working wife

According to a survey of married couple, most of the house chores; namely, cleaning, washing, shopping, preparing for meals, cleaning up after meals; are responsibilities of wife. Wife also bears greater burden of child-rearing and nursing and caring. Although Japanese are working shorter hours today, husband has not changed his pattern of life centered on work, many still work long hours and return home late and not a few are posted to work areas alone without accompanied by family. In other words, husband is hardly sharing family responsibilities. Even in double-income families it is the wife who assume heavier family responsibilities. Working mothers hope that their husbands will share in "disciplining of child", "overseeing academic work", "developing neighborhood relationships" and particularly "cleaning, wasting, and cleaning up after meals". In many families it is the wife who "manages household finance" but "important decisions" are made by husband and he also possesses "overall real power in the family" showing that traditional division of labor between husband and wife has changed little.

Among men 89.8% said they were "economically independent" whereas the number was 58.6% for women. While there is a wide discrepancy between man and woman, economically independent women are on the rise. The older they are, the greater the independence. Working wives are also increasingly becoming economically independent.

- (5) Attitudes towards marriage and family ... are fixed attitudes changing?

"After all woman's happiness lies in marriage and she should get married" — this is a notion supported by 78.2% of woman and 81.5% of man. Incidentally more single man and woman, compared to those with spouse, were negative about this concept.

"Husband is the bread-winner while wife is the home-maker" is a notion supported by 55.6% of woman and 65.7% of man. Compared to a similar survey in 1979, less number of both man and woman was supportive of the idea. In 1979, 70.1% of woman and 75.6% of man answered in the affirmative.

"Getting married does not necessarily mean having children" is a notion supported by 32.2% of woman and 28.6% of man. In fact 59.0% of woman and 63.4% of man were against the idea. Those who answered in the affirmatives belonged more in the young singles for both man and woman.

While the traditional notion of "woman's place is in the home and man, at work place" is still rooted deep in the society, it is nonetheless changing with times. The change of

attitude is particularly hopeful among the young.

## 2. Sound family and the role of wife

### (1) Needed improved family policy ... not just for woman but for the whole family

The 1975 United Nations Year of the Woman has provided a turning point in improving the status of women, with the revision of their legal discrimination. Their working environment is also improving. With increasing number of women receiving higher levels of education, many married women are actively participating in society. Wives who are not gainfully employed are also active in participating in sports and fitness activities, cultural and learning courses, volunteering in environmental and consumer protection movements or organizing class reunions. While the Japanese wife has successfully adapted herself to social changes, husband is unable to change his work-centered, company-centered life and takes no part in house-keeping, child-rearing or nursing and caring the old and sick. The society does not provide sufficient services in these fields. Under the circumstances it may be only natural for woman, who today enjoy meaningful career and freedom, to hesitate to give those up and commit herself to marriage. Improved family policy is urgently required so that both married man and woman can be fulfilled in family as well as at work and young woman can positively consider marriage and child-rearing as part of her life design.

With the objective of reducing annual working hours down to 1,800 by the end of 1996, a 40 hour work week will be adopted beginning this fiscal year. This is good news to working woman and it is hoped that this will give man an opportunity to enjoy family life.

The 1992 Child Care Leave Law applies equally to both man and woman but partly because it is without pay, it is mainly woman who takes the advantage. It is expected that in the near future the child care leave will be a paid leave and there will be waiver for social security premiums during the period. In addition there will be improvements in child-care facilities. Operating hours will be extended in general and nurseries will be established within work places. Mothers will be actively building local networking to provide mutual support and there will be improved consultation services for mothers who need them. Subsidies are provided for children up to the age of three (a monthly allowance of 5,000 yen for the first two children and 10,000 yen each from the third child).

Nursing and caring for the old is increasingly a major family problem in Japan. While efforts are being made to improve hospitals, aged persons' institutions for those requiring long-term medical care, old people's facilities for those requiring special care, facilities for short stays and day-care centers, and beginning fiscal 1992 a visiting nurse services for old people living at home, both the number of facilities and the quality of visiting home-care services are far from satisfactory. This year marks the mid-point in the ten year program for the elderly people's health and welfare and the whole program is currently under review. Nursing leave has not been enacted yet but there is a guideline which gives corporations an opportunity to provide it as necessary. The tax system is also being studied with the objective of reducing family burden of children's educational expense.

### (2) Encouraging pride and joy of motherhood — child-bearing sex

There are many who believe that "whether or not to bear child is a private matter, not something for the government to intervene in order to increase fertility". Rightly so. Unfortunately, however, not all women are proud of their biological sex; not all women have sufficient knowledge with regard to child-bearing. There is little tradition in Japan

for families to discuss matters relating to sex. The subject is not sufficiently addressed in school education. Today in the absence of mothers who can share their experiences of pregnancy and child-birth, many women are insecure about motherhood. There is a need both in the public and the private sectors to provide sensitive services to help women, who have little experience of pregnancy and child-birth, understand biological functions of their body, provide necessary information with regard to family planning, pregnancy and child-birth and support during childbed and child-rearing.

It is expected that the size of family will further be reduced with increasing number of single households. Women will be increasingly expected to cultivate her proud heritage of womanhood, pass it on to posterity and to continue to play an essential role of managing the spiritual and physical needs of her family.

Country Paper  
Republic of Korea

Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace

by

Hon. Ms. Sun Young Kang, M.P.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

It is indeed a great honor and pleasure to be here in Beijing for the 10th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development timely held in tune with rapidly changing 1990's. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Hon. Fukusaburo Maeda, Chairman of Asian Population and Development Association, and the Hon. Zhao Dongwan, Chairman of the Educational, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress of China, as well as those involved in the preparation of this meeting for their energy and efforts devoted.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The status of women is steadily advancing with the rapidly changing international society and quite properly we have selected the issue to be discussed today and in the following APMPD Meetings. Needless to say, the theme covers a great range of fields, and I would like to discuss the present status of women in the Republic of Korea and present some options for the 21st century as well as the new position women are expected to play then.

Today, Korean women are playing active roles in all areas of society including political, economic, social and others. Though the proportion of women's participation in society has increased dramatically in the recent years, comparatively, their status still lag behind.

First, allow me to discuss the role of women in the policy-making process of our country. Undoubtedly, in order to reinforce the role of women in this area, parts played in the respective fields of politics, administration, economy and education must be expanded. It is true that women's participation in these fields have steadily increased over the years, however, their participation in the policy-making process have been limited. For this reason, women's demands haven't been fully reflected in our policies and further, proper policies for women have not been implemented.

Though the number of women in politics is far less compared to the number in other countries, it is true that political activities of women have been triggered with a renewed political consciousness in women. For example, with the launching of the present government in 1993, three women were appointed to ministerial posts and interests in women's policies in the different political parties have been elevated. Higher posts in civil service held by women only reach to 1%; however, family welfare bureaus have been newly installed in 15 city and provincial organs and women have been appointed at the head of these bureaus, seeing to it that policies for the benefit of women are properly carried out.

Second, when we examine the participation of women in the economic sector, much change has occurred as of the 1980's, especially when it comes to employing women in

work force. The number of working single woman has shown a decline over the years, but the number of married woman in the working field have steadily increased during the past ten years. If this trend continues, by the year 2000 we will be able to see a variety of working conditions besides full-time employment. The demand for women workers in specialized or clerical jobs will steadily increase and new as well as flexible forms of employment like part-time jobs or in-home employment will be seen in the future, and we are working toward this end as well.

Finally, in the educational field, as of 1990 the percentage of women in universities constituted 45% of the entire student population. Of these 30.9% are in undergraduate and 22.5% are in graduate levels. Though these numbers indicate a definite increase in both quantity and quality, the general trend is still quite discouraging. Moreover, there still exist tendencies of discrimination in the education content as well.

It is anticipated, however, that educational opportunities for women will further expand in the future. In addition, as the people's awareness to eliminate factors that hinder cultural as well as educational development spread, it is expected that discrimination in this area will be wiped out. Accordingly, a new kind of problem in which the employment of women of higher education is expected to emerge.

Fellow parliamentarians!

The year 2000 is not merely a date in the future. It has a special historical meaning for it culminates one century while opening another. Especially for the advancement of women's status, the 21st century is an era of new challenges and possibilities and toward this end, there is a greater demand for proper preparation.

In order to set the direction and objective for the enhancement of women's role in the future society, it is essential that a collective body to study this matter is institutionalized so that the management and use of the present system relating to women is properly examined, comparing with systems of other advanced countries. This is the only way to secure equal opportunity and treatment.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

For women to be able to play their proper part in society, we must start with those present here today. We must open our hearts and share our experiences, information and funds in order to join together their potentials and efforts. In this manner women can be a leading force in the future that will not only build a greater Asian society but also a more prosperous global village.

Thank you very much.

## Country Paper Malaysia

### Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace

Status and Role of Women in Development and Family Welfare  
by  
Hon. Ms. Siti Zainab Abu Bakar, M.P.

#### STATUS OF WOMEN IN MALAYSIA

Malaysian women who constitute about one-half of the population and account for one-third of the labour force have an important role to play in the family, society and the economy. As such, greater attention has been given to ensure that their intelligence, skills, abilities and potentials are tapped to the fullest.

The Government has long acknowledged the significant contribution by women to overall national development and peace. In view of this the Government formulated the National Policy on Women (NPW) in December 1989.

NPW overall objectives are:

1. to ensure equitable sharing in the acquisition of resources and information as well as access to opportunities and benefits of development for both men and women, and
2. to integrate women in all sectors of national development in line with their abilities and needs in order to improve the quality of life, eradicate poverty, abolish ignorance and illiteracy and ensure a peaceful and prosperous nation.

The National Policy for Women essentially articulates the Government's commitment towards facilitating the participation of Malaysian women in the social and economic life of the nation.

The Sixth Malaysian Plan states:

“the Government is committed towards the effective involvement of women in overall national development. In recognition of the crucial role women play in family development and their increasing participation in economic activities, the Government will continue to support programmes that strive to facilitate the role of women both within and outside the family. As women constitute a vital economic resource, the Government's goal, therefore is to integrate women as equal partners in nation building”.

The key factors in the NPW and the Sixth Malaysian Plan are:

- to integrate women in all sectors of national development.
- the role of women both within and outside the family.
- equal partners in nation building.

In view of the above, the major thrust of the Government's efforts will be towards ensuring that future policies and programmes are designed to facilitate the more effective participation of women as partners in social and economic development.

## EDUCATION

The educational achievement of women has improved considerably over the years. Women benefit from equal access to educational opportunities at primary and secondary levels of education. In terms of tertiary education, female intake in universities constituted 44% of total intake during the Fifth Malaysian Plan period with female students making significant inroads into areas like medicine, dentistry, engineering, architecture and accountancy.

## HEALTH

Since independence Malaysia has achieved tremendous success and rapid advancement in the health sector. The life expectancy for female increased from 65.6 in 1970 to 73.4 in 1991 as compared to males which increased from 62.2 to 69 for the same period.

The maternal mortality rate has declined significantly from 7.9 per 1,000 live births in 1970 to 0.20 in 1990.

It can be concluded that the state of health of Malaysian women today is a fairly positive one. Health-wise they have made great progress.

## LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Malaysia has achieved rapid economic development in the last three decades. Women who account for about half of the population constitute one-third of the country's labour force.

This indicates that women play an active role in the socio-economic development of the country through various economic activities.

In terms of occupational structure, women are largely concentrated in low-skilled, labour intensive jobs in the agricultural sector and in low-paying semi-skilled, assembly type production operations in the industrial sector. In 1990 even though 9.4% of women were in professional and technical occupations, the majority of them were in teaching and nursing. Their participation in administrative and managerial occupations was also less than 1%.

The number of women who have seriously entered the business world is however on the increase.

As the government is fully aware of the economic potential of women in economic activities, there are plans in the Sixth Malaysian Plan to "promote human capital enhancement programmes aimed at improving their occupational status".

These will include:

1. skill training and retaining programmes.
2. opening of opportunities in non-traditional occupations.
3. increasing intake of female students in vocational and technical education in order to increase the number of female workers in higher-skilled and better paying jobs.



Other considerations to be looked into are:

1. the needs of disadvantaged women in particular in female-headed household.
2. equipping women with marketable skills to improve their human capital and to facilitate access to employment and income-generating activities.
3. provision of support facilities for working women, such as child care centres.

## LAWS AND LEGAL RIGHTS

1. Political and Administrative Rights.

Women in Malaysia have had political and administrative rights since the country's independence. These rights are guaranteed by the Federal Constitution which does not differentiate between male and female citizens. Women may hold political and administrative office and can participate in local government.

2. Rights Relating to Employment.

Women's participation in the work force is regulated by laws that apply equally to both sexes, with some provisions to protect women, particularly those concerning night shifts and hazardous occupations. For women in the private sector, the Employment Acts 1955 makes provision for maternity leave up to 60 consecutive days with maternity allowances.

The Income Tax Act 1967 also makes provision whereby women have the option of separate or joint assessment and can incorporate income from all sources for tax purposes.

3. Family Law.

One of the major advances for non-muslim women was the passing of the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976. The Act protects women from the injustices of the previous laws on marriage and divorce. It abolishes polygamy, prescribes a minimum age of 16 years for marriage and provides for compulsory registration of all marriages.

With regard to Muslim women, the Islamic Family Law Enactment has given more rights and benefits to protect, upon divorce, Muslim women and their children.

4. Laws Relating to Rape.

To further safeguard the interest of women and to protect them against abuse, reforms to laws relating to rape was passed in 1989 whereby mandatory sentences of not less than 5 years and up to a maximum of 20 years can be imposed as a deterrent to crimes against women.

5. Women's Image in Media.

To safeguard women's image in media, laws were passed relating to selling, distributing, exhibiting, producing and possession of any obscene book, pamphlet, paper, painting of figure whereby a mandatory 3 year imprisonment could be imposed for such offenses.

## 6. Domestic Violence.

The issue of domestic violence is a subject of serious concern in Malaysia. A new act on domestic violence is now being called for to provide more protection for women who normally are victims of such violence.

### FAMILY WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

In view of the important role of women in family welfare and development as well as their increasing involvement in the various economic sectors, efforts were made to educate the Malaysian public on the benefits to society when both men and women share family responsibilities.

In addition, the significant role mothers play towards moulding future generations of progressive citizens bring to the forefront the need to equip women with sufficient resources and skills.

Towards this end the Government through relevant agencies conducts courses on family life, parenting and counselling techniques as well as implemented programmes related to the promotion of happy families through family togetherness.

Economic development, changes in social norms and shifts in public policies have brought about significant changes in the status and roles of women in family, society and economy.

The role of women are multi-faceted. Apart from performing their traditional roles within the home as wives, mothers and home-makers, with the increase in the level of education more and more are now involved in economic activities.

As women now contribute more towards the household economy, they are more likely to participate in household decision-making with respect to spending, acquisition of property, children's education, family size, family planning, social activities and migration. Women also play a major role in caring for young and old including supervision of children's daily activities and social work.

Consequent upon social changes, there has been significant shifts in the marital structure and family formation. The improvement in the status of women has brought about postponement in the age at marriage and a transition to smaller family size. Self-arranged marriage is also found to be positively related with urbanisation and higher education.

Entering into wage employment often means that women would have to assume double workload, that of the family and the work place. The increase in female labour force participation has affected the availability and quality of care for the young and old members of the family. Coping with the multiple functions women are expected to play put considerable strain on their time and energy. Women who come from middle class households may be able to employ another woman to take over some of their domestic responsibilities but women who come from poor households have to carry the double burden of full-time work and full-time housework. Women who find it difficult to balance their role of career and housewife may either leave their jobs, find other ways of coping or continue to work but consciously lower their opportunities to promotion to posts which may be more demanding.

With better education, more and more women are participating in family migration-decision. Many of the younger women are involved in autonomous moves. Rural-urban migration is

on the increase as people will move if they can increase the present value of their future income by an amount greater than the cost of moving, the inconvenience of settling in an unfamiliar environment, such as loss of contact with friends and adjustment difficulties in a new place.

In view of the important roles of women in carrying out household responsibility and decision-making, they must be provided with the skills and resources to enable them to play their part in enhancing family welfare and to nurture a progressive and quality future generations. In this connection family development activities, including home economics and parenting skills, currently being carried out by various government and non-government agencies are being further intensified. Effort is also being made to sensitise men of their roles in sharing household responsibilities.

The family is the basic unit of society. In view of the structural changes in the roles of women from traditional to modern sector, trends in marriages, family formation, the changing structures and functions of the family must be monitored with appropriate programmes to determine the actual and potential roles and status of Malaysian women as equal partners with the men in national development and family welfare.

The Malaysian branch of APFPD intends to conduct own survey on the successes of various programmes implemented to promote advancement of women. Malaysia which is currently facing labour shortage encourages population growth. The country's population presently stands at 18 million. We hope to increase it to 70 million by the year 2020.

Country Paper  
New Zealand

Women in the 21st Century  
- Strategy for Prosperity and Peace

by

Hon. Ms. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, M.P.

Introduction:

New Zealand, where I come from, is a nation which arose as a direct result of the Treaty of Waitangi signed on 6 February 1840 between the British Crown and indigenous Maori chiefs - both men and women.

Subsequent immigration has brought new settlers from many countries - among the first being from China. They have proven to be an industrious people and one of our brilliant women barristers and policy analysts is a Chinese woman, Mai Chen; her husband, incidentally, occupies a high position in our country's Treasury.

So, although strongly bi-cultural between Maori and British and Maori/English bi-lingual, our community has people from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

So, at the very beginning of my address, I want to reflect on a Maori proverb which, translated, says: To progress with some certainty, we should look back to see what has been learnt.

In Maori language: Me titiro whakamuri tatou kia mohio ai me pehea haere ki mura.

As I do not want to be either egocentric or offensive, I will look at a Greek comedy written about 413 BC. This was not long after the catastrophic defeat of the Athenian expedition to Sicily, and shortly before the revolt of the Four Hundred in Athenes, whereby an oligarchic regime ready to make people with Sparta was set up.

The heroine is Lysistrata. It is about the seizure of the Acropolis and of the treasury of Athenes by the city's women who, at Lysistrata's instigation, have, together with all the women of Greece, declared a sex strike until such time as the men will make peace. The women defy their menfolk until the peace is arranged, and so a conference of both sides follows. Lysistrata scolds them all and urges reconciliation and peace is made; after which both the Athenian and Spartan wives are reunited with their husbands.

Fellow Delegates: Here is a lesson on how women can bring peace to the world. Essentially, by realising our own strength. We have unique qualities to bring to the situation - but first, we must have our own self-respect. And, next, use our common sense, compassion - and then our intellect.

Last year, in Hanoi, Viet Nam, the New Zealand delegate said that,

"One of the strongest building blocks of a healthy society is a population which is able to take decisions from a position of informed understanding.

John Blincoe went on to say that, in simple terms, we who are legislator Parliamentarians, "...must get basic education of all - especially to the women and adolescent girls with whom lies the answer to total fertility levels and population numbers."

He correctly observed that raising the status of women is critically important.

I am proud to point out to this Conference that New Zealand was, in fact, the first nation to give its women the vote - in 1893.

In the present New Zealand Parliament, we have 21 women who comprise 20.79% of the total.

As one who was the first woman Cabinet Minister of Maori descent, I know how women can have a stabilising influence in Cabinet, simply by asking: "What effect will this policy have on families?" It is a simple question with a salutary effect, believe me.

#### Population:

Women are the majority sex in New Zealand. Of all people resident in New Zealand at the 1991 census, 1,711,371 or 51 percent were female and 49 percent male - the difference amounting to an extra 48,800 females. This numerical predominance of women over men, which first occurred in 1968, is projected to continue into the first part of next century. By 2031, women are expected to outnumber men by 83,000.

#### Demographic Patterns:

The increase in the proportion of women in the population that has occurred in New Zealand this century is similar to that which has occurred in other developed regions such as North America and Europe. This increase is due to the aging of the population and women's greater life expectancy.

In 1971 the median age of the female population was 26 years. By 1991 it had increased to 32 and it is projected to reach 41 by 2031.

The increase in female life expectancy this century is due mainly to a transition from infectious diseases to degenerative diseases (eg heart diseases, cancer and cerebrovascular disease) as major cause of death. This has resulted in an increase in life expectancy generally and for women in particular. In 1985-87 life expectancy at birth was 77.1 for females and 71.1 for males, a difference of six years compared with a difference of four years in 1950-52. This gap is increasingly due to higher male mortality at older ages.

The major causes of death contributing to these differences in mortality between women and men are ischaemic heart disease (heart attacks) and accidents. Behavioural factors such as smoking and risk-taking (eg recklessly driving, drinking and driving, and physically risky recreational pursuits), which play a major part in early deaths from these causes, have traditionally been more common among men than women. As well, estimates suggest that women have a biological advantage which accounts for about two extra years of life when compared with men. This higher life expectancy for women means that the excess of women over men in the population is particularly marked at older ages. Among children under 15 years of age, there are more males, reflecting the fact that more boy babies are born. In 1991 there were 96 girls for every 100 boys aged under 15 years. Thus, from age 25 women begin to outnumber men (105 to 100).

## Maori Women

The proportion of women and girls who are Maori has also increased, from 6 percent in 1891 to 13 percent today.

## Aging of Population:

The female population has an increasing proportion at older ages. The proportion of women aged 60 years and over has increased from 4 percent in 1891 to 17 percent in 1991.

Table 1

Birthplace of Women Born Overseas		
	1891	1991
British Isles	87%	45%
Australia	7%	10%
Europe	3%	8%
Pacific Islands	—	19%
Asia	<1%	12%
Other	2%	6%

## Public Life:

The direction of change in society is often influenced by the decisions of a relatively small group of people who hold public office. Women throughout the world have traditionally been poorly represented in the ranks of power, policy and decision making.

## Parliamentary Elections:

As I have already noted, New Zealand was the first country in the world to give all women the right to vote in parliamentary elections. It did so on 19 September 1893 with the passing of the Electoral Bill. Two months later on 28 November 1893 women went to the polls for the first time to elect members to the House of Representatives. In the short time available between being granted the right to vote and the general election, 109,500 women or 79 percent of the total estimated female population eligible to vote had registered on the electoral roll. Of these women, 85 percent voted.

Maori women took an active interest both in Maori politics and the causes espoused by 19th century Pakeha women, including women's suffrage and temperance. In May 1893, the year after the establishment of a Maori Parliament (Paremata Maori), Meri Mangakahaia of Te Rarawa presented a motion seeking the right for Maori women both to vote and be selected as representatives in the Maori Parliament. Four years later in 1897, in addition to having the right to vote for members of the House of Representatives, Maori women won the right to vote for members of the Maori Parliament.

In 1894, the year following the granting of women's suffrage, the first attempt was made to obtain the right for women to stand for Parliament. This took the form of a private member's bill, the Parliamentary Disability of Women Abolition Bill. The bill lapsed in the committee stages. Over the following years several unsuccessful attempts were made to enable women to enter Parliament. Finally, in 1919, the Women's Parliamentary Rights Bill was passed in the House of Representatives, allowing women to stand as parliamentary

candidates.

The first women candidates stood for Parliament in the 1919 general elections. However, it was not until 1933 that the first woman, Elizabeth McCombs, was elected to the House of Representatives in a by-election.

In 1947, Mabel Howard became the first woman to serve as a cabinet minister when she was appointed to the Health and Child Welfare portfolios.

Women in Politics in New Zealand:

There are no seats reserved for women.

Women have held the following major Cabinet portfolios: Environment, Finance, Health, Social Welfare and Police.

The New Zealand electoral system includes representatives of general electorates and the four Maori electorates. This month and next, Maori themselves are having the first chance to increase this number up to their population in the total New Zealand electoral population. This will depend on how many opt for the Maori roll instead of the General roll.

The geographically largest Maori electorate has been served by a woman Member of Parliament for the last 26 years, the Hon. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, who has previously held the Environment and Tourism portfolios.

Maori Women MPs:

In 1949, the first Maori woman, Iriaka Ratana, was elected to a Maori seat in Parliament.

In 1967, the first Maori woman to become a cabinet minister was elected, and became a Minister in 1972. In 1974, the Hon. Mrs. Tirikatene-Sullivan became the first Minister for the Environment in the world. (It is that woman who is presenting this paper!)

Though a handful of women have been elected in every succeeding election, there have only been 44 women elected to Parliament in New Zealand; 28 of these have been Labour MPs, 15 National MPs, and one Alliance MP.

Up until 1972 only 11 women had been elected to seats in Parliament, eight through by-elections. Of these eight, four replaced family members in the same electorate. However, since the mid-1970s, the growth in women's participation in parliamentary elections has been much more rapid. Not only have more women offered themselves for selection, but they have formed an increasing proportion of office-holders. In 1975, for the first time, four women were elected to Parliament during the same period. This figure doubled to eight in 1981, and by 1984 the number of women holding seats in Parliament had increased to 12, rising to 14 in 1987 and 16 in 1990.

The most successful general election yet for women was in 1993 when they took 21 of the total 99 seats.

In addition to improving their representation in Parliament in recent years, a growing minority have been successful in reaching the higher echelons of power.

Prior to 1984, only three women had ever served as cabinet ministers. One of these was

Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan who in 1972 became the first Maori woman to be appointed as a cabinet minister.

By 1989, there were five women serving on the front bench. In the same year, New Zealand's first woman Deputy Prime Minister, Helen Clark, was appointed, achieving the highest political office held by any New Zealand woman. In 1993, she became the Leader of the Labour Opposition.



## Country Paper Philippines

### Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace

#### Status and Role of Women in Development and Family Welfare by Hon. Congressmen Mr. Margarito B. Teves

Distinguished parliamentarians, ladies and gentlemen.

Filipino wives' contribution in generating livelihood has increased. However, the husbands' share in child care and house work has not grown as matched. Wives still do three times more child care and four times more house work than their husbands. In the rural areas, women who work for income exceed the number of working hours of their husbands. There is even less sharing of domestic responsibilities between husbands and wives.

In those families where both husband and wife work, the number of working hours increases as their income increases. In families with higher income where both husband and wife work, there is more equitable sharing of the domestic chores.

The level of education is a major factor in determining the equality and sharing of economic and domestic responsibilities. There is a better sharing of domestic responsibilities in households where spouses have more or less the same level of education.

As the number of children grows, urban wives sacrifice their jobs to take care of the children and house work. For rural wives, on the other hand, child care and house work suffer since their contribution to income generation is crucial.

Husbands and wives work an equal sharing of domestic responsibilities. In smaller families, husbands contribute to child care and house work and realize better the importance of family planning.

Let me also summarize the paper presented by Senator Shahani, the sister of the President, to the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, a few years back on the status of policies and legislation on women.

The 1987 Constitution recognizes the role of women in nation building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men. Regarding equality within marriage, the salient point is that the new family code allows a woman to engage in any occupation without consent of the husband or over his objection. However, the law does not absolutely equalize the position of men and women in the case of disagreement over administration of conjugal property; the husband's decision prevails. On family formation, there is a Presidential Decree which obliges applicants for marriage license to receive family planning instructions and information on responsible parenthood consistent with the policies of the Population Commission. On divorce and legal separation, with respect to concubinage to be a crime, concubinage must constitute: (1) keeping a mistress in

conjugal dwelling, (2) having sexual intercourse under scandalous circumstances with a woman other than his wife, and (3) cohabiting with a woman in another place. However, there is now a pending Senate Bill which will remove or minimize this inequality on marriage. This Senate Bill stipulates that concealment by the husband of the fact of having children with another woman before the marriage should be a ground for the wife to ask for nullment of the marriage. Regarding employment, there are laws that require the employer to allow the nursing mother at least one-half hour twice a day during her working hours to nurse her child. With respect to equal pay for equal work, wage differences between the sexes are still apparent. To a certain extent, this can be attributed to the norm that husbands are wage earners while women's jobs are mainly marginal or peripheral and their wages are supplementary to that of husbands. Finally, in the case of education, a higher education, as we all know, is associated with lower fertility and vice versa. Women's education, late marriage increases employment opportunities outside home. Thus, it is an effective development approach towards regulating population growth of the country.

In summary, we see the increasing importance of women in our society, in politics and in our respective households. We have seen it through the increasing number of women gaining employment opportunities and contributing to the family income. In politics, you know that we had a first lady President sometime ago. We now have 20% of the Senators who are women. The Philippine Legislators Committee on Population and Development, which is a strong advocate of population and family planning, is co-chaired by two women, Senator Shahani and my colleague in the House, Congresswomen Oreta. Even in our respective household, the speaker of our house is a woman. She is my wife.

## Country Paper Singapore

### Family and Housewife in the Social, Economic and Demographic Context - The Case in Singapore

by  
Hon. Mr. Chay Wai Chuen, M.P.

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Singapore is a multi-racial, multi-cultural city states with a population of about 2.8 million. 78% of the population are Chinese and they form the major ethnic group. The Malays and Indians make up 14% and 7% respectively while the other ethnic groups make up the remaining 1%.

#### 2 The Contemporary Family

- 2.1 The family is regarded as the building block of the Singapore society and a high premium is placed on its well-being. The family plays a primary nurturing role in the upbringing of the young. It plays a key role in the transmission of values, knowledge and wisdom from one generation to another.

- 2.2 As in most societies, the Singapore family has faced tremendous pressure in having to cope with the rapid changes brought about by industrialization, rapid economic development and technological improvements. Today, about 85% of the families are nuclear families and traditional Asian values are subjected to some of the eroding influence of the media.

#### 3 Trends affecting family life

- 3.1 The Government has identified three worrying trends related to marriage and birth which need to be addressed as they erode family life. These are:  
(a) more singles,  
(b) rising divorces; and  
(c) fewer children.

##### (a) more singles

- 3.2 There is a growing proportion of single women aged 35 years and older. In 1980, it was 5.3%. In 1990, it was 8.3%. Most of the single women have secondary and post-secondary education. Most of the single men have no secondary schooling.

##### (b) rising divorces

- 3.3 Although the divorce rate is low compared to other more developed countries, the rate has doubled in the past decade, from 3.8 (1980) to 6.3 (1992) per thousand married female resident population.

##### (c) fewer children

- 3.4 Family size is getting smaller. In 1980, the average household size was 4.9. In 1990, it was 4.2. Women and men are delaying their marriage. The average age at marriage rose from 24.8 and 28 years in 1982 to 26.7 and 30 years in 1992 for women and men respectively.

- 3.5 Married women are also having fewer children, from an average number of 3.4 in 1980 to 2.8 in 1992. Women with little or no education have more children than better educated women. Women with no formal schooling produced 2.5 times as many children as those with tertiary education. The ratio rose from 2.8 in 1980 to 2.9 in 1992.

#### 4 Integration of women's progress in society

- 4.1 Women constitute almost 50% of Singapore's population and form an integral part of the country's human resource. They have contributed to and benefited significantly from the country's progress.

- 4.2 This paper sets out the following:

- a) status, rights and responsibilities of women including homemakers or housewives;
- b) effects of marriage, fertility and employment on family life.

- 4.3 It will also cover how Singapore provides the environment to foster this integration and enable the woman to make her choice, ie to be homemaker (or housewife) or to be directly involved in the economy.

#### 5 Status and Rights of Women

- 5.1 Women's rights in Singapore are ensured through legislation and education, provisions in employment and health care, marriage and divorce.

##### Women and Law

- 5.2 The Women's Charter which was enacted in 1961, protects and safeguards the rights of women and is the most important piece of family legislation. It lifts the barriers towards the attainment of an equal partnership between husband and wife. Among its wide range of provisions, the Charter:

- a) outlaws polygamy;
- b) gives equal rights and responsibilities to both husband and wife in the management of children and the home;
- c) entitles the wife to a share of the matrimonial property even though she may not have contributed directly to it financially;
- d) makes it obligatory for the husband to maintain his wife and children during marriage and upon divorce;
- e) protects the wife and children from a violent husband to the extent of removing him from the matrimonial home.

##### Women and Education

- 5.3 Singapore's education policy provides equal opportunities for both sexes. This policy has not only ensured parity between the sexes in school enrollment but has led to an increase in the number of girls enrolling in tertiary institutions. Female enrollment in Universities and Polytechnics to 40.9% in 1991/1992.

##### Women and Health

- 5.4 Singapore has attained parity with the advanced industrialised countries in the health status of its population including women. Female life expectancy has now reached 75 years. Rates of infant mortality and maternal mortality have improved. Compared with 1980, the rates fell from 11.9 to 5.0 per thousand for infant mortality and 0.05 to 0.04 per thousand for maternal mortality in 1992.

### Women and Employment

- 5.5 The Employment Act ensures that women are not discriminated against in recruitment, promotion and in terms of employment. There are also provisions in the Act for maternity leave and on dismissal of women on grounds of pregnancy. The principle of equal pay for equal work adopted by Government for the Civil Service since 1962 has set the guide for employment practices.

### 6 Effects of marriage/fertility

- 6.1 With improved education, greater access to employment and rising aspirations, women have delayed their marriage and childbearing. The Total Fertility Rate exhibited a downward trend since the 1960s and hit the replacement level of 2.1 in 1975. It has remained below this level since then and declined to a historic low of 1.4 in 1986.

- 6.2 In 1987, the New Population Policy with a package of incentives to encourage higher fertility was introduced with the objectives of reversing the low fertility trend and increasing the number of births and the average family size. The message of the New Population Policy is "Have three or more if you can afford it".

- 6.3 Incentives given under the New Population Policy include tax incentives, subsidised child care fees, priority in public housing schemes and special schemes for married women in the Civil Services. (More details on these incentives are in Annex A.)

- 6.4 To reverse the late marriage and childbearing trends by secondary and tertiary educated men and women, the Government launched two programmes ie:

- a) match-making services provided by the Social Development Unit and the Social Development Section;
- b) public family life education programmes which promote healthy family life.

- 6.5 The New Population Policy has produced some results and the Total Fertility Rate has stabilised at about 1.8 births per women. The number of births has increased to about 50,000 per year, with the increase coming mainly from third and fourth order births. A bigger share of this increase are born to those better educated. However, the rate is still behind the replacement level of 2.1 in 1975. The average number of children born per married woman has fallen from 3.4 in 1980 to 2.8 in 1992.

- 6.6 The success of the New Population Policy has been hindered by several obstacles. These include (a) an increasing proportion of unmarried adult population and (b) continued delay in marriage and childbearing. The Government will continue with its efforts and monitor the impact of the New Population Policy.

### 7 Profile of Homemakers

- 7.1 In Singapore, the homemakers category refers to persons who are engaged in household work without pay. Housewives make up the majority in this category. About 85% of female homemakers in 1990 are married.

- 7.2 In comparison with 1980, the number of female homemakers dropped in 1990 by 1.6%, a decrease of more than 6,000 (from 375,200 to 369,100). The sharp drop was more evident among those aged 20-29 years, 8% (from 75,800 to 45,100). Those aged 30 to 39 showed a moderate increase of 4% (from 98,600 to 111,600).

- 7.3 Of the 369,100 female homemakers in 1990, 18.5% of them (68,400) had at least secondary education; an increase of 11% from 1980. Homemakers or housewives

contribute to “home goods” as opposed to “market goods” in the nation. Examples would include cooked meals, disciplined children and clean homes.

## 8 Employment or Homemaker

- 8.1 Studies have indicated that retaining woman in the workforce continues to be a problem despite the fact that the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFP) has been increasing steadily over the decade, from 44.3% (1980) to 51.3% (1992).
- 8.2 In the National Survey on Working Mothers (1986) which interviewed 3,000 married women, 93% of those who stopped working, cited child care, marriage and household reasons for their stopping work.
- 8.3 Regardless of whether the woman works or not, women’s involvement in household chores is still high as borne out by the 1989 survey on 500 Married Women in Public Housing initiated by the Singapore Council of Women’s Organisations, Singapore’s umbrella body for women’s organisations.
- 8.4 According to a 1992 International Labour Organisation (ILO) Report, men all over the world are not doing enough housework and working women have to juggle family responsibilities with work. The fact that women drop out of the labour force in Singapore also indicates that the domestic role of women takes precedence over the economic role.

## 9 Push for Employment

- 9.1 Statistics from the Singapore Labour Force Survey Report of 1992 showed that out of the 41,700 economically inactive persons who indicated that they intended to join the labour market within the next two years, 78.4% (32,700) were females. They were mostly housewives, aged 30-49 years and had secondary education or below. 80% had worked before and 41% preferred part-time work.
- 9.2 The National Trade Union Congress (NTUC) embarked on a “Study of Flexible Work Arrangements in Singapore” in 1992 which determined whether economically inactive women would enter the labour market if they were provided with suitable work arrangements.
- 9.3 Its survey of 500 non-working women aged 25 to 54 years indicated that home-based, part-time work and flexible working hours could entice women not intending to go back to the workforce to return to it. For younger women, suitable child care alternatives will enable them to continue to work. For older women, training and skills retraining would help.
- 9.4 The NTUC plans to work with the National Productivity Board, the Skills Development Fund and employers to establish an agency to help women go back to work. This will include providing training courses and helping employers to look for women with the qualifications they want.

## 10 National Priority

- 10.1 In 1985, an Economic Committee was appointed by the Government to identify new directions for future growth. In its report, the Committee noted that the projected decline in Singapore’s population and labour force growth will seriously limit the GDP growth rate. It noted that besides increasing business and labour productivity, indigenous manpower supply should be increased by:
  - a) increasing the female participation rate, and

b) encouraging older workers to remain in the workforce.

10.2 Measures recommended by the Committee included setting up more child care facilities at affordable prices and encouraging part-time employment. These measures have been implemented.

## 11 Programmes for Women and Families

11.1 The Government is cognizant of the multiple roles women have to undertake and the challenge faced by them. Mindful of these challenges, the Government has undertaken several measures to enhance women's economic participation. These include:

- a) a government support scheme for the development of child care centres under the Ministry of Community Development to meet the child care needs of working parents and to help to facilitate the entry and retention of women in the work force. In 1993, there were almost 340 child care centres providing a total of 25,200 places.
- b) child care monthly subsidy scheme of S\$130 per child for working mothers to defray part of the cost of child care when they place their children in child care centres;
- c) Parent Education Programmes to assist parents in parenting their children;
- d) Family life education programme aimed at school children and the general public to create awareness of changing values and expectations, to promote the concept of shared responsibilities of both sexes and to promote marriage and responsibilities of both sexes and to promote marriage and responsible parenthood as desirable goals in life and to strengthen family values;
- e) programmes and services for the care of the aged and disabled dependents;
- f) special schemes in the Civil Service for women which include:
  - no pay leave for child care for mothers to care for children below the age of 4 years, without a loss of status upon resumption of work;
  - part-time and flexible hours in the employment scheme for female employees with children below 6 years;
  - full-pay unrecorded leave of 5 days in a year for female officers to look after sick children below 6 years of age;
  - tax relief for aged and handicapped dependents at S\$3,500 per case from the Year of Assessment 1991; and
- g) "Guidelines on Part-Time Employment" to give employees the flexibility to offer part-time work schemes and to safeguard the basic benefits of part-timers.

## 12 Conclusion

12.1 In sustaining full employment, the Government is mindful that the family remains the basic unit of the Singapore society. The Government will continue to take steps to promote marriage preparation and encourage employers to support family life programmes at the work place.

12.2 For most men and women, work and the family are equally important. With industrialisation, work outside of the home has become increasingly important for both husband and wife. The challenge for most families is how best to balance work and family life.

- 12.3 It will take the combined and persistent efforts of men and women in every position of influence to enable men and women to balance their responsibilities so that they can enjoy fulfillment from both work and family life. Workers, employers, community leaders and policy makers will continue to play their roles. Ultimately, women themselves have to make the choice and decide whether the benefits outweigh whatever cost and effort are required in a particular situation and stage their life cycle.

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## Annex A

### CURRENT INCENTIVE MEASURES UNDER THE NEW POPULATION POLICY

- i To reduce the burden of childbearing:
  - Normal child relief of \$1500 for the first 4 children.
  - Enhanced child relief for first 4 children for working mothers with 3 “O” level passes and above. The quantum of relief is higher if the child is below 12 years of age.
  - Special tax rebate for new 2nd, 3rd and 4th order births.
  - Further tax rebate in lieu of paid maternity leave for new 3rd and 4th order births.
  - Subsidised child care centre fees for the first 3 children of a working mother.
  - Use of Medisave for delivery and hospital expenses for the first 3 children.
  - Delivery and hospital expenses of the 4th child subject to a maximum of \$3000 can be offset against the parent’s earned income.
  - Priority in HDB housing allocation for upgrading is given to families with 3 children.
- ii To deter high order births by the less educated and low income:
  - Accouchement fee for the 4th child related raised to \$1000 irrespective of class of ward, and to \$1300 for 5th and subsequent children.
- iii To encourage married women working in the public sector to have more children:
  - Special child care leave provisions for married civil servants with children below 12 years of age (no-pay leave, part-time employment and sick child leave).
- iv To prevent early sterilisation:
  - Pre-sterilisation counselling to all women with less than 3 children.
  - Waiver of accouchement fee is only allowed if the mother is sterilised after 3rd or subsequent children.
- v To discourage abortions for special reasons:
  - Compulsory pre-abortion counselling for married women with less than 3 living children, and post-abortion counselling for all women.

Country Paper  
Sri Lanka

Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace

Sub-subject: 1994 Family, Household and Wife

by

Hon. Dr. Neville Fernando, M.P.

The influence of Buddhism prevails in Sri Lanka and in every buddhist home the mother is worshipped daily. At 6 p.m. every day on TV is shown the children worshipping the mother and father. The prayer, thanking the mother for sustaining him/her for 10 months in the womb and feeding them with her milk (converted from her blood). Thus, from early childhood a child is taught to love, honour and respect the mother. This tradition has given a superior place to women in society.

Legally, all citizens of Sri Lanka are equal irrespective of their sex, caste, creed, etc. Thus, there are no legal barriers to women to do what they want in Sri Lanka. Politically, women were granted universal suffrage in 1931 together with men, long before countries like England. Thus, Sri Lanka was the first country in the world to produce a woman Prime Minister. India, Israel, U.K., Pakistan and Bangladesh followed later.

To come to the top, as everyone of us knows, in politics dominated by men is a very difficult task.

The first woman Prime Minister took office on a wave of sympathy for her assassinated husband. She lost the next election, but came into power battling the male-dominated opposition.

In the household the mother not only look after the children, but also runs the house, balancing the budget and attending to the education of the children. She teaches the children and cares for their health. She, it is who first treats a child who falls sick with home remedies. By precept and example, she leads the children to become useful citizens.

In poor homes, still the mother is the “hewer of wood and drawer of water”. Where water is difficult to come by she walks miles to draw water and collect firewood. Long hours are sometimes spent near community taps to collect water given at fixed times in the day. Young children accompany the mother and very often the elder sister takes the place of the mother. This girl child at times has the same responsibilities of mother specially if she is dead or gone for employment.

There are the white collar workers from middle class families. These women who work either in the private sector or government are educated up to year 12. They generally work as clerks.

The professionally qualified women compete with men and are equally treated. They serve as doctors, accountants, engineers, lawyers and in other professions like banking, finance and administration.

Nearly 30% of the workforce in Sri Lanka are women so that their contribution to the economy of the country is considerable.

Majority of young women today are not satisfied, unless they have a job, and towards this end they attend classes to enter a university. Others qualify to be secretaries, computer operators, clerks, etc. Literacy among women is about 85%. Therefore, one could say that there is an ongoing battle to climb up the social ladder at all levels among women. In this, some are disappointed while some succeed.

The above scenario is generally in urban areas. In the rural areas where living conditions are tougher, the women has to bear the brunt of the work.

She often gets up early in the morning, cooks the meals and accompanies the husband to the fields. She tills the soil and tends the cattle, walks miles to collect a pot of water. She also has to collect firewood. The older children accompany her.

In the Northern and Eastern part of the country where terrorists are active all work for the day ceases fairly early. The mother accompanied by the children go to a common place where the army affords their security. The terrorists often ransack their houses, plunder them and set their houses and belongings on fire.

In the border villages life is unbearable. Often there is shortage of food and medical needs are not attended.

Up to date nearly 12,000 civilians - Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims have been killed by the terrorists. These terrorists collect funds in Western countries which give them asylum.

The bitter war costs the government nearly \$400 million a year. This money could have been put into better use if there is peace.

Urbanisation of rural areas are taking place at a steady rate. Vast extents of forest cover and coconut lands have been exploited for human settlements.

While this may be a sign of progress, the forest cover has now diminished to about 25%.

About 50 years ago the effect of marriage on women was debilitating as there was no family planning. The rural women after regular conception and delivering child after child were anaemic and subject to various infectious diseases and complications of pregnancy.

Over the last forty years due to spacing of children and use of contraceptives, the quality of life of women has improved with a life expectancy reaching nearly 76 years.

Due to the fact that women attend college and university the age of marriage is now about 28 years from an earlier age of 18 years. In the married life they have only 2 - 3 children. But the ideal should be 1 to keep the population increase down. Fertility is reduced by late marriage and use of contraceptives - oral and otherwise and sterilisation.

Marriage in Sri Lanka is taken very seriously and is meant to be life long. The marriage ceremony itself can be considered in two parts. The first is the religious ceremony which involves the blessings of the Gods while the second part conducted by the Registrar of Marriages is the legal requirement.

Though it is customary for the parents of the bride to give a dowry to start the new couple on a new way of life, this practice is now dying away. However, virginity in a woman may either make or break married life.

Unmarried mothers, though they are accepted by society, are not considered as good examples. The institution of marriage is still held sacred.

Since 1950 successive governments have encouraged family planning so that the growth of rate has come down to 1.2. However, in actual numbers 250,000 are added to the present population of 18 million annually and by the year 2000 Sri Lanka would be faced with a population of 20 millions and all the problems attending it.

The total fertility rate (TFR) is about 3.

Maternal mortality is less than 80 per 100,000 due to very good antenatal care provided by antenatal clinics conducted by doctors, nurses and midwives not only in recognised hospitals but also in the villages.

Of late, with women going to the Middle East for employment, there has been a serious disruption of family lives.

Husbands have committed suicide and wives have returned in coffins or children are neglected and husbands have become wayward. Often the returning wife finds the husband living with a mistress.

While some families have done extremely well with the money earned, others have been left destitute, especially where, due to ill treatment by the householders, the woman returns before settling loans taken to purchase a job abroad.

No in-depth study of the problems has been made, but the sociological problems are tremendous.

## Country Paper Thailand

### Role of Women in Population and Development in Thailand

by

Hon. Senator Dr. Uthai Sudsukh

#### 1. Introduction

Thailand, a country of 514,000 square kilometers, is in the centre of continental South-East Asia. The population is 57.8 million with a growth rate of approximately 1.3 percent per annum at present as a result of the effective National Population Policy and the Family Planning Programme started in 1970. The trend of population growth is gradually declining with a target of about 1.2 percent per annum by the end of 1996. In 1990, Crude Birth Rate and Crude Death Rate were 17.0 and 4.5 per 1,000 population, respectively, whereas Infant Death Rate and Maternal Death Rate were 35 and 0.4 per 1,000 live births, respectively, in 1989. The Average Life Expectancy for males was 62 and for females was 66 years during 1985-1990. Besides, there have obviously been demographic changes in sex-age structure of population distribution or population pyramid. Proportion of children has been reduced compared to the increase of adult and old-age population groups and female population is slightly more than that of males. However, the differences between regions especially the southern and north-eastern still show high proportion of children with malnutrition and infectious diseases.

With regard to socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental changes, Thailand has experienced a period of rapid economic growth during the past two decades particularly from 1987 to 1991 with average annual growth of GDP at over 10 percent. However, the income distribution between the rich and the poor, the urban and rural has been widening. At the same time, there is increasing migration from rural agriculture labour force to urban industry or industrial zones. These have resulted in changes of social values, consumption behavior, life styles, working competition and being "nuclear family" instead of the previous "extended family". These changes adversely effect various problems of socioeconomic and environmental conditions such as accidents, violence, poor sanitary living conditions, mental disorders, drug addiction, prostitution, AIDS, heart diseases, cancer, etc. Environmental pollutions, whether they be water, air, soil, or noise and deforestation and drought, have certainly caused the problem of imbalanced ecology. Currently, it should be mentioned here also that the nature of economy has changed from "self-reliance" to "market and industry" oriented economy as well as more globalized in terms of trade, foreign investment and tourism.

In the context of women issues, the question arises as to how women have participated in and benefited from the recent Thai development with their opportunities and problems. Thai women's strengths and capabilities in population and development have consistently been acknowledged. But, the nature of the obstacles and constraints to be overcome and removed as Thailand undergoes rapid change need to be analyzed and further developed in the future in order to achieve equality, peace, quality of life and sustainable development. This paper is intended to merely touch on some interested aspects of the women issues.

## 2. Women and the Economy

It has been realized that women contribute substantially to the national and local economy, although this is often invisible as much of it takes place in the informal sector. Their role is regrettably underrated by official computations. Their contributions are not sufficiently recognized in national statistics. For instance, domestic chores and unpaid labour tend not to be included as "employment" even though they provide inputs into the national economy equivalent to a type of employment.

The changing face of the economy has witnessed parallel changes in the role of women, at times leading to exploitative situations. Because of economic needs, many women have to undertake increasingly a triple role in daily life; child care, agricultural work and other work as supplement or alternative to agricultural work. The latter is reflected in the rise of women in the industrial sector. It is accentuated by the influx of women into the service sector. The linkage between this sector and the sex industry highlights a national dilemma.

## 3. Women and Employment

The pull of women from rural areas to enter the industrial and service sectors has given rise to a number of problems leading to exploitation of women and children. This includes insufficiency of education and access to occupational training, lower wages than those received by men, earlier retirement age as compared to that of men, and a diminishing decision-making role within the family as the pattern of the economy changes as well as other forms of discrimination of employment particularly in the informal sector. Serious forms of exploitation are identified with prostitution and labour rights of women without guarantee.

Measures required for improvement include elevation of the quality of life, satisfaction of basic needs, more equitable access to education and a longer period of education beyond compulsory six-year education. These would need to be coupled with more occupational training for women and girls and more social awareness of the need for equality in employment, among all groups. Relevant laws need to be reformed and enforced more seriously to protect women against discrimination.

## 4. Women in the family

The importance of the family and women's roll in the family has been well accepted. Current economic needs push members of the family out into the employment market even at an early age. Such pressure leaves little room for the sustenance of family relationships unless countermeasures such as assistance for needy families are promoted. There is a shift from the extended family to nuclear family. The imperfections of the family system may give rise to gender discrimination; boys are often given priority treatment in education and other opportunities and domestic chores tend to be delegated to girls rather than that of the mother alone. Not only is lack of care and time accorded by many fathers to their families a serious concern in family relations but also drunkenness on the part of some fathers leads to family violence, child abuse, sexual promiscuity or AIDS problems.

Measures for prevention and correction of the family problems include, for example, education to promote gender equality within families, counselling, greater openness in promoting sex education. Legal measures are required to prevent bigamy. Development subsidies for needy families are urgently required to prevent the decline of the family system.

## 5. Women and Politics

Although women have enjoyed universal suffrage in Thailand since 1932, this is far from reality, and women's participation in politics, particularly in parliament itself, is of a limited nature. At present women constitute no more than 7% of members of parliament in the House of Representatives and no more than 10% of the total number of senators. Those women who have managed to enter politics tend to come from special circumstances such as from families with existing political positions and networks.

At the local level, the situation facing women is equally difficult. While women are now eligible for the post of Village Chief, they are still prevented by ministerial regulations from becoming district officials, a position with great reins of power in local administration. On another front, while the military is generally known to meddle in Thai politics, women are kept out of the military elite.

With regard to the roles of Thai National Parliament, both the House of Representatives and the Senate have long been established a body each called "Committee on Women, Youth and Elderly". Such a committee is always active in promotion and support in the respect of laws, policies and budget for the implementation of relevant issues.

In the future, it will be necessary to promote the image that politics are of concern to everyone irrespective of gender. Women's access to political power at the national and local levels needs to be promoted through greater consciousness raising among the public and cooperation among women's groups to push for such access. The laws which prohibit women's access need to be abrogated.

## 6. Women and Human Rights

Thailand's access to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women pinpoints the fact that women's rights in Thailand are closely related to the international perceptions of human rights. Implementation of international human rights norms at the national level is, unfortunately, faced with a number of discrepancies. They are in the respect of lacunae in national law and practice concerning family rights, educational access, employment opportunities, domain of public office, politics, freedom of travel, social and cultural, women's own body - illegal abortion.

The scenario suggests the need for more serious implementation of human rights at the national and local levels. Law reform is only a partial feature of the intersectional and multipronged approach required. This includes the call for a general law against sex discrimination and more educational inputs to change attitudes as well as other necessary actions.

## 7. Mechanisms to promote the advancement of Thai women

The main mechanism at the international level for promoting advancement of Thai women is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Thailand acceded to the convention on 9 August, 1985. While CEDAW might be considered as a "grandiose norm" to some, it can serve as a catalyst for change.

At the national level, there exists the National Commission on Women's Affairs (NCWA) under the Office of Prime Minister in 1989, with its mandate to be the spearhead of the programme for the advancement of women in Thailand. This mandate includes action to

mobilize collaboration with NGOs and the private sector and efforts to generate more cooperation from the women in general, so that they participate more actively for their own development and also national development.

The political will and commitment for women's development has been increasingly profound. The first National Plan to mention women's development in concrete terms was the Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan adopted a decade ago. The present Seventh Plan continues to define the national process concerning women's development, and a new twenty-year Women's Development Plan has also been prepared and put into its implementation.

The implementation of the women's development programmes has been coordinated by the NCWA, among various governmental and NGO agencies. The former includes Ministries of Public Health, Interior, Agriculture, Education, Industry, Justice, University Affairs, and Office of the Prime Minister whereas the latter includes a good number of them, particularly the National Council of Women (NCW) which is one of the major NGOs.

In this juncture, it has to be stressed that Thailand is very proud and highly gratified as well as in the deepest debt of Her Majesty the Present Queen's great devoted leadership and guidance. Her Majesty has been promoting women's involvement in national development including population, natural and environmental conservation developments. Through Her Majesty "Support Foundation" Her Majesty has successfully revived the traditional cottage industries, and promoted income generating activities for women, especially those in the rural areas, in order to upgrade the economic and health status as well as the standard of living of their families. In addition, Her Majesty has initiated many valuable programmes to preserve the traditional Thai culture, heritage and other national development programmes with great compassion to the people. All, indeed, are well aware of Her Majesty's accomplishments and have obviously shown herself to be a leader and a source of inspiration for all Thai women. Thai people out of loyal devotion, call Her Majesty the Mother of the Thai Nation. On the auspicious occasion of Her Majesty's Sixtieth Birthday Anniversary on 12 August, 1992, the cabinet unanimously declared 1992 the Year of Thai Women. In this connection, the National Commission on Women's Affairs (NCWA) organised the first National Assembly on Women in Development on 1-2 March, 1992, in recognition of the importance of Thai women. As a result, the Declaration on Thai Women was adopted. The declaration stipulated various priorities to be addressed in order to ensure the protection of the rights of women and their full participation in development.

## 8. Conclusion

The status of women and the nature of the roles of women in population and development in the past and at present in Thailand has been reviewed and recommendations for feasible future advancements have been made. The scope of the analysis and recommendations includes the issue of economy, employment, family responsibility, politics, human rights, and mechanisms to promote the advancement of Thai women.

Studies of women's status have revealed the problems and strategies for the promotion of the roles of women. These will enable women to have an effective participation in economic and social development at their full physical and mental potentials, amidst all the changes in the social and economic environment, which in turn affect the roles and status of women. Thai women played greater and greater roles in almost every aspect of population and development at local, national and international levels. The importance of



the family as the smallest social institution which is the core of all development activities and women's role in the family is especially emphasized, particularly when the nature of the traditional "extended family" has transformed to be the "nuclear family".

Appropriate measures for improvement of the roles of women are specifically stressed. They incorporate the promotion of education and appropriate employment opportunities, health services provision, freedom of expression, joint responsibility with men in bringing up families, protection from exploitation in employment and discrimination, access to information, more constructive attitudes towards gender equality, development and support of National Government and non-governmental organizations dealing with women's development, sufficient budgetary allocation, appropriate law and policy reform, and dissemination of these priorities to the public at large. There, of course, are also rooms for the members of National Parliament to play for the betterment of quality of life of women and socioeconomic development of the country as a whole.

## Country Paper Vietnam

### Vietnamese Housewife's Role in Family Life

by

Hon. Ms. Nguyen Thi Than, M.P.

The standpoints of Vietnamese leadership have been transferred into the Vietnamese legal system which show the entire supports to the women's status. However, there are not many researches on this matter yet. The existing situation may be caused by many reasons such as the women's political and economic status and equality with men which has been recognised by laws. That's why researchers do not map out the separate subject to study the socioeconomic gap between men and women. Those views in the past time are not suitable to the present. On the other hand, in the Asian countries are existing the ideas to look down the women's status. More or less those concepts have effect on the present points of view. At present, women's positions are becoming more and more important in the social and economic development, particularly in the population issues, environment and sustainable development. We welcome the idea put forward by APDA on the role of women in the family life and socioeconomic development as well. This initiative is very important for our Asian nations where women are inferior in many fields in the society.

#### THE VIETNAMESE WOMEN ISSUES IN BRIEF

According to the 1989 population census, the population of Vietnam was 64.4 million (in 1993 the figure was 71.8 million). The number of women amounted to 53.2%. Out of that 48% was in reproductive age (age group 15-49). The sex ratio of the population at the age of 15 and over is 114. This ratio has been increasing from 103 (age group 15-19) to 230 in the age group 85 and over. The expectancy of life at birth of male and female (1989) was 63 and 67.5, respectively.

#### HOUSEWIFE'S ROLE IN THE FAMILY LIFE

The wives always play the main role in housekeeping in many countries. They have to look after housework, their children and prepare the meals while the husband is responsible as the breadwinner in the family. Usually women may have job and work before marriage, but after marriage and having children they will have to quit their job and devote their lives to looking after their children and to housework.

It is quite different in Vietnam that besides the housework in the family, the Vietnamese women also participate in various works in society. The population census in 1989 showed that 70% of women aged 15 and over had permanent jobs, and that only 10% of women worked as housekeepers (Out of this rate, the urban women was 17% and rural women was 9%). The difference of the rate may be answered that many women migrate to the cities with their husbands and they have to become housewives because their qualifications are not good enough to get jobs there. The women labour accounts for 53% in rural areas and 48% in urban areas. Only in agricultural production, the number of women labour amounts to 65%. Among the women in the age group 20-49 who are involved in economic activities, 80% of them are having jobs and 8-12% are working as housekeepers. In the rural area this rate is 14% with the age group 20-29; 18% with the

age group 20-29 and 25% with the age group 40-49. In general, women have to spend at least 60 hours on jobs and housework per week. Decision-makers often under-estimate the role of women in economic contribution in the family. Many women are involved in service work and light industry which has gained quick growth rate and has created great sources of income to the family and society, e.g., the light industry grew 11% in 1993 while 65% of women were working in this field. So, the income gained by women to their families must be great.

Formerly, as the tradition of the Vietnamese society, women participate in the economic activities and has income, but all the expenditures of the family were decided by the husband. Nowadays, the more society develops, the higher the people's literacy will be. The role of women will gradually become more and more important to the family and society. The data of 1989 statistics indicate that the number of households headed by men and women in urban areas were 52% and 48%, respectively. That shows men and women acted almost the equal role. In rural areas, the figure was 72% and 28% with men and women, respectively. Those figures represent the real status of women in the family life at the moment. In urban areas, with the effect of the people's higher literacy rate, the contribution of women to the family's economy becomes greater so they have the role to manage their family. On the other hand, during the war time, children always followed their mothers (households of children were always registered with their mothers). Therefore, the number of female heads of household stayed rather high. In the mountainous areas and in the ethnic minority community the male heads of household occupy 90%. Thus, the lifestyle and points of view that men are superior to women are still existing. One of the very important reasons is that the people's literacy rate is rather low in this areas. The 1989 statistics showed the rate of literacy was 88% in the total population of the country. The figure comprised of 93% for males and 84% for females. The literacy rate is different according to the regions. For example, it was 48% in the mountainous area and 90% in the urban areas. Especially, 18% of women had never attended school in the rural areas and only 9% in the urban areas. The number of women graduates from universities in the urban areas was 3.1% and only 0.5% in the rural areas. The number of women who finished secondary school in the urban areas was three times bigger than that in the rural areas. The number of drop-outs among the age group 10-14 is up to 20% of females in rural areas while it is 11% in urban areas.

## THE STANDPOINTS OF WOMEN AND FAMILY IN VIETNAM

The feudalist regime created the grade and patriarchal systems in the society so the duties of women then were to serve the family and give birth of sons who would follow the family line. Women in that time were inferior in the society and had to obey the powerful husbands. Before being married women usually had to obey the father in the family. They would obey their husband after marriage and if the husband dies, women had to obey their sons. The marriage used to be arranged by families of both sides and the heritage rights only belonged to the son. That was the patriarchal system where the husband normally had several wives (polygamy). At that time a family of ten daughters were considered as childless family and a son was considered as a child in the family.

The above concepts were gradually left behind especially after the Vietnamese Revolution in August 1945 and the National Liberation 1954-75. The Constitution and the law on marriage and family provide the equal right between men and women in society, in economy and in family. The regulation on one husband, one wife and liberty in marriage has liberated women out of the traditional concept. However, the old concepts and thinking still remain here and there, notably in the rural mountainous and remote areas. Those existing ones have to be continuously done away.

## THE EFFECTS OF MARRIAGE FACTORS AND DEMOGRAPHY ON THE FAMILY LIFE

Before the foundation of Vietnam (8/1945), marriages were arranged by parents, but since 1945 the Constitution and law on marriage and family clearly provided that the family must be with one husband and one wife, the polygamy and child marriages have decreased dramatically. The 1989 statistics indicated that at age group 15 and over, 74% of females were married, and that the age at marriage has increased gradually that is 25.5 and 23.2 for men and women, respectively. The age at marriage has been increasing in the urban areas. It is 26.7 and 24.8 for men and women, respectively. The average age at first marriage with men is lower and with women is higher in comparison with other countries. Frankly speaking, the cases of polygamy have decreased, but it still remains in some regions. The statistics of 1989 show that there are 11,890 thousand married men, but there are 12,487 thousand married women. Therefore, out of the errors in registration and death, the cases of polygamy are existing in the different age groups and different regions. Child marriages are existing, but the figure is very low. As the matter of fact, the early marriage makes women bear the hardship in life in the very early period when the physical and spiritual development is not in full swing yet. Those limited development gives effect on further study and enlarging knowledge and the final result is that it is very difficult to gain the entire equality in the family life.

In the recent past, the birth rate in Vietnam has decreased constantly. The total fertility rate (TFR) decreased from 5.9 in 1970-74 to 3.8 in 1989-90. The programs of family planning and birth control in Vietnam started since 1960, but as the result of study shows, people have enough knowledge of contraceptive methods. But, the contraceptive prevalent rate (CPR) is only 50%, and 63% is using the IUD. In general, people use the modern contraceptive methods in low percentage. Thanks to the contraceptive methods and literacy rate, social participation of women is increasing day after day. Therefore, the birth rate has decreased gradually.

As the general tendency of the developing countries as the result of health care policies and social and economic development, the children's weight at birth is less than 2,500 grams. Malnutrition rate and death rate of women in Vietnam have dropped down remarkably. The statistics in 1989 indicated that the crude death rate was 8 per thousand and the infant mortality rate was about 45 per thousand (in 1993 this rate was some 37 per thousand). Similar to other countries in the region, the death rate decreased sharply right after the country was liberated and the rate has been going down gradually. Due to the decrease of death rate, the life expectancy increased. On the other hand, the birth rate also decreased so the family structure became smaller. Furthermore, as the result of the socioeconomic development, young generation wants to live in nuclear family more than to live in the union family. That is the reason why the women's responsibility will be heavier in the society which is becoming aging and older. Usually the 60 year-old daughter-in-law has to look after the 80 year-old parents. Just like in other countries, the different death rates between male and female create the more widows in the old age. Therefore, the responsibility with themselves in their lonely life will be harder.

Country Paper  
Syrian Arab Republic

Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace -  
Family and Housewife in Social, Economic and Demographic Context

by

Hon. Dr. Eng. Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara, M.P.

First of all, I want to say that Syria is a small country with population of about 30.5 million. 49.5% of them are women and 50.5% are men.

If we go through what is written in papers, the Constitution, laws and others, there is no difference between men and women from the birth to death. But, even so, in education, among those who leave school before finishing 6 classes, which we call primary school, the girls are only about 10% whereas boys are more than 25%.

If we will look after the children, there is a law. At each department belonging to the government or private sector where there is more than 10 children for the father or mother, there should be a small school which we call "garden" to take care of and nurse these children who have the age of more than six months until two and a half.

Even every thing is good, but only in fact less than 1% of employees are women. If you go to the ministerial department, you can find 10% in some ministry and 25% in some ministries. It depends on how the job is hard. Why such things happen? As we understand, it happens for two reasons. One of them is the old traditions in our country. The second is economic situation where we cannot offer enough jobs for them. These are the two problems that we have to consider.

In order to develop the nation, we have to consider the family. For example, there are women who are engineers.

It is a matter of culture. If we go to rural areas, there are women who operate a tractor. They cannot ride on a bicycle, but can operate a tractor. I think that this is the cultural problem. I think that it is important to break the barriers of such old traditional culture so that women can be engaged in the jobs required by the society.

It would require cooperation with NGOs, labor unions and women's federation, etc. The cooperation with mass media would be also required. I think that it would be necessary to encourage women to be engaged in the employment which they need.

The problems would vary according to nations. The problem in the Middle East is when peace would be realized in the Middle East. If peace is realized, we will be able to cope with our problems with all our efforts in the quicker and more efficient manner. We would like to pray that peace will prevail all over the world. I want to particularly emphasize this point.

Thank you.

## Discussion

### **Chairman Dr. Eng Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara:**

We can give two minutes to each woman to make any comments because we are speaking about women in the 21st century.

### **Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually there are two things that are in my mind. First of all, an observation made in my country is that if you are talking about women and improvement of status of women, there is a kind of feeling that men feel threatened, or they feel we are fighting against them. As soon as we start talking about women, the men would say why we are always talking about women, too much attention on women, they are taking away our jobs, we have to do the housework, etc. So, my first question which may concern all of us is actually how do we fight, but conservatively, as my colleague from New Zealand said, with love and understanding prevailing. Secondly, what has not been discussed too much, I think, is the international flow of women workers out of our countries. Indeed more and more women now go outside not only because of the limited job market within the country, but better payment abroad. I think research has shown that informal route is open more than the formal contract. So, it is something that we may talk about and really work together in order to protect the family as well as the women who are going out for the sake of family.

### **Chairman Dr. Eng Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara:**

I want to say one thing. Of course, all men agree to share everything with women without only one thing; We cannot become pregnant. Secondly, I also want to say if there is no good family, we cannot be here. If my wife does not let me go and leave her alone, and if the husbands are not good, we cannot be here, either.

### **Ms. Chieko Nohno, Japan:**

We have been discussing about family planning. If we must pay attention to family planning, we must give due regard to health and well-being of women. To promote the health of women, we need support of men and husbands. However, in family planning, so much focus is given to childbearing. But, of course, we have to create the right environment to allow mothers to give birth to children and for unborn babies and embryos, the mother is the environment. Therefore, men and women must respect each other and create a better environment. A lot is said about child abuse, indifference of mothers and fathers. And, issues related to divorce are often discussed and debated. But, in Japan, we are also facing aging of the society. And, there is also abuse against the elderly citizens. That is also a potential problem. So, we have to have a very comprehensive view about how we can secure fundamental human rights. As parliamentarians, we have to support the health of women. I hope that is one area that we must work for.

### **Ms. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, New Zealand:**

You actually pointed out a very important point that the only thing men cannot do and women can do is that they cannot become pregnant. That in fact is at the heart of the matter because if only women are able, then it should be only on their authority that they become pregnant. Secondly, would it appear offensive to men for women to have the right to say whether or not they wish to have sex. That is a big question I put to everyone. In

other words, can it be regarded as women's right as to whether or not she wants to be pregnant. So, would men take offense at that? Men around here obviously wouldn't. However, it is a major question. But, perhaps we would need all men's conference on the subject and all women's one and see if we cannot come to some accord. My third and final point is that to reduce population, the abortion is an option. My suggestion is that for a woman to be able to prevent herself from becoming pregnant is far more humane. It may not be a choice in some countries and cultures, but it is very easily possible if men accept the women's decision.

**Ms. Yukiko Kawahashi, Japan:**

We have had some success stories in Japan on population problems. I believe that there will be a slide presentation illustrating the Japanese experiences. But, one should also share the successes as well as failures. And, I would like to introduce to you our experiences of failures. Japan emerged from agricultural society to industrial society. Now we are going to the post-industrial society. The change is very rapid. In the course of such a transformation, as we entered into the industrial stage, we have seen the rapid decline of population. And it can be a success. But it also resulted in the weakening of the family strength and bond. As countries industrialized, people move from the agricultural areas to the urban areas, separating from their family members. They are no longer together. As a result, the function of family caring for the sick, elderly and children are given less importance. So, the function of the role of family is no longer strong than before. So, we have to have the social policy supporting or overcoming such deficiencies. Japan belatedly embarked on formulation of such policies. But, I think we were a little too late. If we did it in advance, we would not be facing such a serious problems of aging of the society. In the very near future, we would say that one out of four would be elderly citizens. So, we will have to face an increasing number of elderly women in the very near future. If in the past we had introduced the family policy allying women both to work and to lead a happy family life, then we could have avoided some of the problems we are facing today. So, we believe that building networks within the community is very essential. Had we done our homework, maybe we could have alleviated the current issues and have a good balance between development and well-being. We have witnessed the success of Beijing in developing itself. We must never forget the family policies. We must always think ahead so that we can improve the situation.

**Ms. Chieko Nohno, Japan:**

I would like to add the importance of sex education. Especially, children must follow their parents. So, the parents' behavior is very important to the children. As the character of sex education, how to make a good life is important. For this purpose, health education is necessary.

**Chairman Dr. Eng Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara:**

Thank you very much. Today you have worked very hard. So, it is better to close now.

## SESSION III

### Slide Presentation and Discussion

<March 4, 1994, 14:00 - 15:40>



## Discussion

### **Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Hirose. It was a wonderful slide presentation. It was a great inspiration, a great learning. What happened to women in Japan 50 years ago or 80 years ago is happening to the women of so many countries in the world even today. It is shameful for us, men and women also, that such nasty things are happening in the world regarding the women even today. We saw in the slides that in the early days in Japan, deliveries were made by midwives. We are aware that such a thing is happening even today in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and so many countries. The progress that Japan has made is something really ideal and it should be followed by other countries of the world. Now, I invite your opinions, views and discussion on the basis of the slides presented and also what is the factual position of all over the world, especially in the countries of Asia with regards to women.

### **Dr. Eng. Mohamad Ghassan Tayyara, Syrian Arab Republic:**

First of all, I want to say to our Chairman of AFPPD that, I think, it is necessary to organize the "Union of Men" in the coming century because the 21st century will be the women's century. This cannot be so as we speak about equal rights. Let's also think that the 21st century will be for equal rights, not for women or for men.

Second, in our country in 1993, they demonstrated a Japanese film "Oshin". I learned from this film that, before the Second World War, the women in Japan had the right to do everything. If we look deeply at this film, when the boy has the wife, his mother did not agree with him. She suffered because of the mother. And, in the end, her children also suffered because she was also the leader. So, from the beginning, before the Second World War until today, the women in Japan were the leader of the family. I have understood this from the film. It was the historical film of about 30 - 35 series.

When I spent about 40 days in Japan, I spoke with many women there. They are so gentle and they take leadership and the men agree with it. It seems that the men are not the leaders. The men are the leaders. In fact, they have the right to speak about what will happen, for example, in China. But, to decide what will happen in the house, this decision is made by the women.

### **Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Our friend from Vietnam, would you like to say something?

### **Mr. Bui Ngoc Than, Vietnam:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From long time ago, we have equality between men and women. The Constitution of Vietnam has some articles about equality between men and women. But, it takes a long time to get real equality between men and women. The figure of female parliamentarians in our country is 18.7%. In my Standing Committee of Parliament composed of 30 members, there are two female members. In the Cabinet, there are some female Ministers. Our men in Vietnam are trying to help wives and sisters to become professors and doctors more and more. If you compare Vietnam with other countries, for example, Japan which we just saw in the slide presentation, there is a big gap in the status of women between the two countries. It is the Japanese policy to improve women's status. It's very good. We continue to learn experiences from such a policy.

We are trying to make progress in improving the women's status more. We have the position to learn some good experiences of other countries to apply them in our country. I thank Mr. Chairman and all the participants for this learning opportunity. From this morning we learned so much experience from Australia through Thailand. We can apply your good experiences for our country. Thank you.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

I think our fellow delegate has learned lessons from your discussion and points of view. May I now request our friend from Thailand to respond?

**Ms. Poonsook Lohajoti, Thailand:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. Although we want an equal right, the Thai women also recognize that we want to preserve the men's dignity. We also want them to lead as the head of the family. It's true. It's not politics. Even though nowadays the work opportunities in Thailand are widely open to women, there exists a certain degree of discrimination, especially in the area involving the upper management position, promotion, job privileges, etc. And an important law was implemented last year in Thailand for higher compulsory education from the 6th grade to the 9th grade, about 48 years behind Japan. However, we hope that this continuing education will keep both boys and girls in school at least for 14 - 15 years old instead of leaving school at the age of 12 - 13 years old at the present time. Also as the extra-curriculum program, we are going to use one channel of the satellite that we have just had, the Thai Communication Satellite. This is for the training program and continuing program. Some of the rights that the Thai women still do not have are only four right now. I have said that in the paper already distributed to all of you. We believe that by educating women, the whole family will be educated, too, as someone already told this morning. The pattern of women's development in Thailand is not so far from what we have seen in the slide presentation, just the same way as the Japanese women. I hope that the 21st century will not be the women's century alone, but will be the century for the family, peace and prosperity, equal for men and women. Thank you very much.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you, madam. Thailand has a great culture. When you started, in my opinion, the age-old culture was in your mind. That should be the spirit. In your conflict between men and women, they are the part and parcel of the same goal. There should be love and affection. Wherever there is love and affection, equality comes itself, education comes itself, and health care comes itself. Thank you very much. Now, may I request our friend from Singapore to express his view?

**Mr. Chay Wai Chuen, Singapore:**

When I saw the slide show just now ended saying that the women of Japan may likely to be the leader in the 21st century, and that the 21st century may well be the century for women, I was a little bit puzzled, not quite surprised. How did they arrive at this conclusion? I was the delegate to the World Conference of Human Rights last year in Vienna. And there were many statements made by countries all over the world on human rights and so on. Frankly, what impressed me most at the Vienna Conference was not the talks or politics about human rights, but the power of women. Women's group presented themselves extremely well. They were very well organized as NGOs. I was really impressed by what they did. That set my mind to think about the statement that the 21st century may be

possibly the century for women. If you look back into history, it is not really surprising. There were the centuries in the countries when the women were the head of the system. So, in Singapore, as I said in the morning, we started off without much baggage. We were independent from British. We are an immigrant society. So we had the Women's Charter right from the beginning in 1961. That assured them of equality of rights, equality to share of property, employment, equal pay for equal job, etc. Then, we have been able to work along that way. Then, we come to the present problem of professional women, well-educated women not wanting to start their families, delaying marriage and fertility decline. So, the Government of Singapore is right now trying its very best efforts to think about the ways. Some of the things are also the highlights that came from the Japanese slides, the child care facilities, flexible hours, and more education on what men can do to share the house work. We are not succeeding so well in trying to get our professional, well-educated women to marry sooner. Something that you can not push them, you can persuade them, but if they are not persuaded, you can't really force them. So, we are not very effective yet. As the saying goes in our discussion, a single man scraps the bottom when he tries to look for the wife, but still remains single whereas the single woman at the top looking upward to get their prince charming. There is this discrepancy. We have a lot of single women who are not married. That causes our problem. Thank you.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you for your view. Now, I think I should discontinue the method. I should invite the speakers who want to express their opinions. Can you raise your hand, please?

**Ms. Chieko Nohno, Japan:**

Thank you very much. I would like to say two points. You saw the old women Mrs. Kin and Mrs. Gin. They are both 100 years old. But, in China, apparently there are people who are 120 years old, 130 years old. But, I think it is most important for the old people to be fully engaged and fully healthy. So, I think the point is not to live just long, but to live a fulfilled and healthy life.

The group of professionals, the nurses, for example, are very important in protecting the health of the older people. So, I think we need to enhance organizations of professional women like that. In addition to nurses, I think midwives would also play an important role in sustaining and supporting older people to live healthy life. In relation to longevity, the average life span of the Japanese women is 76 and the men live as long. In Bangladesh, apparently women have 54 years, and the men enjoy the long life of 64 years. That means that the Bangladesh women need a great deal of support so that they can enjoy healthy life and bring up healthy children. Because the Japanese women have longer longevity, maybe it is better for a Japanese woman to be slightly older than his husband because they can enjoy longer life together. Maybe their married life would be more stable. So, I think we need to be physically fit and psychologically fit. So, for the 21st century, I hope we can enjoy health physically, spiritually and psychologically.

**Ms. Yukiko Kawahashi, Japan:**

Looking at the slides, you probably got the wrong image that the Japanese women enjoy superiority. But, you know, the man wrote the script and directed the whole film. The truth of the matter is that the Japanese women have become richer. That's wonderful. The Japanese women have always been strong in families. But, outside the family, not so. The social status of our women would be perhaps lower than the Singaporean women. As far as the family status is concerned, the Japanese women have been always strong. It is the tremendous change that three women representatives are here from Japan. This is the

credit to Mr. Sakurai. But, generally speaking, social status of the Japanese women is still low. In government, business, society at large, the Japanese women do not participate in the decision-making process. What I mean by this has to do with the human rights. We need more women in the decision-making posts. Women as capable as men, as ambitious as men, should be given such decision-making posts. This is the basic human right.

In addition to that, there are still a number of important points. What do I mean by this? The Japanese society is going rapidly out of industrial society into the post-industrial society, that means a new society. The Japanese are thinking that the new society demands a new thinking. What do I mean by the new thinking? Daily activities should be gentle to the environment. We should not push efficiency, but I think fairness is more important than the efficiency. And protection of ordinary people, protection of consumers is more important than protection of producers. The problems of expensive housing, expensive land prices in Japan, I think, must be switched from giving priority to producers to giving priorities to consumers. That means women's perspectives, women's thoughts, women's mind is called for in building a new society. As we want to make the 21st century a women's century, it means calling for women's perspectives, women's sensitivity to be given more important recognition in decision-making process at every level. When you say that the 21st century is the women's century, it does not mean that we want to sit on top of men. No, it means that we want to use our sensitivity and our thoughtfulness in decision-making process.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

It is called love and affection, prosperity of both men and women.

**Ms. Sun Young Kang, Korea:**

As we have just seen the slides from Japan, I can very well relate to their presentation of the women's status because the present status of the Korean women is also just the same way. In that respect, I am also very honored to be present here with the three women delegates from Japan in their position because they seem to be very honorable, and have a great respect in their country. In the morning session, I was not able to divulge in the status of women in my country. If you would give me a couple of moment, I would like to divulge further. As we may all agree on the implementation of establishing not only preservation of the traditional values of women, but also to create the mechanism for preserving family rights and ethics and consequently preparing an active form is imperative. If we take a look at our Constitution in Korea and its amendments, we can see the reformed family law which changed a very discriminating family law. The past law implicated an automatic inheritance by the family head, assuming the head was a male. The current amendment gives a way to optional system of succession to the family head which diminished the rights of the male family head. Relatively in the 1990s, the total fertility rate was 1.6. By the year 2000, the rate will decrease by 0.9. By the year 2020, the total fertility rate will no longer have increments. Subsequently, mortality rate will increase in 1991 by 5.1%. The population aged 65 years old and over will be 6.8% in the year 2000. In the year 2010, it will be 9.4%. This is probably due to the fact that there are changes in the way women are perceived in society. Accordingly, there will be changes in welfare status as well. Overall, with the changes in social consciousness concerning women, our country will hopefully continue to preserve the welfare status of women concerning employment, family preservation and population control. Thank you.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you. Any other person?

**Ms. Hu Yamei, China:**

Yes, Prof. Peng Yu and Prof. Li made presentations on the Chinese situation. I watched the slides and this touched my heart because I am over 79. I have witnessed the previous status of women in the 1920s or 30s. In the past, the status of Chinese women was similar to that of the Japanese women. When I was young, the enrollment of girls was very low. I leaned medicine because I thought that I should be independent as a woman. I wanted to be a doctor because I did not want to be an ornament or object of men that could be appreciated by men alone. So, at that time I made up my mind to be a doctor.

With the establishment of the New China, this phenomena has been thoroughly addressed. That is, with the New China established, women account for half of the sky, meaning that they are responsible for half of the affairs and enjoy half of the rights either in terms of education, and job opportunities. Women enjoy equal rights. Of course, I am not saying China is not without problems. I am only talking about the policy. In terms of employment, women have a lot of jobs. About 40% of the jobs in the fields of science, technology, medicine, and culture are taken up by women. For the pediatricians in my children's hospital, 83% are females. So, I often say that male doctors in my hospital constitute minority. So, we don't have many men in this field.

In the household chores in urban cities, I think both husband and wife share the burden of house chores. In my hospital, some of the men doctors do a better job in cooking and knitting than their wives. Also sharing the responsibility to look after the babies.

In China, the important measure to protect the employment of women is that all the factories should have their own nurseries. In Beijing, we have about 10,000 nurseries run by the enterprises. All these help to protect the rights and interest of women. Before they go to work, they can send the kids to the nursery and take them home after the work is off. In my hospital in Beijing, we have a nursery. The fathers and mothers can send their kids to the nursery.

In terms of political status, the number of female parliamentarians, that is, deputies to the National People's Congress, is still smaller. It is only 25%. We need to work harder to struggle for the rights of women. Now, we have the law for protection of the rights and interest of women. So far, we don't have the law for protection of men.

In short, I feel that the policy of women are taking up half the sky has placed some role in China in improving status of women. Before the New China was established, once a woman was married, she had to have the family name of her husband. But, after 1949, with inception of the New China, once a woman is married, she can stick to her own family name. For instance, my family name is Hu. After I got married, I didn't have to follow the family name of my husband. This is just to give a sense of independence to women in the family and society. Thank you.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you, madam. Any other view? Any other person?

**Mr. Margarito B. Teves, Philippines:**

Our discussion is centered on education and health services, how they have affected the fertility rate and how they contributed to the reduction of population growth rate. At the same time, we also discussed the status of women, how we view them in the 21st century, and one example of Japan.

What I want to bring up is that there is a certain trade-offs we have to consider, especially at the society level. As women become more educated, more liberated, they will be at the level of the men in terms of status and other facilities. We talk about wages, for instance. Gradually as women become more educated, the differences becomes very narrow. But, in the relationship between men and women, especially in marriages for men who are not yet clear, or not yet used to the advent of women approximating their status, there is one aspect in the men that is always threatened. This is ego. What I am trying to convey is that perhaps there could be a trade-off if both men and women are not conscious about the relationship, perhaps marriage could be threatened. Perhaps there is a closer correlation, especially in the urban areas where women are more educated and assert their rights. Probably we will have more cases of tension leading to more separation and more broken marriages. Ultimately, of course, at the individual level, it really depends on the intellectual and biological configuration of men and women. But, I think at the society level, in urban areas, probably there will be a higher incidences of tension which could lead to the broken relationship. So, I think we should be very conscious and objective about what we have in terms of family planning and reduction of fertility rate. But we should be conscious of the need to continue the family ties between men and women and children. So, I think we should be also careful about this.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you, please.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question when I saw the slides was "Are the women really happy?" It seems that it is the men who made the slides.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

But, madam, the man who presented the slides has got a beautiful heart, heart of a woman.

**Dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Indonesia:**

Maybe, it's still debatable. When the reaction came from our colleague from Syria, I thought, oh, my God, we are going to talk about peace and prosperity and are going to have a war in this room. But, actually not. It is very good. But, what we really have to take into consideration is the different stages that we are in. Among our countries as well as within our countries, I agree with Mr. Teves from the Philippines. There are two things. Maybe we have to really take the rural-urban differences into consideration in moving forward not only because of differences in education, etc. which means also different stages in change of cultural norms. Also I was wondering whether we should talk about the relationship without children. I am worried what is going to happen to our children. We talk about the decline of total fertility rate. How is our husband-wife relationship to the child? Most probably some of us, women, actually implant the norm of discrimination in our own sons and daughters. We teach our daughters to do everything, but sons get away throwing the clothes on the floor and not doing anything. Maybe, that's also our fault. But, on the other hand, we may teach that they are equal, but then they see that their father is different from their mother. Maybe we should go a step further. And besides taking our relationship between husband and wife, men and women into consideration, but also how are our children going to be treated? Are they going to learn new norms from television or from us as a model? I think that is very important to talk about, to consider and really take action because as we have seen in the slides, it needs one

whole generation to have a new culture and a new norm and relationship between husband and wife. Maybe even two generations. Can we speed it up? Or is our success in family planning and population policy detrimental to this relationship to the next generation and the generation after that? I think that this is a good thing to talk about in peace. Thank you.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you, madam. Any other person?

**Ms. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, New Zealand:**

The progress noted in the slides was extraordinarily impressive, indicating what happened as a matter of a few decades ago and what it is now. To change cultural attitude to that degree is working in the most delicate and difficult area. And it would appear that you have changed the cultural attitudes. I must say that the mutual respect in a partnership, the release of every woman from a exploited situation is important. Perhaps I should vocalize the ideal as the mutual respect between husband and wife. However, we do have in this age many who do not actually marry and do not consider it necessary. Personally I do. But, I know that in my country de facto partnerships have increased considerably. In those situations, it would appear that the female partner suffers a great disadvantages. But, a wife in marriage doesn't. I think that it is another aspect of living today. I take a point made by the delegate from Indonesia that we have to be always aware of our role models for our children. I think sometimes it is evident that women can over-indulge the sons so that they are not in fact passing on. I should not say liberation per se, but release from the position of exploitation. But, they don't pass it on. It is very important how we have our children evaluating their own roles in the family, brothers and sisters. It is very easy for the brother to think that the sister can do all the cooking and the boy doesn't have to do that. Male descent has also an influence where the descent line follows only through males. It didn't in the indigenous culture in New Zealand. And there were great norms and prohibitions against women speaking publicly. I thought the role model is very important when I was a students before I came into politics. You face a lot of antagonism, but somebody has to be the role model of change.

I think it is very heartening to hear the delegates have been talking. I think we are mutually inspiring each other. That's impressive to come from the situation that was shown in the slides to what it is now in Japan. It has a lesson for all of us. I am still analyzing how it came about exactly.

The United Nations has a Decade of Women. It has been a major thing even though I didn't acknowledge although I was a participant at the beginning. I think these meetings must contribute constructively and positively to the support we give to each other and a greater understanding that we have.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you, madam. Yes, please. I think that you are going to be the last speaker.

**Dr. Eimatsu Takakuwa, Japan:**

I think the Japanese men must speak up, don't you think? Let me be the voice. Ms. Sullivan from New Zealand has just said how the dramatic change in Japan was brought about. I want to give an answer to that question. Japan was defeated in the Second World

War. It meant that soldiers came back from the Continent. There were many people in Japan on a very narrow strip of land. There was shortage of food and shortage of everything. So, the first thing that had to be done was population control. And abortion was illegal unless there was a medical deformity or medical decision to help the mother or baby. But, immediately after the end of the War, we added that the economic reason maybe another factor in carrying out the abortion, not just maternal and child health. That was the major decision in the history of abortion in Japan.

The next important factor was education. It was public health nurses who were at the leading edge of the public health education. The health centers were the place of education. The Japanese women educated in this way accepted the need for family planning and birth control. That was the first step to success. Many delegates here said that the status of women in society must be elevated. The major factor in elevating women's status is population control and higher level of women's education. So, in all your countries, you are giving your women more opportunities for education.

Somebody referred to the film "Oshin". When I was a little boy that was exactly the kind of Japan. I think if we did not lose the last War, we were still having Oshin around. But, because we lost the War, our society has entirely changed. So it is only 40 years back when the Japanese society was the Oshin society.

For the first time now, we have low fertility, low mortality. We have a very few child births. We have to keep them alive. We have to have high level of hygiene in order to protect a small number of children that are born. And, we, the Japanese men, share in the happiness of the elevated status of the Japanese women.

The total fertility rate in Japan is only 1.5. That continues to make the Japanese population to decline. This is a major problem in Japan. Because of the low fertility rate, the Japanese women has to be protected.

We have been discussing philosophy and high ideals here. I am a member of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation on Population. I have traveled widely around the world. I have been to a number of developing countries. Hygiene and preventive medicine is my field of expertise. The main question is how we lower the infant mortality rate. In Japan, infant mortality rate is 5 per 1,000 births. In India, I think that it is 90 or 100 per 1,000 births. To lower the secondary mortality is very important. The major cause of infant mortality is diarrhea. That means shortage of safe drinking water. Mills line phenomena were observed in the 19th century in England and Germany. They found the way of filtering water. That practice alone reduced the diarrhea enormously. And, the longevity increased in both Germany and England only by filtering water. The diarrhea went down and infant mortality went down. And, the average life span increased in both England and Germany. Filtering water is one thing that can be done in the individual family. The local autonomous governments may filter water. I think that can be done in every country.

The second thing is education. Education is increasing literacy, general education, not just health education. The people can write what they learn. They can take notes so that they can refer back to their notes all the time. Raising literacy is the main objective of education. So, the methodology in developing countries to reduce infant mortality is to provide clean drinking water, filtered water and general education to increase literacy.

**Chairman Mr. Mahendra Prasad:**

Thank you very much for the contributions from all of you. I think that this is the time



now for conclusion. Before we conclude, I want to bring some points. In my opinion, in some cases at least in some parts of the world women are not less responsible for the bad status of women. Like, for example, in India, if some of the most educated, most advanced, highly intellectual ladies are asked, I asked a few, which they want, a boy child or a girl child. They will confess that they want a boy child. This is the factual position, not if in all countries, but definitely in some countries.

I am a father of three sons. Some time, I feel sad why I did not have one or two girls. I can tell you girls are more loyal, more loving, more faithful in so many cases than boys. This is a fact. But, women would still like to have male children, not female children. I don't know why it is so. It needs some research by psychologist or sociologist.

What I feel about neglect of women is that a human being is, by nature, selfish. This is a statement of fact. He wants self-prosperity and self-happiness. You need something good for yourself, then something good for your family, then something good for your society you are in and something good for your nation, and ultimately something good for the world. For all these goodness, you must have a happy family. You cannot have a happy family unless you have a good wife, a good daughter, good ladies in the family. All the things are not possible. To meet the end of your own selfish interest, we must give a good status to women. Talking about India, for example, there is some sort of imbalance in the same society. In India, we gave the first lady Prime Minister of the world, Indira Ghandi. Then, it was followed by Norway, Britain, Bangladesh and other countries. But, in 95% of the cases, the status of women in India is not up to the mark. That is imbalance. This is just to provoke your thoughts. Now, I conclude the session by thanking all of you for your precious contributions.

## CLOSING SESSION

<March 4, 1994, 16:00 - 16:20>

Closing Remarks  
by  
Mr. Fukusaburo Maeda  
Chairman  
Asian Population and Development Association

Ladies and gentlemen,

On the occasion of the closing of the Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development, I feel very honored to be given this opportunity to say a few words.

We have been able to successfully complete this memorable 10th meeting. The two-day meeting was a very short time, but we can all be proud of meaningful discussion. I would like to heartily thank Dr. Zhao, Ms. Hao, Parliamentarians from different countries, and the Chinese host for their support in organizing the meeting.

This meeting focused on women who are the center of the issues of population and development. Particularly, we decided to adopt a theme - "Women in the 21st Century - Strategy for Prosperity and Peace" for the next three years. So, this was the first of the three years focused on family and housewife in social, economic and demographic context. The role of women at home is indeed very big. Their position and role in the family would have a great impact on fertility, infant mortality and even morbidity. The role of women at home will also affect the thinking and attitudes of the young people of the next generation.

Later this year, the International Conference on Population and Development will be held in Cairo, Egypt, which will be adopting population policies that would be implemented for the next 20 years. In other words, this year would mark an important milestone in our efforts to solve population problems. Our wisdom, decisions and actions would determine whether we can pass on the earth to our future generations. In this memorable year, I think it was the most timely that we were able to focus on women who are the important actors in the issues of population and development.

The theme of the next year's meeting is the Women's Work and Economic Activities. I look forward very much to seeing everyone of you in the next year's meeting for further progress.

In closing, I would like to thank the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the National People's Congress of China which extended a great support to us, the Government of China which welcomed us with a generous hospitality, and also the secretariat who worked very hard behind the scene to make this meeting a great success. I would also like to thank the Parliamentarians from Asian countries who have taken time out of their busy official schedule to be with us this time, and experts and representatives of international organizations for joining us here. I hope that you would continue to exert great efforts to promote the cause of population and development.

Lastly, I would like to pray for your health and happiness. Thank you once again for all your contributions.

Closing Remarks  
by  
Mr. V.T. Palan  
Regional Director  
East, South East Asia and Oceania Region, IPPF

Your Excellences,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a privilege for me on behalf of the International Planned Parenthood Federation to say a few words as part of this closing ceremony. We have come to the end of a two-day intensive and most productive process of deliberations on the whole question of population and development. We are particularly fortunate that we are able to have had the opportunity to attend this meeting in this historical and culturally rich metropolis Beijing of the People's Republic of China. From the time we set our foot at the airport, we have been taken care of with the greatest of courtesies, kindness, generosity and sumptuous banquets; that even those of us, who are visiting China for the first time, leave this fascinating country as old friends of China. Speaking for myself, the organizers have left no stones unturned, to make the stay and the meeting enjoyable, memorable and productive.

I have attended several meetings of APDA and AFPPD in the past. I must confess that this particular meeting has outdone many others, both in terms of the depth of discussions and the contributions that all of us have made to the specific deliberations. Starting from the opening ceremony message from H.E. Mr. Li Peng, the Premier of China, to all the other speeches, we have been reminded and reminded of the challenges to the quality of life, and to the stability of the family and nations from unplanned and uncontrolled proliferation of births. We are told of the needs to promote the notion of children by choice and not children by chance. We are reminded of the need to provide free and full information on contraceptive and the reproductive responsibilities of couples to their community and nation. Every child born, we are told, must be a wanted child, able to develop to his or her fullest potential physically, mentally and socially.

Asia, we are reminded, has a special responsibility, cutting across national boundaries, given that 60% of the global population live here. We have a heavy responsibility to ensure that children are not born too soon, too late, too close and too many. If Asia is successful in this solemn task, we would once again lead the way for the world as we are doing in the economic front. What the next generation inherits depends on what Asia does today in the population arena. This is a particular challenge to the Parliamentarians and legislators since after all they are in the ultimate analysis the national leaders; setters of the national vision; the molders of new values and goals, and the mobilizers of the community for a better and brighter life in the shortest possible time.

That we are able to discuss this in the People's Republic of China with the world's fastest growing economy is an object lesson that where there is a will, there is a way, specially if the will is by the political leadership; even in an area such as family planning plagued by traditional, cultural, social and religious ambiguities and misinterpretations.

Another area which we have focused rightly at this meeting is the role of women in population and development. APDA theme on "Women in the 21st Century" is praiseworthy, appropriate and timely. Timely because we are at the threshold of a new millennium, and we cannot and should not continue to treat one half of the population as second-class citizens. Timely because we can make an important contribution on this issue in the Cairo Conference. Praiseworthy because it shows that APDA and AFPPD are sensitive and responsive with ability and willingness in its leadership to take these issues germane to the population problematique. As the Chairman stated at the opening ceremony, this is the beginning of a series of meetings on this important issues and on the vital role women can and must play if opportunities are given to them, and if we are all to make any headway at all in improving the quality of life and manage the numbers games. We need not to take antagonistic positions on the need for gender sensitivity and on the need to remedy the gender imbalances since all of us have mothers, sisters, wives or daughters and no one in their right mind wants to see them given any less opportunity than the males, or discriminated against just because they are females. The earlier we address legislative barriers, social barriers, cultural barriers, religious barriers and conventional barriers, the sooner we will have a happy, harmonious and mutually satisfying relationship, within the family, within the community and within the nation.

IPPF congratulates APDA, AFPPD and ESCPH for the courageous effort in beginning the process of discussion on women's role and development and population. It remains a challenge to all of us until it can be translated into pragmatic, inclusive and culturally sensitive programs and actions and bring changes to the lives of the marginalized, poor, and neglected among our society, especially among women who are the greatest sufferers of poverty and neglect.

It only remains for me to thank all of you for giving me and IPPF the opportunity to be with you as we discussed these important issues.

Until we meet again, I wish you a safe flight home.

Thank you.

Closing Remarks  
by  
Hon. Mr. Shin Sakurai  
Chairman  
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

Ladies and gentlemen!

The Meeting which started yesterday has now come to the end. Thank you very much for your active participation in the discussions. I am positive that our results, conclusion of this Meeting, will make a great contribution to the Cairo Conference. As I have listened to the deliberations, I would like to report to you on what we are going to do at the Executive Committee Meeting and what we are going to do at the Prep Com Meeting in New York. And, we have discussed this Meeting at the Executive Committee Meeting with regards to the improvement of the status of women. We had enjoyed good discussion. And I am sure that member nations of this AFPPD will enhance the status of women so that men and women will enjoy equal status in the near future. I am confident of that.

Towards the end, Dr. Takakuwa of Japan, has stated that drinking water and education are essential. So, I believe that the Cairo Declaration should duly reflect the importance of improving the living environment and securing the safe drinking water for women given the fact that many women are engaged in the agricultural activities in the developing nations.

Sanitation and public health are also another area of important challenge. However, those people who are illiterate will have to be taught of the needs of the public health by some other means and maybe the use of safe drinking water can be of one tool to enhance the awareness of those people. So, we might be creative in trying to bring better environment for women at large. And, the Executive Committee members would continue to discuss, be creative and determine what should be the best subject that should be addressed by us.

Once again thank you very much.

Closing Remarks  
by  
Hon. Ms. Hao Yichun  
Vice-Chairwoman  
Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee  
of the National People's Congress of China

Respected Mr. Chairman, Fellow Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Tenth Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on Population and Development now comes to a close.

APDA has successfully held nine meetings of Asian Parliamentarians on Population and Development. During this meeting, the parliamentarians and experts from various countries discussed broadly on the issues of population, development and women's role and status, exchanged experience, promoted understanding and friendship. The meeting has achieved a complete success through common efforts made by the parliamentarians and friends here.

Fellow parliamentarians, Asia is the origin of the world's ancient civilization and also the most populous region in the world. The solution of the Asian population problems will be of great importance to peace, prosperity and development of Asia and the world as a whole. Many Asian countries have already adopted proper measures to reduce the fertility rate and have achieved significant results. However, the trend of rapid population growth has not yet been controlled. The task of improving the quality of human resources is still arduous. The solution of population problems will still depend on the common efforts made by the Asian parliaments, governments, NGOs as well as the people from each Asian country.

Today, the Asian parliamentarians from various countries gathered in Beijing once again to discuss the important issue of Asian population and development. The meeting clearly shows that we, parliamentarians, have attached great importance to the issue of population and development and possess a strong sense of responsibility on it. I am deeply convinced that more and more parliaments, governments, experts and personalities of various circles will participate in the population activities so that APDA and AFPPD will achieve greater accomplishments.

In conclusion, I will express, on behalf of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee, the National People's Congress of China and myself, our sincere gratitude to the Asian parliamentarians, representatives of international organizations, experts and guests for your support and cooperation. I hope you will all have a pleasant journey home after this meeting and I would like to welcome you to Beijing again in the future.

Thank you!

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### The Tenth Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development

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