Introduction

In January 2018, a New Zealand parliamentary delegation visited Hanoi, Viet Nam to attend the 26th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF). After attending the APPF Annual Meeting, the delegation undertook a bilateral parliamentary visit to the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea.

The delegation comprised three members of Parliament, and was supported by a delegation secretary:

- Jonathan Young MP, leader of the delegation
- Anahila Kanongata’a-Suisuiki MP
- Mark Patterson MP
- Wendy Hart, delegation secretary.
The New Zealand Parliament is an active participant in inter-parliamentary organisations, such as the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF). Such regional forums bring together parliamentarians from around the world to discuss global issues, propose solutions to international developments, debate world events, and disseminate and promote democratic ideals and practices. In doing so, they ensure a New Zealand voice is heard on these important issues. Participation also provides development opportunities for members of Parliament, which in turn strengthens our Parliament.

Bilateral visits to other countries serve to inform New Zealand members of Parliament, and allow New Zealand perspectives and policies to be understood by other countries. They also promote New Zealand values, highlight areas of common interest, strengthen bilateral and parliamentary connections, and demonstrate New Zealand’s progressive and multicultural society, as well as promoting New Zealand trade and business.

The delegation acknowledges the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, including the advice and hospitality from the New Zealand Embassy in Hanoi provided by Ambassador HE Wendy Matthews and her team. Thank you to the New Zealand Embassy in Seoul, especially Chargé d'affaires HE Roy Ferguson and his team.

**The New Zealand – Viet Nam Relationship**

The New Zealand–Viet Nam relationship is thriving, with frequent high level visits in both directions in recent years. In November 2017 Prime Minister Ardern led a high level delegation to the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in Da Nang, accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Trade and Export Growth. The Prime Minister extended an invitation to the Viet Nam Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc, who visited in March this year. We also have regular inter-parliamentary visits.

Our trade relationship has been growing rapidly. In the past 12 months two-way trade grew 18 percent to almost NZ$1.6 billion. This follows the signing of the ASEAN, Australia, and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement in 2009, with a resulting 180 percent increase in bilateral goods trade. New Zealand has been working with Viet Nam and others on bringing the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership into force and both are participating in Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations.

Our people-to-people links with Viet Nam are growing. There is impressive growth in the number of Vietnamese students applying to study in New Zealand (2,220 in 2017, up 20 percent from 2016). Tourist flows from Viet Nam have been growing sharply from a modest base, largely as a result of Air New Zealand’s Auckland to Ho Chi Minh City direct flights, which will continue for a third season in 2018.

**Background on the National Assembly of Viet Nam**

The National Assembly has 500 deputies, elected for a term of five years. The most recent election was held in May 2016.

**Electoral system**

Deputies are elected by majority vote from 184 election units, each returning up to three deputies. Voters have as many votes as there are seats to be filled in their unit.
To be elected, candidates must receive more than half of the valid votes cast. If fewer than the required number of deputies in a unit are elected in the first round, or if only half or fewer of the voters voted, a second round is held.

Voters must be citizens aged 18 years or over. Candidates must be citizens aged 21 years or over. Candidates may be nominated by political, socio-political and social organisations, the armed forces and state agencies, or they may be self-nominated. At least 35 percent of the total number of candidates must be women, and at least 18 percent must be from ethnic minorities.

**Leadership**

The Chairperson of the National Assembly is elected by and from among the deputies. The current Chair is H.E. Nguyễn Thị Kim Ngân.

The Chair, Vice-Chairs and some additional deputies make up the Standing Committee of the National Assembly. Its extensive powers include calling and presiding over elections to the National Assembly, convening and presiding over the Assembly’s sessions, interpreting the constitution and laws, and issuing ordinances. The Standing Committee continues to meet when the National Assembly is not in session.

All the deputies from each province or major city form a delegation. Each delegation is staffed by full-time deputies and has its own budget and headquarters.

**Legislative process**

Prior to the opening of a session, bills must be sent to the relevant Assembly committee for evaluation, and also be discussed by the delegations. Bills are considered over two sessions. In the first session, submitters for a bill and responsible agencies make presentations. Deputies may then discuss the bill before it is considered in a plenary session and referred to the relevant bodies for revision. In the second session any issues still outstanding are considered before a final vote is taken on the revised bill.

**Committees**

Within their areas of jurisdiction, ten statutory committees consider legislation, scrutinise the actions of government, and conduct investigations. Ad hoc committees may be set up to evaluate projects or investigate issues.

**Assembly composition**

After the 2016 election, the make-up of the National Assembly was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-party members</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of women deputies is 132 (27 percent).
26th Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

General

At the heart of the Asia-Pacific region is ASEAN which has fostered stability in the region since the end of the Cold War. New Zealand has a well-established relationship with ASEAN, including through related forums such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). New Zealand is active in the region’s economic architecture, such as Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and regional trade agreements. To a great extent, the APPF acts as the parliamentary branch of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and keeps close ties with other regional integration institutions such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Pacific Forum, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, and the Pacific Basin Economic Council.

However, the APPF maintains a clear and independent agenda and 27 national parliaments are current members. The APPF expresses its views on these issues and the positions of the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific region through resolutions and a joint communiqué signed by all the heads of delegation.

The APPF is a forum of national parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific region, which seeks to:

- identify and discuss matters of common concern and interest in a global context
- deepen their understanding of the policy concerns, interests, and experiences of the countries of the region
- examine the critical political, social, and cultural developments resulting from economic growth and integration
- encourage and promote regional cooperation at all levels on matters of common concern
- further their respective countries’ sense of regional cohesion, understanding, and cooperation.

The APPF acts to promote regional identification and cooperation, with particular focus on:

- cooperation for the further advancement of peace, freedom, democracy, and prosperity
- open and non-exclusive cooperation for the expansion of free trade and investment, sustainable development and sound environmental practices
- non-military cooperation, giving due consideration to issues relating to regional peace and security.

Prior to departure, the New Zealand delegation worked on a number of draft resolutions. These included empowerment and representation of women and girls; enhanced regional economic integration; and responding to climate change. We were pleased that many of New Zealand’s points were included in the final documents.
26th Annual Meeting of the APPF

Parliamentary partnership for Peace, Innovation and Sustainable Development

Parliaments from 19 member countries, one observer country and guests from two other inter-parliamentary organisations participated in the 26th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum in Hanoi, Viet Nam. These were: Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Mexico, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Brunei (Observer), Morocco (Guest of the Host), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA).

The overarching theme of the forum’s annual meeting was Parliamentary partnership for Peace, Innovation and Sustainable Development. The concept note for the meeting outlined that the Asia-Pacific region has undergone substantial changes since 1993, the inaugural year of what became annual meetings of the APPF. While its potential was already evident at that time, the region has emerged as an engine of global growth. In the 21st century, the Asia-Pacific region is characterised by the diversity and vibrancy of its societies, and the dynamism of its economies. There are also considerable trade opportunities and security concerns for the region.

There is scope for greater cooperation to enhance regional security and contribute to inclusive prosperity for the almost three billion people who live in the 27 APPF member countries. Through strengthened partnerships, parliamentarians can put in place the enabling conditions to bring about that vision. As a unique forum bringing together parliamentarians from across the region, the APPF can be a catalyst for change.

The annual meeting was opened by the President, H.E Madam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan. She welcomed participants and spoke of the APPF vision for regional cooperation and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. After the formal welcomes, the work of the forum proper began with the first of the three plenary sessions and the establishment of the Drafting Committee to discuss in more detail the draft resolutions presented at the forum. The Drafting Committee considered the resolutions and established working groups to meet separately to consolidate draft resolutions on the same topics. New Zealand delegation members delivered speeches in the plenary sessions, participated in working groups, attended the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, and other meetings.

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was held on the first day of the forum and the entire New Zealand delegation attended. Gender equality is the 5th Goal out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, meaning that gender equality is a top priority for all of our countries and one of the benchmarks of progress against which development and growth will be measured. The Honourable Mrs. Truong Thi Mai, Vice President of the Vietnamese National Assembly, delivered the key note address. She discussed the disproportionate impact that climate change was having on women and girls, especially as they were prominent in the agricultural and traditional economies. She implored delegates to be mindful of their legislative power to protect women and girls.
Anahila Kanongata’a-Suisuiki addressed the meeting, noting the progress that had been made in the Pacific legislatures and the substantial work still to be done. She said the APPF itself needed to take gender equality seriously, observing that there was no need for the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians to sit outside the main annual meeting. Furthermore, the rules of the APPF retained outdated concepts of chairman – it was time for men and women to take a joint role in the proceedings and chairpersonship of the APPF.

It was pleasing to see that parliamentarians, both men and women, participated in this discussion.

**Executive Committee**

New Zealand’s term on the Executive Committee has now ceased therefore we did not participate in this part of the meeting. Fiji is the new Oceania representative.

**Plenary sessions**

The plenary sessions of the APPF took place from Monday 18 to Wednesday 20 January. The delegates exchanged views on agenda items, which were grouped into four broad categories:

1) Political and security matters in the Asia-Pacific region
2) Economic and trade matters in the Asia-Pacific region
3) Regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region
4) The future work of the APPF.

Members of the New Zealand delegation presented their views in all of the plenary sessions. These sessions were also opportunities for the delegation to become more informed on international issues of importance to New Zealand.

**First plenary session: political and security matters in the Asia-Pacific region**

The first plenary session focused on political and security matters in the Asia-Pacific region. The immediate past president of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr Saber Chaudhury opened the discussion – making salient points about the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region – which included the smallest state in the world and the most populous. He spoke of the need for legislators to consider the most vulnerable, those with disabilities, the young, and marginalised ethnic groups when performing their duties. He noted the many ‘legacy’ issues in the region stemming from war and colonisation, and spoke of a greater commitment to the principles of the UN Charter of justice and equity. There is a need to cooperate on matters of trans-border crime and terrorism, and to eradicate abhorrent practices including human trafficking and organised crime.

A number of delegates shared initiatives in their own countries and there was consensus that no one state would succeed in tackling security issues without cooperation. Canada particularly cited the relationship between levels of under-development and poverty with conflict. A number of countries expressed concern over the simmering tensions on the Korean Peninsula and the destabilising of the United States of America as a world leader.
Second plenary session: economic and trade matters in the Asia-Pacific region

The second plenary session focused on economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. The Deputy Prime Minister of Viet Nam spoke of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the technologies and trends that are changing the way we live and work, and the difference in opinion of what ‘development’ actually means. A range of parliamentarians gave perspectives on the upcoming APEC meeting.

In addressing this session, Jonathan Young spoke of the importance of trade for New Zealand as approximately 85 percent of what we manufacture we export, and fourteen of our top twenty export markets are APEC members (including the United State, China, and Japan). Linking to the previous plenary session, he noted that peaceful cooperation is essential for trade. Furthermore, trade is responsible for lifting billions of people out of poverty with still hundreds of millions to come – but this could only occur in a fair, transparent, rules-based, and inclusive system. Importantly for legislators, there were huge policy considerations in the Fourth Industrial Revolution necessitated by the significant leaps in digital technology and its ability to extract information, artificial intelligence, and new technologies consistent with a low-carbon economy. These are cross-jurisdiction issues that Parliaments need to contend with.

Mark Patterson shared New Zealand experience of trade liberalisation and concerns around rising protectionism. Over the space of 35 years, New Zealand went from being one of the most closed and protected economies, with distorting tariffs and subsidies, to one of the most dynamic, open and diverse economies. He urged parliamentarians to advocate for modern trade agreements which reinforce labour laws and human rights, the protection of intellectual property, mitigation of cyber security concerns, and multinational tax compliance.

Third plenary session: regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region

The third plenary session addressed several dimensions of regional cooperation that can promote parliamentary partnership for peace, innovation, and sustainable development.

Jonathan Young discussed sustainable development and the necessity for sustainable energy. He noted that there was a relationship between consumption, supply and the environment. As an example of our responsibility to move towards clean energy technologies. Mr Young cited Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister’s point that if sea levels rise by just one percent, 40 percent of the Mekong delta will be submerged. Mr Young shared New Zealand’s proactive legal framework to respond to the threat of climate change, including:

- a goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- establishment of an independent Climate Commission
- transition of our car fleet to electronic vehicles.

He cautioned that the transition to a low carbon and low emissions future must be considered in tandem with the income and prosperity of citizens and the necessary infrastructure.

Mark Patterson spoke on how New Zealand can contribute to regional food production and food security. He noted that one of the strategic objectives of our foreign aid programme is to increase economic and food security by:
• promoting market-led agriculture
• improving market access through better biosecurity and food safety
• building resilience by tackling food safety and nutritional challenges.

New Zealand estimates that in the last year it has assisted over 30,000 farmers to lift agricultural output, with a particular focus on its Pacific Island neighbours, and has many joint initiatives in ASEAN countries. Mr Patterson noted New Zealand has a large reforestation programme and are aware of the need to reduce per head bovine emissions. Science and technology are central to achieving our 2030 commitments and New Zealand continues to play a key role in the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, an excellent example of cooperation for a common goal.

Fourth plenary session: future work of the APPF

Delegates reflected on the recent gains and the future of the APPF. There was agreement that members should report on progress towards shared goals at each annual meeting. The next host will be Cambodia in January 2019.

Adoption of resolutions and joint communiqué

The joint communiqué and resolutions were adopted and signed by the heads of delegations and the joint communiqué is attached as Appendix 4.
Bilateral visit to the Republic of Korea

Following the APPF, the delegation travelled to the Republic of Korea for a series of meetings in and outside Parliament. This was a very interesting time to visit on the eve of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics and Paralympics.

The visit programme is set out in Appendix 5.

The New Zealand – Republic of Korea Relationship

New Zealand’s bilateral relationship with the Republic of Korea is founded on strong political, economic, and security links going back to the Korean War. Diplomatic relations were established in 1962 and a resident Embassy opened in Seoul in 1971. In recent years, the relationship has deepened through engagement in such areas as economics and trade, people-to-people links, film and culture, education, science and technology, Antarctic issues, defence, and promotion of shared interests in regional and global issues.

The Republic of Korea is New Zealand’s sixth-largest trading partner with two-way goods and services trade totalling NZ$4.0 billion in the 12 months to June 2017. Bilateral goods trade is relatively complementary and New Zealand’s exports to the Republic of Korea include logs, ethanol, meat, dairy and seafood. Imports from the Republic of Korea include refined oil, capital and consumer items such as cars, electronic equipment, and machinery.

Trade between the Republic of Korea and New Zealand has grown more than four-fold since 1990 but there is scope to expand these ties, particularly through investment. Following a preliminary study, leaders officially announced the intention to negotiate a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2009. The Republic of Korea is a significant regional economic partner for New Zealand.

As of 2016, the Republic of Korea is New Zealand’s seventh-largest tourism market in terms of visitor numbers. The Working Holiday Scheme enables young Koreans and New Zealanders to work in each other’s countries for up to a year. Korean alumni links stretch back to the estimated 300 Koreans who studied or trained in New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s under the Colombo Plan. As of 2017, the Republic of Korea remains New Zealand’s fourth-largest source of international students with over 7,000 Koreans studying at New Zealand schools and tertiary institutions.

The Republic of Korea is a global science and innovation leader and New Zealand considers it an important collaboration partner. There is a range of ongoing activities under a Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement signed in 1997. The current programme (the Korea-New Zealand Strategic Research Partnership Fund), with a focus on advanced technologies, environment/Antarctic research, and health, was announced in early 2015 and aims to strengthen collaborative links and raise awareness of mutual research capabilities. One notable joint research project to come out of the first programme is a collaboration between the University of Auckland and its Republic of Korea partner, the Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute, involving development of robotics for elderly care.
Background on the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea (Kuk Hoe)

The National Assembly has 300 members, elected for a term of four years. The most recent election was held in April 2016.

Electoral system

253 members are elected by simple majority vote from single-member constituencies. 47 members are elected by proportional representation from nationwide party lists. Voters have two votes, one for a constituency member and one for a party. Parties must obtain at least three percent of the nationwide party vote, or win at least five constituency seats, to be eligible to be allocated list seats.

Voters must be citizens aged 19 years or over. Candidates must be citizens aged 25 years or over.

Leadership

The Speaker is elected by and from among the members for a term of two years. The present Speaker is Chung Syekyun.

Legislative process

On introduction, a bill is referred by the Speaker to the appropriate standing committee for detailed consideration. Once the committee has reported back, the Speaker refers the bill to the plenary session, where it is debated and decided upon. Within 15 days of a bill being passed by the Assembly, the President must either promulgate it or return it to the Assembly with an objection and a request that it be reconsidered. If, after reconsideration, the Assembly passes the bill by a two thirds majority vote, with more than half the members in attendance, it becomes law.

 Committees

16 standing committees consider bills and petitions within their respective jurisdictions, and investigate matters referred to them. Special committees may be established to examine bills and other matters.

Assembly composition

Seven parties are currently represented in the Assembly. The three largest parties are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Korea Party</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Party</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of women members is 51 (17 percent).
**Bilateral programme**

Our first meeting was with Representative Shin Sangjin, Chairperson of the National Assembly’s Science, ICT, Broadcasting and Communications Committee. We visited a committee room and heard how the Parliament conducts its scrutiny work. We spoke about the strong economic links between our countries, for example car manufacture, and the building of naval vessel HMNZS Aotearoa. This will be our largest vessel and a world-first naval “Environship”, with Korea’s Hyundai using the Rolls-Royce concept design under licence.

We acknowledged the friendly bilateral relationship and importance of strategic partnership between our countries. In terms of trade, Mark Patterson noted as a farmer the benefits of the FTA and the opportunities to share information and technology. We agreed that the relationship has potential to grow further with the mutually beneficial bilateral FTA. Currently, Korea’s investment in New Zealand is declining with New Zealand’s investment in Korea on the rise.

Jonathan Young and Representative Shin shared insights on electrical vehicle trends, including the expansion of EV technology such as hydrogen to trucks and freight, and agreed to share experiences in the future.

We then meet with the Republic of Korea-New Zealand Parliamentary Friendship Group Vice President Kim Songsik and Representative Chung Tae-ok. Our discussion focused on inter-Korean relations. Representative Kim, a member of the minor liberal party said he hopes tensions are solved through diplomatic means and that the international community continues to support Korea’s position on this issue. They lamented that six decades since the division of the two Koreas they remain technically at war and have not fully realised reconciliation. We support peace on the Korean peninsula and hope for positive outcomes in inter-Korean relations. We are united in opposition to nuclear weapons testing and isolationism.

During our meeting we experienced the emergency warning system, sent to all cellular phones, which warned of sub-zero temperatures and to take care of children and the elderly.

*Above: The New Zealand delegation with the Republic of Korea-New Zealand Parliamentary Friendship Group Vice President Kim Songsik and Representative Chung Tae-ok.*
We had a lunch meeting with the 2011 Prime Minister Fellow Representative Lee Hye-hoon, who is a member of the conservative Bareun Party. The Prime Minister’s Fellowship provides an opportunity for rising political leaders to visit New Zealand to learn about the bilateral relationship with Korea and to share their expertise with New Zealand political and business leaders. During lunch, there was active discussion on trade, including CPTPP, and the decision to invite North Korea to Pyeongchang Olympics. Representative Lee reflected very fondly on her time in New Zealand.

We then were honoured to call on Deputy Speaker Shim Jae-chul and we acknowledged the excellent bilateral relationship and agreed to deepen parliamentary cooperation. We agreed to seek ways to utilise each other’s strength in ICT and primary industries to add value to the existing relationship.

There was also an active discussion on balance between economic development and protecting the environment and the role of Parliament in this process. Deputy Speaker Shim said this is one of the areas Republic of Korea could learn from New Zealand and said he wishes to enhance cooperation in environment protection. Deputy Speaker Shim travelled directly to the airport following our meeting for travel that included a visit to Wellington. We were very pleased that the Deputy Speaker was able to call on our Speaker.

*Above: The New Zealand delegation with Deputy Speaker Sim at the National Assembly.*
Our defence relationship has developed out of New Zealand’s involvement in the Korean War. Around 6,000 New Zealanders served in Korea, 45 of whom lost their lives. Groups of New Zealand veterans and their families visit the Republic of Korea each April for commemorative ceremonies in Seoul, the Kapyong battle site, and at the UN Memorial Cemetery in Busan, where 34 New Zealanders are buried. We were honoured to lay a wreath at the Korean War Memorial, hosted by the Director of the memorial and accompanied by the Defence Attaché and two members of the NZDF currently deployed to the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission.

Above: A sculpture in memoriam at the Korean War Memorial, named The Drop or Nun’Mul Bang’Ul. The plaque reads:

New Zealand continues to support efforts to bring peace and security to the Korean Peninsula as a member of the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC). New Zealand contributes a small number of New Zealand Defence Force personnel to UNCMAC. Bilateral defence engagement is maintained through involvement in annual military exercises, ship visits, defence talks, multilateral
peacekeeping operations and academic exchanges. An overarching Memorandum of Understanding on bilateral military cooperation was signed in 2014.

That evening we had the pleasure of attending a dinner hosted by the Charge d'Affaires with board members of the very active Kiwi Chamber and Kiwi Alumni association. We heard first-hand about the strong military, business, and educational bonds between New Zealand and Korea.

At a breakfast meeting prior to departure, we met Professor Leif-Eric Easley from Ewha University, a specialist in the Northeast Asian security architecture. Professor Easley discussed issues on the Peninsula and factors that complicate the delivery of aid and work of donors, including the United Nations, when attempting to assist North Korea. Professor Easley shared further research with us, particularly analysis of the Moon administration’s efforts to bring about the ‘peace Olympics’ and the perspectives of the international community.

Conclusion

Our participation in the annual meeting of the APPF was very valuable not only for the issues we discussed but the connections we made with counterpart parliamentarians. It was heartening to bring New Zealand’s perspectives to the table and to see so many reflected in the final resolutions. We hope to remain involved in the APPF activities throughout the duration of the Parliament.

Our visit to the Republic of Korea reinforced New Zealand’s commitment to peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, reiterated the value that New Zealand brings to the bilateral relationship as an innovative country with a complementary economy, and highlighted opportunities for collaboration. Once again, we would like to extend our thanks to our kind hosts in Viet Nam and Korea.

New Zealand Parliamentary Delegation, January 2018
Appendix 1: APPF Programme

Thursday, 18 January 2018
09:00 – 11:30 Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
10:00 – 11:30 Meeting of Secretaries and Advisors of the delegations
12:00 – 14:00 Lunch
14:00 – 17:00 Executive Committee Meeting
18:00 – 18:30 Opening Ceremony
18:30 – 21:00 Dinner hosted by H.E. Mme. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam, President of APPF-26

Friday, 19 January 2018
09:00 – 10:30 First Plenary Session – Political and Security Matters
10:45 – 12:30 First Plenary Session – Political and Security Matters (continued)
13:30 – 15:30 Second Plenary Session – Economic and Trade Matters
15:45 – 17:30 Second Plenary Session – Economic and Trade Matters (continued)
14:00 – 17:00 Meeting of Drafting Committee / Working Groups
17:00 Courtesy call on Leaders of State of Viet Nam

Saturday, 20 January 2018
09:00 – 10:30 Third Plenary Session – Regional Cooperation in the Asia – Pacific Region
10:45 – 12:30 Third Plenary Session – Regional Cooperation in the Asia – Pacific Region (continued)
09:00 – 12:00 Meeting of Drafting Committee / Working Groups
12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

Fourth Plenary Session – APPF Work
14:00 – 16:30 - Adoption of Resolutions, Hanoi Declaration and Joint Communiqué

- Signing of Joint Communiqué
16:30 – 17:00 Closing Ceremony
17:30 Press Conference

Dinner hosted by H.E. Mme. Tong Thi Phong, Vice President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam, President of APPF-26 Organizing Committee

Sunday, 21 January 2018
07:00 – 08:30 Tour / Departure of Delegations
Appendix 2: Final resolutions co-sponsored by New Zealand

26TH Annual Meeting, Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

RESOLUTION ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SHARED PROSPERITY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

(Sponsored by Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Mexico, Mongolia, New Zealand, Russia and Viet Nam)

The 26th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum:
Recalling the 24th and 25th APPF resolutions on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls;
Reaffirming the Convention on the Eliminations of All Forms of Discrimination against Woman (CEDAW), International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, ILO Equal Remuneration Convention and other relevant international instruments covering women’s rights;
Mindful of the fact that although women constitute almost half of the world’s population, they are continued to be marginalized in all sectors of development;
Referring to the result of the 2017 World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index which pointed out that the average global gender gap is now 32% a slight increase compared to average gap last year which stood by 31.7%;
Recognizing the significant role of information and technology that are being vastly developed in this millennial era can play to increase gender parity of 50:50 by 2030;
Acknowledging that greater economic participation by women spurs economic growth and that greater utilization of millennia’s technology for development of business opportunity can promote greater economic opportunities for women;
Aware that women are often disproportionately affected by climate change and natural disasters owing to gender inequalities and the dependence of many women on natural resources for their livelihoods;
Recognizing the importance of involving men in the promotion of women’s economic empowerment, the elimination of gender-based violence and the advancement of women’s political participation;

Resolves to:
1. Call upon the parliaments of the APPF Member States to continue focusing on legislative support of expansion of women's legal, economic and social opportunities, enhancement of the system of family, maternity and childhood protection, and provision of high-quality medical and social aid.
2. Update national laws that promote women's access to financial and capital market, economic and digital education that allow their inclusion in economic activities.
3. Empower women to maximise their access to technology, especially for those who live in remote and rural areas in order to enhance their economic opportunities.
4. Raise the awareness of the "internet of things" to enhance digital literacy of women and girls in Asia and the Pacific.
5. **Call on** Asia Pacific countries who have not done so, to set up regulatory framework that can promote equal remuneration at work, women’s leadership, entrepreneurship, skills and competencies.

6. **Develop** a national financial infrastructure and multinational regional financial institute for women employment, Micro Small Medium Enterprises and entrepreneurship.


8. **Welcome** the new initiative of APEC Women and the Economy Sub-Fund which is scheduled to be operational in 2018.

9. **Urge** APPF members to develop measures that reduce unpaid and domestic work done by women to achieve inclusive growth.

10. **Call on** APPF Member States to better understand the gender differentiated effects of climate change and natural disasters.

11. **Encourage** more women leaders to take an active role in promoting, defending and protecting women’s rights at all aspects.

12. **Encourage** APPF Member States to consider how young people can be better engaged with Parliament and for girls to see politics and leadership as viable career choices.

13. **Urge** APPF Member States to devote particular attention to abolishing harmful practices and legislation that discriminate against women and girls, or perpetuate and condone violence and discrimination against them including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

14. **Encourage** women parliamentarians from the parliaments of the APPF Member States to take part in the Eurasian Women’s Forum to be held on September 20 – 21, 2018 in Saint Petersburg (Russia).
RESOLUTION ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN PROMOTING SEAMLESS REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

(Sponsored by Canada, Chile, Mexico, New Zealand and Viet Nam)

The 26th Annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum:

**Reaffirming** the numerous resolutions adopted by the APPF Member States at previous Annual Meetings on regional economic cooperation and integration as well as economy and trade;


**Recalling** Bogor Declaration adopted at the 2nd Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders’ Meeting in Indonesia in 1994, which establishes a common goal of free trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific by further reducing barriers to trade and investment and by promoting the free flow of goods, services and capital among APEC economies; reaffirming the commitment to fulfill the tasks aimed at their achievement as per the 2010 Pathways to Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) and the 2014 Beijing Road Map for APEC’s Contribution to the Realization of FTAAP;

**Welcoming** the results of APEC 2017 and the 25th APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting organized in November, 2017 in Da Nang, Vietnam in creating new drivers for regional economic integration through promoting open and free trade and investment, supporting multilateral trading system, enhancing regional and sub-regional comprehensive and inclusive connectivity, increasing the competitiveness and creativity of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs);

**Welcoming** the results of the G20 Summit in Hamburg in July 2017, particularly the overarching commitment to shape globalisation to benefit all people and enable our people to seize its opportunities;

**Recognizing** that trade and investment are important engines of robust, sustainable and balanced growth as they provide access to new technology, innovative business and manufacturing processes, as well as link domestic firms, particularly micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), to global value chains, and enhance productivity and innovation;

**Reiterating** the leading role of the World Trade Organization in promoting an international system of liberalized trade;

**Welcoming** the entry into force of the WTO’s Trade Facilitation Agreement and **encouraging** the APPF Member States to undertake the measures necessary to implement the agreement and those who have not yet ratified the agreement to do so;

**Boosting** the compliance of the Goal 17.10 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which promotes a universal multilateral trading system based on open, non discriminatory and equitable regulations within the WTO framework;

**Noting** that political and economic instability has led to lower global economic growth, volatile financial conditions, employment challenges and significantly slower expansion of international trade in recent years;

**Acknowledging** that deeper economic ties relates to the promotion of peace, stability and development and that seamless economic integration is essential to boost inclusive and sustainable growth of each member state as well as to improve relations between countries for a stable and prosperous Asia-Pacific region;

**Recognizing** that the Asia-Pacific region is one of the most dynamic trading and economic growth regions in the world that engages developed, developing and emerging economies alike and that APPF Member States have different levels of economic development, calling upon Parliaments of APPF developed countries to provide assistance to Parliaments of less developed countries in strengthening institutions to foster trade and investment liberalization;
Emphasizing the importance of promoting good governance, strengthening anti-protectionist measures to facilitate free trade and investment, committed to the eradication of corruption and unfair trade practices that impede the optimal development and growth of the economy and international trade;

Underscoring that free trade agreements establish rules and standards by which market access for trade and investment can be more predictable and, therefore, are critical tools for economic prosperity and improved standards of living;

Also stressing that, in doing so, free trade agreements create opportunities by which businesses can benefit from global economic developments, including the rise of value chains, the digital revolution, and e-commerce;

Considering that regional economic integration that is rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive is at the core of the work undertaken by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC);

Recognizing that today’s global trade is multi-faceted and complex, involving investment and capital flows, supply- and value-chains, the movement of labour, connectivity and digitization, knowledge-transfers, as well as considerations related to women’s economic empowerment, labour standards, opportunities for youth, skills-development, diversity and inclusivity, environmental protection, and sustainable development;

Cognisant that protectionism is rising, there have been some skepticism of multilateral agreements, and the rules governing global trade are under challenge;

Acknowledging that challenges remain throughout the Asia-Pacific region regarding income inequality, uneven access to connectivity and education, as well as economic and social marginalization, among others;

Underscoring the importance of unhindered access to economic activities for all social groups, including women, youth, people with disabilities, low income people;

Also acknowledging the intensification of public debate in many parts of the world regarding trade liberalization in part because of concerns over their potential impact on the labour market, lower wage earners, the manufacturing sector and other traditional industries, intellectual property protection as well as domestically-sensitive policies and programs;

Confirming the role of parliaments of APPF member states in creating an enabling institutional environment to economic integration in the Asia-Pacific; affirming that the APPF is a key platform for strengthening cooperation and understanding about regional economic and trade matters;

Affirming the role of parliaments in providing appropriate national legislative frameworks and holding the government’s work to account where the negotiation, ratification and implementation of free trade agreements are concerned;

Committed to continue improving the dialogue based on the principles of equality, mutual benefit and shared responsibility in order to reach prosperity and economic growth in the Asia Pacific region and move forward to a real integration and strategic association.

RESOLVES TO:

1. Confirm that the main objectives of regional economic integration in Asia and the Pacific are growth, cooperation, exchange and innovation, with the aim of creating an integrated market;

2. Support the negotiation and implementation of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements within the Asia-Pacific region that: are non-discriminatory, reciprocal and mutually advantageous; promote regional economic integration, particularly on the part of MSMEs; enhance human capital, innovation, and productivity, especially of the most vulnerable and marginalized segments of society, such as women, and youth;

3. Affirm the determination of APPF member states to establish a seamless and comprehensively connected and integrated economy in the Asia-Pacific through policy collaboration in trade and investment liberalization and business facilitation;

4. Commit to further promote free and open trade in the Asia-Pacific region by, inter alia, supporting a ruled-based, free, open, fair, transparent and inclusive multilateral trading system.
Foster the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) through possible pathways including regional agreements such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and the Pacific Alliance (PA), FTAs between ASEAN and trading partners. Fighting against all forms of protectionism, fostering regional and sub-regional comprehensive and inclusive connectivity;

5. Welcome the positive developments in sub-regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region and note the conclusion or on-going negotiation or expansion of various regional and bilateral trade frameworks involving APPF Member States, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the Pacific Alliance, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and others.

6. Pursue policy strategies to ensure deeper participation of enterprises in APPF Member States, especially micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), in regional and global value chains; to increase MSMEs' innovation capacity, especially for women and youth-led businesses;

7. Promote public investment and policies that facilitate the creation of public-private partnerships related to the implementation of trade agreements, such as regarding infrastructure and transportation logistics, connectivity and digitization, innovation, education and skills-training;

8. Promote the development and utilization of e-commerce in the Asia-Pacific through supporting the strengthening of a favorable, transparent and stable legal environment and policies for cross-border e-commerce;

9. Ensure that the result of trade and investment liberalization in the Asia-Pacific region will lead to the lowering of barriers in APPF members and also between APPF Member States and non-APPF countries to contribute to global economic integration;

10. Mitigate the potentially adverse effects of trade agreements experienced by vulnerable workers and stress that trade agreements and their components, including the movement of people, must reflect regional security developments and concerns;

11. Urge APPF Member States to consider that effective regional trade and cooperation must be built upon domestic policies and regulatory settings that support knowledge-based economies, effective use of information technology, and innovation;

12. Recommend Parliaments of the APPF member states to review and complete legal frameworks that promote free and open trade and investment as well as strengthen anti-protectionist measures at national and regional level;

13. Request Parliaments of the APPF Member States to maintain stable political and socio-economic environment as well as transparent, predictable and non-discriminatory policies for business and investment in conformity with the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) agreements;

14. Strengthen the capacity, engagement and mechanisms for parliamentary oversight of international trade and investment as a key instrument for more profound economic integration in the Asia-Pacific;

15. Foster the representative role of parliamentary members in generating public support for the goals of free and open trade and investment;

16. Promote collaboration between legislative and executive branches to solidify a consensus around regional economic integration issues, urge APPF Member States to encourage their Governments to realize the opportunities for maximizing the existing regional trade architecture;

17. Build the necessary political will to negotiate free trade agreements among APPF Member States that incorporate elements of the modern, multifaceted global economy, including but not limited to: women's economic empowerment, corporate social responsibility, environmental and labour standards, sustainable development; and that are consistent with WTO principles and rules;
18. **Encourage** the economies and their respective parliaments to continue developing work programs with the aim of improving their ability to be part of negotiations and approval of integral free trade agreements for the future;

19. **Support** opportunities for interaction between Parliaments of the APPF member states and between Parliaments and business communities through dialogues, conferences, seminars and other exchange channels for better understanding of specific demands for a open, rules-based multilateral trading system;

20. **Encourage** Parliaments of the APPF member states to implement innovative practices that improve time and cost efficiency for international trade and investment including streamlining customs procedures and reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers as well as enhancing the business climate in each member economy;

21. **Call** on parliaments in the APPF region to undertake meaningful public consultations about trade agreements, including during and before the time that they are being negotiated, and apply the outcomes of these consultations to the ratification process;

22. **Foster** closer partnerships as well as strengthen dialogue and cooperation mechanisms between APPF Member States and parliaments in order to implement commitments to achieving strategic regional goals;

23. **Encourage** APPF member states to prepare and present progress a report at the outset of the next APPF session on promoting seamless regional economic integration.
Appendix 3: Ha Noi Declaration

26th Annual Meeting, Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

A New Vision for Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Partnership

1. We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathered in Ha Noi, Viet Nam under the theme “Parliamentary partnership: Peace, innovation and sustainable development”. We endorsed this Ha Noi Declaration to mark the 25th anniversary of APPF and chart out the course of development for the Forum towards 2030.

2. We recall the timely establishment of the APPF in 1993 to meet the demand for dialogue and cooperation of member countries and the region at the end of the Cold War.

Outstanding Achievements

3. We are pleased to note on the remarkable achievements that the APPF has attained in its twenty five years of development. The APPF has relentlessly pursued common goals of promoting dialogue and cooperation for peace, stability, prosperity in the region.

- The APPF cooperation and dialogue have contributed to regional peace, stability, cooperation and development. The APPF’s member countries have redoubled efforts to strengthen international cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual respect and benefits, respecting the principles of international law, toward a peaceful, stable and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.

- APPF has supported and complemented efforts of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in promoting trade and investment liberalization through lowering tariffs, trade barriers, streamlining custom procedures, thus narrowing the development gap among members and reinforcing the multilateral trading system.

- APPF’s member countries have achieved encouraging results in implementing international sustainable development commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the agreements under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

- The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, inaugurated at the 24th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Vancouver, henceforth will be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting in order to foster ongoing discussion and exchange of best practices and experiences related to topics of common interest to women parliamentarians and promoting gender equality in the region.

4. APPF has contributed to the common efforts of regional and international mechanisms, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC), in maintaining the peaceful and stable environment for cooperation and sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific and worldwide.

APPF in a fast-changing world

5. We recognize that the regional and global landscape and multilateralism are undergoing fundamental changes with many intertwined opportunities and challenges that have far-reaching impacts. Fundamental shifts worldwide are harder to foresee.

- The political and security situation in the world, particularly in the region, have experienced complex developments with various underlying destabilizing factors, in particular security threats which seriously influence regional and international peace,
stability and prosperity exist in Asia – Pacific in spite of constant efforts by entire international community. Nationalism, populism and unilateralism are on the rise; flashpoints, regional conflicts, terrorism, territorial disputes, refugee crisis, cyber security, disasters and epidemics continue to present serious challenges.

- Regional and global economic recovery is on track, yet economic integration has slowed down in many regions as protectionism has risen. Trade and investment have generated unprecedented prosperity in the Asia-Pacific, but barriers remain.

- The multi-layered integration and cooperation trends as well as reforms and revitalization of multilateral institutions have been actively pushed forward. Historic multilateral agreements such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change have brought fresh opportunities for development cooperation. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is expected to boost productivity, transform the linkages in global and regional value chains, but at the same time may contribute to increased inequality in the distribution of the benefits of growth and globalization.

- Against that backdrop, it is critical to maintain and further the role of multilateral fora in the regional architecture and in addressing those intertwined challenges.

6. We acknowledge that the APPF is at a critical transforming juncture and the Forum needs to reform to better serve the need for dialogue and cooperation among members and for increased contribution to international and regional multilateral cooperation, including the implementation of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Parliamentary partnership for a shared future of the Asia – Pacific Community

7. Building on the achievements of the APPF and leveraging on the opportunities of the digital age and globalization, we believe that APPF will shape a strategic and an aspirational vision, thus contributing to maintaining and reinforcing peace, stability and prosperity in the region, as well as promoting multilateral efforts to cope with new challenges. To realize that vision, we reaffirm that peace, stability and security are prerequisites for sustainable development.

8. In an ever more connected region, we maintain as an important objective of our engagement the increased participation of women, youth, and Indigenous communities across the political, economic and social spheres as well as the greater inclusiveness of our societies for our mutual benefit.

9. We commit to further the APPF’s mandate and build up a responsible parliamentary partnership towards a shared Asia – Pacific community’s future of peace, stability, innovation, interconnected and sustainable development. We highlight a partnership underpinned by the seven principles on the relations among Asia Pacific countries as mentioned in the Vancouver Declaration, the Tokyo Declaration, and the Pacific Basin Charter reflected in the Valparaíso Declaration.

10. We underscore the commitments made by member parliaments to the common goals and shared benefits, on the basis of the principles of respect for independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, political, cultural, religious diversity, placing particular emphasis on the rule of law and the international law.

11. We reaffirm our commitment to promote cooperation in the spirit of frank and constructive dialogue, tolerance, harmony, mutual support, respect for the fundamental principles of the United Nations and international law.

- That the APPF member countries continue to pioneer in maintaining peace, stability and security in the region and worldwide, preventing conflicts and seeking solutions to end conflicts, promoting dialogue, building trust, respecting international law, norms and standards.

23
- Underlining the importance of maintaining freedom of navigation, maritime and aviation safety and security; calling on countries to resolve differences and disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law and norms and relevant agreements, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
- Strengthening dialogue and joint actions to address non-traditional security threats, including food security, energy security; enhancing cooperation on sustainable management of natural resources, including integrated management and sustainable use of land, forest, ocean and water resources, through joint efforts and trans-boundary cooperation.
- Strengthening cooperation on disaster risk reduction and response, post-disaster recovery, in such areas as policy framework improvement, innovation, science and technology, facilitation of uninterrupted business, early warning systems, search and rescue.
- Highlighting the importance of APPF member countries’ contribution to common efforts in preventing and countering terrorism and extremism.

12. We support the efforts and encourage APPF member countries to implement the following actions to promote sustainable and inclusive development and strengthening regional economic integration.

- Urging and monitoring the Governments of APPF member countries to redouble efforts and coordination in implementing the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Fully mobilizing resources for investment projects in clean technology, energy-saving technology; showing responsibility and contributing to international efforts in mitigating the impacts of climate change to Asia-Pacific region and worldwide.
- Advancing structural reform, business facilitation; promoting economic, financial and social inclusion, quality human resources, job and skill training and education with an aim to enhancing capacity of the labor force in the digital age.
- Enhance cooperation to further free and open trade and investment toward the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP); building a comprehensively connected and integrated Asia-Pacific; promoting quality and resilient infrastructure, sub-region and remote area connectivity.
- Reaffirming commitment to support the rules-based, free, open, transparent and inclusive multilateral trading system; commit to urging the Governments to refrain from introducing new protectionist measures.
- Strengthening cooperation to capitalize on the potential of the digital and internet economy, including through facilitating e-commerce and digital trade; enhancing services competitiveness
- Strengthening Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises’ (MSMEs) innovation, facilitating MSMEs’ access to finance, technology and management; fostering policies and legal frameworks for start-ups and women’s leadership role in MSMEs.
- Enhancing food security and sustainable agriculture, increasing agricultural productivity and resilience in response to climate change.

13. We underscore the importance of reforming APPF’s procedures in making policies, implementing resolutions and agenda, as well as the Executive Committee’s membership and operation. We reaffirm our commitment to reforming APPF for the Forum to be more adaptive to the fast-changing regional and global landscape.

14. In a world where countries are more interconnected and interdependent, we commit to promoting the coordination and synergy between the APPF and other parliamentary fora and regional, international institutions in dealing with regional issues with concrete initiatives and actions to strengthen linkages between APPF and other
regional institutions, toward a strategic vision which contributes to peace, stability and prosperity in the region. With this in mind, we welcome the tangible outcomes of the APEC Viet Nam 2017 in upholding the core values of APEC of free and open trade and investment and its continued support for the multilateral trading system. We support APEC’s leadership in addressing global economic challenges and building regional economic structure. We congratulate the ASEAN for its 50th anniversary and welcome ASEAN’s contributions to regional peace, stability, development and prosperity.
Appendix 4: APPF Joint Communiqué

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

26th ANNUAL MEETING OF ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

At the invitation of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) was held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, from 18 to 21 January 2018 with 354 participants from 20 member countries and 01 observer country.

1. The third APPF Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was held in the morning of 18 January, before the opening of the Annual Meeting. H.E. Madam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam delivered her opening remarks, emphasized the significance of the APPF Women Parliamentarians Meeting, an important network connecting women parliamentarians to discuss gender equality and other matters for the interests of women and girls. The Meeting addressed the theme of “Promoting gender equality for sustainable development and shared prosperity”. The Honorable Mrs. Truong Thi Mai, Vietnamese National Assembly deputy delivered her keynote address. Delegates stressed that parliamentarians should maximize their roles in all steps of decision-making processes, whether at the global, regional or national level, in different areas to promote the implementation of the 5th Goal of Gender Equality out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The Executive Committee convened on 18 January 2018 and approved the Annual Meeting’s agenda and program of activities. Madam Tong Thi Phong, the First Vice-President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam was agreed to be the Chair in the President’s absence. The Honorable Mr. Vu Hai Ha, Deputy of National Assembly of Viet Nam was confirmed as the Chair of the Drafting Committee. Fiji was agreed to replace New Zealand in the Executive Committee for the coming term.

3. On 18 January 2018, the President, H.E Madam. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, opened the Annual Meeting by warmly welcoming all participants and wishing them a pleasant stay in Viet Nam. In her opening remarks, the President highlighted the challenges and opportunities for the APPF and called for greater cooperation among APPF member parliaments to bring APPF to a higher level to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. At the Opening Ceremony, H.E. Mr. Tran Dai Quang, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam delivered his welcome remarks, highlighting the special role of APPF and its members over the past 25 years in dealing with common challenges. He emphasized that APPF should to work together with other regional fora to build the vision for cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

4. H.E Madam. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the Fijian Parliament, the Host of the 25th APPF thanked the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for its hospitality and excellent preparation for the Meeting. As a special guest of the Host, Madam Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the National Assembly of Viet Nam for inviting her and colleagues to present at the Meeting, symbolizing the parliamentary diplomacy development.

5. The Honorable Mrs. Cuevas Barron highlighted the significance of association, integration and inclusion to contrast the messages of isolationism and the voices that attack multilateralism, especially while the world is facing such important challenges as inequality, disarmament, climate change and so many
on. She stressed the ‘turning words into action’ spirit inspired by the IPU Hanoi Declaration adopted at the 132nd IPU General Assembly.

6. The Honorable Takuji Yanagimoto, Member of the House of Councillors and Head of the Delegation of Japan delivered a speech on behalf of APPF Honorary President Yasuhiro Nakasone, expressing his support for APPF. He highlighted that The APPF Annual Meeting shall become a leader holding the torch of hope not only for the Asia Pacific region but also for the entire world.

7. The Heads of 26th APPF delegations paid a courtesy call on H.E Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam. The General Secretary highly appreciated the increasingly developed APPF cooperation and the APPF Parliamentarians as the bridge between people and governments, representing the people’s aspiration.

8. The Annual Meeting held four plenary sessions. A great number of speakers addressed the plenary sessions. A list of speakers from the plenary sessions appears in the Appendix II.

9. In the first plenary session on Political and Security matters, H.E. Madam Tong Thi Phong, First Vice-President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam delivered her keynote remarks on peace and security, highlighting a shared vision of Asia-Pacific for the interests of its people. Former IPU President, Mr. Saber H. Chowdhury was invited to speak at the plenary session. Delegations shared that peace, cooperation and development remain a major trend in Asia-Pacific and in the world. On the other hand, region also faces potential conflicts, instability, security threats and other global issues such as climate change, epidemics, terrorism, etc. Participants resolutely condemned terrorism and shared the views that terrorism, trans-border crime should be effectively addressed with joint efforts by international community by strengthening cooperation between governments and other related agencies in intelligence sharing, and capacity building for the law enforcement forces.

10. In the second plenary session on Economic and Trade matters, the Honorable Mr. Vuong Dinh Hue, Prime Minister of Viet Nam delivered his keynote speech on positive developments in economic cooperation and regional economic integration. The Meeting welcomed a report by Viet Nam on the deliverables of APEC 2017, including the 25th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam in November 2017. Delegations agreed that despite many difficulties and uncertainties, Asia-Pacific region remained the world’s most dynamic with high growth rate and deeper economic regional integration. Delegations stressed that APPF should enhance cooperation to further free and open trade and investment toward the realization of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP); building a comprehensively connected and integrated Asia-Pacific; promoting quality and resilient infrastructure, sub-region and remote area connectivity. Another common theme was the optimization of global value chains. Delegates highlighted measures to strengthen Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises’ (MSMEs) competitiveness and innovation and facilitate MSMEs’ access to finance, technology and management; fostering policies and legal frameworks for start-ups and women’s leadership role in MSMEs, particularly urge the governments to accelerate administrative reform, and to improve the investment environment.

11. Delegates stressed stronger cooperation in sustainable management and effective usage of natural resources, including trans-boundary water resources, land, forests, oceans etc., which contribute to secure long-term and sustainable food supply. Furthermore, it is necessary to promote sustainable rural-urban development, build communities resilient to natural disasters, diversify agricultural sector, increase investment to boost productivity and quality, and broaden the market of agricultural products.
12. In the third plenary session on Regional Cooperation, the Honorable Deputy Prime Minister Vu Duc Dam delivered the keynote address on climate action, cultural and tourism cooperation. Delegations expressed their deep concern over climate change and extreme weather events, which requires stronger joint efforts on disaster risk reduction to respond to climate change and mitigate its impacts and proposed strengthened cooperation in culture and tourism for sustainable development. IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong delivered his remarks emphasizing the significance of the parliamentary partnership and regional cooperation.

13. Regarding APPF Work, delegations emphasized the role of APPF in promoting partnership for sustainable development and inclusive growth in the Asia-Pacific as APPF Parliamentarians represent the aspiration and interests of the people in the region, for the good of all.

14. At the final session, the 26th Annual Meeting unanimously applauded the kind invitation of the Cambodian National Assembly to host the 27th Annual Meeting in Siem Reap in January 2019.

15. The Meeting was briefed on the outcomes of the Drafting Committee and 4 Working Groups throughout the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting adopted Ha Noi Declaration, the Amended APPF Rules of Procedures which stipulate that the Meeting of Women parliamentarians will be held on the occasion of the APPF Annual Meeting to foster discussion and experience exchange related to topics of common interest to women parliamentarians, and 13 resolutions.

16. At the Closing Session, the Cambodian Head of Delegation delivered his acceptance speech for being the next Host of APPF in 2019. The Annual Meeting expressed highest appreciation and gratitude to the Viet Nam National Assembly for its outstanding organization and hospitality, especially to H.E Madam. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, President of the Viet Nam National Assembly for her exemplary Presidency of the 26th Annual Meeting and the staff for their hard work and excellent care for all participants, which contributed to the success of the Annual Meeting.
Appendix 5: Bilateral programme for Republic of Korea

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<th>Monday 22 January</th>
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<tr>
<td>1630 Delegation arrive Incheon International Airport</td>
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<td>1730 Transfer to hotel</td>
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<td>1900 Dinner and briefing with Embassy</td>
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<th>Tuesday 23 January</th>
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<tr>
<td>0920 Depart for National Assembly</td>
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<td>1000 Call on the Science, ICT, Broadcasting and Communications Committee Chair Representative Shin Sangjin</td>
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<tr>
<td>1045 Call on the ROK-NZ Parliamentary Friendship Group Vice President Representative Kim Songsik and Representative Chung Tae-ok</td>
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<tr>
<td>1145 Lunch with Prime Minister’s Fellow Representative Lee Hye-hoon at Woonsan Korean Restaurant</td>
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<tr>
<td>1400 Call on the National Assembly Deputy Speaker Shim Jae-chul</td>
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<td>1430 Guided tour of the Korean National Assembly</td>
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<td>1530 Visit to War Memorial of Korea</td>
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<td>1720 Depart for the New Zealand Residence</td>
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<td>1800 Dinner at the New Zealand Residence with Kiwi Chamber and Alumni board members</td>
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<th>Wednesday 24 January</th>
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<tr>
<td>0800 Breakfast at hotel with Embassy academic contacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professors Leif-Eric Easley</td>
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<td>1030 Depart for Incheon International Airport</td>
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Appendix 6: Press release

Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives

For release: 16 January 2018

New Zealand MPs advance a peaceful, secure, and prosperous Asia-Pacific region

Jonathan Young MP is leading the New Zealand delegation, including Anahila Kanongata’a-Suisuiki MP and Mark Patterson MP, to the 26th Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) in Hanoi, Viet Nam this week.

The APPF brings together parliamentarians from 27 countries in the Asia Pacific region annually to address political, security, economic, and social issues. The agenda works to promote the expansion of trade and investment, sound and sustainable environmental practices, and the advancement of freedom and democracy. Through the exchange of experiences and the building of networks, the APPF aims to provide parliamentarians on both sides of the Pacific with the knowledge and strategies to build more peaceful and stable societies for all.

The Speaker of the New Zealand Parliament, Rt Hon Trevor Mallard, said “This is a significant Forum, as the APPF will be marking its 25th Anniversary and revitalising its commitment to the shared goals of promoting dialogue and cooperation for peace, stability, prosperity in the region. The Asia Pacific region is dynamic and we face shared challenges. The APPF contributes to matters of regional importance by developing and advancing a parliamentary agenda that supports the work of APEC, and I pleased that New Zealand will be well represented at this milestone Forum.”

This year’s Forum has an over-arching theme of Parliamentary partnership for Peace, Innovation and Sustainable Development, with each New Zealand delegate delivering speeches and considering draft resolutions over the course of the Forum on topics such as the empowerment of women and girls, security and conflict prevention, regional economic integration and the consolidation of multilateral trade systems, climate protection and food security, and regional cultural and tourism cooperation. New Zealand will also be supporting a proposal to enhance the voice of women Parliamentarians in the Forum.

Immediately following the APPF the delegation will also undertake a visit to the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea. Here the delegation will learn about recent parliamentary developments and build an understanding of the opportunities for shared trade and economic development, science and innovation, and enhanced people-to-people links.

The delegation will be in Hanoi 17 - 22 January and Seoul 22 - 24 January 2018.

ENDS