



## The Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population

# NEWS LETTER

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On 21 February, JPFP organized the Joint Committee Meeting with Mr. Björn Andersson, Regional Director of UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), which is headquartered in Bangkok, and Prof. Rintaro Mori, MD, PhD, Regional Advisor on Population Ageing and Sustainable Development at UNFPA APRO, as invited guests.



Following the opening address by Hon. Ichiro Aisawa (Acting Chair of JPFP), Mr. Andersson gave a speech titled, “Promoting the Programme of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)”. In the speech, he pointed, in particular, to the success of ICPD in ensuring women’s rights to choose, which has resulted in the transition from high fertility to low fertility, bringing about significant gains in addressing the world’s population issues. He said there is, on the other hand, a need to tackle emerging, new issues of population, such as extreme low fertility in countries like Japan. Mr. Andersson also expressed appreciation to Japan

for its financial support to UNFPA, for its political leadership, and for its emergency and other assistance, including emergency relief for Rohingya refugees.

In Q&A session, Hon. Banri Kaieda commented: “The importance of addressing population issues really struck home when I visited Cambodia as part of an APDA project when the country was recovering from a civil war. I would like to continue to work on population issues”. Hon. Hideki Makihara said, “As a country with the most advanced population ageing, Japan needs to serve as a model for other countries, but we face issues of sustainability of our social security and pension systems”. He asked UNFPA whether there were examples that Japan can learn from with respect to sustainability of social security systems.

Hon. Seigo Kitamura said, “I am a Catholic. There are many different religions and ways of life, and it is essential we build a society in which people can live peacefully, despite differences in our value systems”. He said, “We would appreciate it if UNFPA could share with us concrete policies for people to respect each other and sustain life”. Hon. Shinsuke Okuno suggested: “Today, the situation surrounding population issues is completely different depending on the country or region. In addressing population issues, these differences need to be taken into account”.



Hon. Asahiko Mihara (Director of JPPF) explained, “Forty-five years ago, Japan assisted Tanzania to introduce irrigation farming, which made double cropping possible. Tanzania was truly grateful for our assistance. Last year, I visited Tanzania and saw that the land had been divided among three children through inheritance, resulting in ‘reproduction of poverty’. Unless we effectively deal with the fundamental issue of population, we cannot sever this vicious cycle”.

Hon. Yukio Ubukata said: “I think I came across the data showing that one in about four children who are 4 years-old today will live to 100. Assuming they would work until 70, younger generations would still have to support them for the remaining 30 years. Japan should set an example in addressing this issue, but international collaboration is also essential”. Hon. Hiroyuki Moriyama touched on his personal experience of participating in a field trip in Lao PDR and of having worked for a development-related NGO, and asked, “What expectations does UNFPA have of Japan regarding demographic trends, including ageing?”

In response to these questions, Mr. Andersson emphasized the importance of demographics and said: “Africa has much to learn from the success Asian countries have had in voluntary reduction in fertility rates, economic development, and improvement in education and health. On the other hand, that success now requires us to deal with the new challenge of rapid population ageing. Although UNFPA is not directly involved with pension systems, we hope to promote policy dialogue with the World Bank and others as the UN system and explore solutions that consider the respective situation in each country”. Mr. Andersson also stressed the concept of “leaving no one behind,” and expressed appreciation to the questions and recommendations from the parliamentarians.

Lastly, Hon. Aisawa concluded the meeting by saying: “The population in Africa, at 1.2 billion today, is estimated, according to high population projections, to surpass 4 billion by 2100, but it is difficult to imagine a situation where they would have sufficient health, education, employment, and food. Population in Africa holds the key to achieving the SDGs, and it is hoped that UNFPA would bear this in mind as it takes initiative. Japan hopes to strengthen partnership with UNFPA.”



## ② Embassy of Japan and IPPF launch latest SRHR and UHC publication

(Source : <https://www.ippf.org/news/announcements/embassy-japan-and-ippf-launch-latest-srhr-publication> )



On the evening of Thursday 31 January 2019, the Embassy of Japan and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) jointly organized an event to launch an IPPF publication entitled *Leaving no one behind: universal health coverage and sexual and reproductive health and rights*, at the Embassy of Japan in London.

This event was an opportunity to showcase the successful partnership between Japan and IPPF, and to highlight the importance of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights which is vital to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), women’s empowerment and human security. It was also an occasion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Japan-IPPF partnership.

Guests in attendance included British parliamentarians, representatives from numerous governments, and development and global health practitioners.

The keynote speeches were given by the Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr. Koji Tsuruoka and IPPF Director General, Dr. Alvaro Bermejo, and were followed by a networking reception.

During his opening remarks, Ambassador Tsuruoka highlighted the importance of universal health coverage in ensuring that every individual gets the treatment that they deserve. He also praised IPPF for their continuous work “on the ground” to address the common challenge of health, and emphasised Japan’s support for IPPF’s activities around the world.

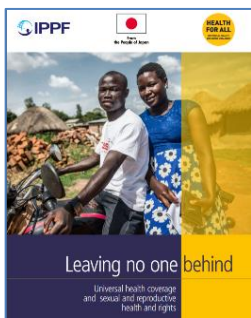
Dr. Bermejo said:

*“By promoting universal access to sexual and reproductive health services that are stigma-free, effective, and affordable for everyone, IPPF makes a unique contribution to universal health coverage.”*

Dr. Bermejo also acknowledged Japan’s leadership in promotion of global UHC based on its own experiences and successful campaigns that have resulted in UHC being adopted as a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target.

The event provided valuable insights into Japan’s leadership in promoting UHC and global health, and the importance of partners looking ahead to forging new opportunities and accelerating collective efforts to achieve the SDGs.

2019 is set to be another important year in building momentum towards UHC, as Japan hosts the G20 Osaka Summit in June, in hope of realising and promoting a free and open, inclusive and sustainable “human-centred future society”. Japan will also be hosting the 7th Tokyo International Conference of Africa's Development (TICAD7) in Yokohama in August, and the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Tokyo in 2020.



IPPF publication *“Leaving no one behind: universal health coverage and sexual and reproductive health and rights”*

[https://www.ippf.org/static/docs/Publication - Leaving\\_no\\_one\\_behind.pdf](https://www.ippf.org/static/docs/Publication - Leaving_no_one_behind.pdf)

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