



JPFP Newsletter

Secretariat of Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP)
Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

September 2024

JPFP's 50th Anniversary #11

JPFP's Visionary and Progressive Policy Recommendations on Population Issues

Since its establishment in 1974, the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP), which is the world's first cross-party group of parliamentarians committed to population and development issues, has been active on the international stage and domestic front, making progressive policy recommendations on important issues of the day. Immediately after the foundation, JPFP formed three working groups on "Population Policy", "Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health" and "Contraceptive Techniques", each of which invited experts to discuss and debate particularly urgent issues. During the 14 months since its inception, JPFP held a total of 7 regular meetings and 7 working group meetings. They drafted a "Resolution on Population Measures", which was adopted under JPFP Chair H.E. Kishi Nobusuke in June 1975. JPFP handed it over to Prime Minister H.E. Miki Takeo and requested the government to introduce these measures into government policies in the 1976 fiscal year. It was also submitted to the Minister of Education, Minister of Health and Welfare, Minister of Finance, Minister of Labour, and other relevant ministries and agencies.

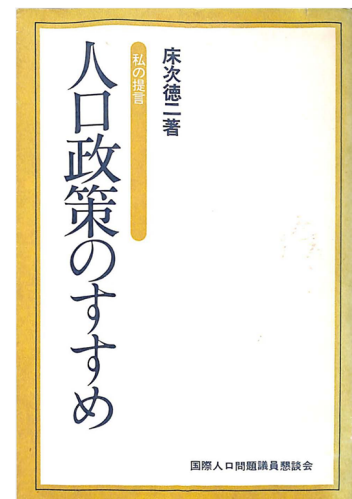
The resolution began with the following words:

"In Japan, where resources are scarce and the population is dense, the issues related to population in particular form the basis of all national policies and should always be given the highest priority and consideration. The world is currently experiencing a population explosion unprecedented in human history and the world's population outlook for the next generation is truly grim and unpredictable, given the problems of food, energy, resources, and the environment, as well as the nationalism of each country. In light of this situation, JPFP continues to search for the most appropriate population measures from quantitative and qualitative perspectives, to contribute to addressing population issues and promoting the welfare of future generations at home and abroad".

The resolution stated that the new goal of population policy is "to stabilize the population at a lower level as soon as possible rather than leaving future population to take its own course" and called for increased efforts to promote family planning, maternal and child health, and contraceptive knowledge and techniques to achieve this goal. It also pointed out the

importance of measures to address population ageing and urban overcrowding and rural depopulation, as well as contradictions in the child allowance system. It emphasized that population policy should be reviewed holistically and comprehensive measures should be put in place, rather than being taken up piecemeal by various ministries. In the area of family planning and maternal and child health, JPPF called for strengthening the dissemination of information and services, increasing the number of midwives and public health nurses, and budgeting for these measures. In terms of measures for contraceptive techniques, the resolution stated, “Although Japan presents a higher family planning practice rate than other countries, 30% of married women have had abortions, and the number of reported abortions alone exceeds 700,000 per year, with an estimated 1 to 1.2 million if unregistered cases are included...It is a well-known fact that the oral contraceptive pill is the most effective, which 50 million women worldwide are taking, while only Japan and other 2-3 countries have not approved it”. JPPF resolved that “the government should immediately consult with the professionals and academia on the oral contraceptive pill”.

The Asahi Shimbun (Newspaper) dated 13 October 1975 referred to JPPF’s resolution that pointed out “the need to reexamine the child allowance system to ensure that all children receive a fair and equitable child allowance” and mentioned that the Ministry of Health and Welfare decided to conduct an opinion survey on the system in response to this view. The working groups continued to further discuss these population issues, and in 1976, JPPF published “[Recommendations on Population Policy](#) (Japanese)” authored by Hon. Tokonami Tokuji, who chaired JPPF’s Working Group on Population Policy. In 1983, JPPF published a book on ageing entitled “*Toward an Ageing Society: Issues and Recommendations*” ([JPPF Newsletter February 2024 Issue](#)).



APDA Global Young Leaders Course for Senior and Middle School Students to Think about Social Issues

The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA; JPPF Secretariat) has been conducting a programme called the “Global Young Leaders Course” since 2021 under the initiative of Dr. Hanna Yoon (Member of APDA Board of Councillors), with an aim to sensitize and empower the next generation to work on the SDGs. In 2021, senior and middle school students from Japan and abroad took a series of online sessions, lectured by experts and businesspersons working in the frontlines of SDG-related fields. In the final session of the course,

the participants compiled their ideas on solutions to social issues they identified and made group presentations in an online dialogue with Asian and Arab parliamentarians. The group presentations were on the topics of “*Poverty: Helping Minorities with Smart Agriculture*”, “*Environment: Digitally Mapping Out Trash Cans to Reduce Public Littering*”, and “*Ageing: Overcoming Social Isolation of the Elderly through the Use of Technology*”. The participating parliamentarians commented that the innovative ideas presented by the young participants helped them identify new policy issues. In 2022, online training sessions in opinion writing were held in collaboration with the global news agency Inter Press Service (IPS). As the outcomes, the students worked on opinion articles on their own selected topics under the guidance of journalists, which were published and disseminated globally by IPS. (IPS website: <https://www.ipsnews.net/topics/youth-thought-leaders/>)



In the 2023-2024 term, the programme is offering virtual and in-person sessions by specialists in various fields, taking advantages of the respective benefits of both modes of learning. The topics covered include women's and girls' empowerment, reproductive health and rights, gender equality, maternal and child health, poverty eradication through innovation, and more. Students also participate as observers in APDA's parliamentary meetings and have hands-on learning about community revitalization efforts using IT by a private-sector company. Through this programme, participants have learned to a great extent that they take stock of various issues at home and abroad and engage in self-initiated activities. APDA will continue to support young people in tackling social issues and promoting solidarity and mutual understanding across borders, including through international exchanges and international platforms to present their opinions.

Digest video produced by 2021 Global Young Leaders Course students:



JOICFP, IPPF, and APDA Submitted Requests for “Pact for the Future”

Ahead of the UN Summit of the Future on 22-23 September, JOICFP, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and APDA submitted a request (prepared by JOICFP and IPPF) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan regarding the “Pact for the Future”. Noting that objections were raised to the paragraphs referring to SRH&RR in the draft Pact, the three organizations sought the support of the Government of Japan, including in ensuring that these paragraphs are maintained in the outcome document. The adopted [“Pact for the Future”](#) covers a wide range of topics including peace and security, sustainable development, climate change, digital cooperation, human rights, gender, youth and future generations, and transformation of global governance, and the reference to SRH&RR was maintained in key paragraphs.

JPPF

Established in 1974, JPPF has the longest history in the world as a supra-partisan parliamentary group on population and development. JPPF, in concert with APDA, has created a network of parliamentarians on population and development, through which a diverse range of knowledge and experience has been shared to accomplish concrete results.

APDA

APDA since its establishment in 1982 has served as the secretariat of JPPF.

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Supported by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

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