



JPFP Newsletter

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

November 2024

Toward JPFP's 50th Anniversary #12

For the First Time in Modern History: A Dialogue for Peace Between the World's Five Major Religious Leaders and Political Leaders

On 9-10 March 1987, in Rome, Italy, a “Consultative Meeting with Spiritual Leaders on Peace, Development, Population and the Environment” was held, chaired by H.E. Fukuda Takeo, former Prime Minister of Japan and Chair of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP). The meeting brought together representatives from the InterAction Council (OB Summit) and seven leading figures from the world’s five major religions. At that time, a meeting of political and religious leaders was considered unfeasible. However, H.E. Fukuda sought a way to make it happen, recognizing that “having dialogue with leaders of major religions, who have long worked in the realm of spirituality—rather than supporting or criticizing any particular religion—will help us address the various global challenges created by the human mind”.^[1]

Over the course of the two-day meeting, the participants discussed issues such as world peace, development, population and environment, resulting in the adoption^[2] of the Rome Statement, which states: “*present trends make the pursuit of effective family planning inevitable. The positive experience of several countries and religions should be shared and scientific research into family planning should be accelerated*”.^[3] It was a historic accomplishment that religious leaders, who had taken a negative stance on population issues including family planning, agreed with political leaders that family planning is necessary for world peace and the resolution of population issues”.^[4] This was widely covered by the media in Italy and beyond.

At the JPFP Executive Members’ meeting held the following week on 17 March and the JPFP General Assembly meeting on 20 May, H.E. Fukuda delivered a report on the Consultative Meeting, stating that “invitations to the ‘Meeting on Population’ would not bring in religious leaders, so we made it happen by calling for a meeting focused on world peace and the importance of population issues in relation to it”. He also expressed his respect for the foresight of JPFP in addressing the issue of population from its inception and for the efforts of its members to date.



[1] Atsumi Keiko, 2023, *OB Summit No Shinjitsu (The Truth About the OB Summit)*, Diamond.

[2] APDA, 1987, "[Population and Development Issue No. 20](#)" (p.10). "[Population and Development Issue No. 22](#)" (pp.12-13)

[3] InterAction Council, "[Rome Statement on Global Issues](#)"

[4] Yasuo Fukuda, Helmut Schmidt, Malcolm Fraser, 2016, *Sekai ha Naze Arasounoka?* (Why the World Struggles: Ethics in Decision-Making), Asakura Shoten.

Severe impact of the Global Gag Rule (GGR) on SRHR

The Global Gag Rule (GGR), also known as the Mexico City Policy, was first introduced by then-Republican President Ronald Reagan in 1984 and was abolished by the Clinton administration in 1993. Since then, it has been both reinstated and repealed multiple times as Republican and Democratic administrations have alternated. Most recently, President Donald Trump reintroduced the policy shortly after taking office in January 2017. The policy restricts U.S. funding to non-U.S. entities that provide or promote abortion-related services, even if such services are legal in their respective countries. Furthermore, the former Trump administration expanded the scope of the regulation to include not only U.S. funding but also non-U.S. funding, cutting off funding to organizations that did not comply.[1]

As a result of the recent U.S. presidential election, Mr. Trump was re-elected as president of the United States. It is expected that the GGR will be reintroduced immediately after his inauguration next January, as it was the last time, and it is increasingly likely that this will affect the activities of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and

others. According to IPPF, during the previous implementation of the GGR under the Trump administration, care that could have been provided was stalled, leading to an estimated 108,000 more mothers and children losing their lives and 360,000 additional HIV infections over the four years from 2017 to 2021.[2]

The Government of Japan significantly increased its contribution to the IPPF in 1985, a year after the U.S. first introduced the GGR in 1984. In 2017, the day after the U.S. government announced the suspension of its contribution to UNFPA, the Government of Japan issued a press release affirming its continued support for the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including support for UNFPA and IPPF. This announcement highlighted Japan's commitment to providing concrete support for the realization of SRHR.[3]

[1] JOICFP, [About GGR \(Mexico City Polity\)](#), JOICFP.

[2] Andrew Cherlin, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 2022, <https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2123177119>.

[3] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, [Contribution to the United Nations Population Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation](#).

Activities for Strengthening National Committees on Population and Development in Bahrain

On 26 October, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), Forum of Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAPPD), and Bahrain Shura Council conducted a meeting of parliamentarians on water security and SDGs in Manama, Bahrain, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Japan Trust Fund (JTF).



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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.

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APDA

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

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Secretariat of Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPPF)

Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

2-19-5-8F, Nishi-Shinbashi, Minato-ku,

Tokyo 105-0003 Japan

TEL: +81-3-5405-8844 FAX: +81-3-5405-8845

E-mail: apda@apda.jp Website: <http://www.apda.jp/en/>

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