



**31st Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF31)
23-26 November 2023, Manila**

**MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS
Report to the Plenary Session**

1. The Meeting of the APPF Women Parliamentarians was held on Thursday, 23 November 2023 from 13:40 to 15:56 in Manila, Philippines.
2. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Pia Cayetano, Chairperson of the Philippine Senate Committee on Sustainable–Development Goals, Innovation and Futures Thinking, and co-Chaired by Hon. Camille Villar, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines.
3. The two main topics that were discussed are Gender and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Women’s Participation and Leadership.
4. Eleven Member Parliaments delivered their speeches on Gender and SDGs, namely Brunei, Canada, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Mexico, Philippines, the Russian Federation, Thailand, and Vietnam.
5. Thirteen Member Parliaments delivered their speeches on Women’s Participation and Leadership, namely Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, the Russian Federation, and Thailand.
6. In her welcoming remarks, Hon. Pia Cayetano emphasized the importance of the meeting and gathering of the Women Parliamentarians because of the opportunity to learn and share experiences in what is still a male-dominated field.
7. In her opening remarks, Hon. Camille Villar stated that our commitment to achieving gender equality is intricately linked with the realization of SDGs. She shared that the Philippines recognizes the integral role of women in fostering a society where every individual, regardless of gender, can thrive. She then invited her fellow women parliamentarians to engage in discussions that will contribute to the SDG agenda in their respective nations and collectively propel the Asia-Pacific Region towards a more inclusive and equitable future. She likewise invited the members of the Body to deliberate on strategies to enhance women’s role in governance, share perspectives, exchange ideas, and to formulate actionable strategies that will resonate across diverse nations.

8. Hon. Pia Cayetano opened the floor by giving a brief introduction on the topics to be discussed. She then mentioned that she advocated the creation of the first-ever Committee on SDGs, Innovation, and Futures Thinking in the Philippine Senate in 2019, which was established to oversee the country's progress in achieving its commitments to the SDGs by the year 2030. She added that since gender equality is SDG No. 5, it is indispensable to the success of the 17 SDGs and, therefore, women must be at the front and center of the agenda and their implementation. For the topic on women participation and leadership, she pointed out that the current APPF forum on Women Parliamentarians proves the importance of women in decision-making positions. She reminded the Body that the goal is to empower women in all roles of leadership. She also mentioned that they must be cognizant of unpaid care and shared responsibilities because, although women are primarily in charge of their homes and doing so with lots of love and affection, it is likewise a deterrent for many women to participate in the community and in local and national policy-making bodies because of their responsibilities in the home. She reminded the Body that despite all the efforts and communications on violence and abuses, these still happen in the communities and countries.

Gender and Sustainable Development Goals

9. Hon. Hajah Rosmawatty Abdul Mumin of Brunei expressed her alarm over the report that 15 percent of the SDG Agenda 2030 are on track and many are going in reverse; thus, Brunei welcomes a political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development that was adopted in September 2023 to expedite the SDGs' implementation. She also reported that Brunei is making progress in advancing the SDG Agenda 2030 and is continuing to be inclusive, sustainable, and transformative, focusing on a multi-faceted approach to access inclusive and equitable quality education and training, decent jobs, better services, and an enabling ecosystem supported by assistive technologies. She added that Brunei has undertaken a research study with 1,400 women, 400 at-risk women, and 300 men, which became helpful, relevant, and practical because the needs and contribution of women in Brunei were reflected. With the availability of their data, disaggregated by age, sex, location, and socio-economic background, they were certain that women's decision-makers and leaders would be able to reflect the needs and challenges on the ground during the process of decision-making. She likewise undertook to continue to put greater emphasis on digital literacy among their people in order to fully leverage on the technologies to improve their lives, and more importantly to spur the economic advancement and stimulate broader economic growth. Another undertaking Brunei mentioned is to provide equal opportunities and access for women to enhance their skills, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) because education is a driving force to a woman's empowerment. She, then, called upon parliamentarians to put greater attention to close the gender digital divide and address the excess gaps to education.
10. Hon. Vanda Sarundajang of Indonesia stated that the SDG Agenda 2030 remains the world's best roadmap to peace, security, recovery, dignity, and shared prosperity. She then proceeded to share that Indonesia International Law has set the priorities, which are as follows: (i) increasing women's empowerment in entrepreneurship; (ii) increasing the role of mothers in children's education; (iii) reduction of violence against women and children; (iv) reduction of child labor; and (v) prevention of child

marriage. She expressed her belief that challenges related with gender and SDGs faced by countries are unequal; hence, she called upon everyone to ensure that all countries, especially the developing countries, could achieve SDGs through shared commitment and action. She ended her speech by emphasizing that gender equality plays an integral part in fostering sustainable development as enshrined in SDG 5, which provides that decision-making processes should be participatory, responsive, equitable, and inclusive.

11. Hon. Ota Fusae of Japan manifested that Japan has submitted the draft resolution on “Promotion of Gender Equality and Strengthening Women’s Participation”, which mentions that the realization of an inclusive society where all people can achieve the life plan for their children regardless of gender is the driving force of economic growth. She expressed agreement with everyone in the forum that with such an inclusive society, we must achieve gender equality and ensure that women can participate in decision-making in all areas and levels in an equal and meaningful form. She then proceeded to report on Japan’s efforts in strengthening women’s participation, gender equality, empowerment of all women and girls, which their country considers as important also from an economic revitalization perspective. When she served as the State Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry until September 2023, she was engaged in policies to encourage companies excelling in the development of female leaders and female empowerment. She confirmed that the empowerment of women and fully accepting women’s capacity contribute to increase in diversity, and generate innovation led to the creation of covert value and revitalization of the economy. She committed to promote efforts to realize the virtuous cycle of females in parliament and economic growth. She also reported that Japan has initiated a guideline for women’s policy entitled, “The Basic Policy on Gender Equity and the Empowerment of Women 2023”. She also provided two specific initiatives in Japan: (i) the Nadeshiko Brand—wherein companies are selected based on their outstanding performance in terms of encouraging women’s empowerment; and (ii) Japan is ultimately aiming to increase the ratio of female executives to 30 percent or more by 2030, increase the ratio of female entrepreneurs to 20 percent or more by enhancing support for fundraising, and decrease, if not close, gender pay gaps.
12. Hon. Thanta Kongphaly of Lao PDR stressed the importance of Gender and Sustainable Development Goals, which is appropriate to the situation of women in the region and international labor. He stated that women’s capacity building, implementation of gender equity and equality, and women leadership and participation play a role in improving and developing women. He complimented this forum for advancing and promoting women participation in political decision-making, collaborative process to create a network for solidarity, harmony, and unifying force in addressing conflict and government gap. He then reported that Lao PDR has adopted various laws that turn the content of convention of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women into law, such as: (i) the Constitution provided equal rights without discrimination, and focus on implementing development policy in promoting and protecting the advancement of women and children; and (ii) the budget law stipulates the allocation of the State budget that ensures gender equality is one of the basic principles of Lao PDR budget allocation. He added that Lao PDR has made efforts to implement the five-year national and social economic development plan, which includes the implementation of a policy on the elimination

of all forms of discrimination against women and the empowerment of women in all areas. He also manifested that Lao women has been included in leadership positions at various levels such as: (i) Members of the Lao National Assembly: 22 persons; (ii) Members of the Provincial Peoples' Assemblies: 30.5 percent; (iii) Prime Minister and equivalent: 77 percent; and Deputy Minister and equivalent: 73 percent. He noted that in order to achieve sustainable development goals in line with the 2030 Agenda, women participation is essential; thus, countries in the region must actively cooperate with developed countries to increase assistance and support to developing countries to move forward with a goal to ensuring prosperity, peace, and stability in the Asia Pacific Region and around the world.

13. Hon. Carla Morales Maldonado of Chile expressed that the fulfillment of the SDGs is directly related to the well-being of our populations and especially of women, who for years have seen their development capacities diminished, either due to lack of studies, training, or simply due to lack of opportunities to develop in the fields that were once forbidden for many years. She added that women have the obligation and the challenge to fight to achieve empowerment and incorporate their vision in the bills and public policies that seek to reduce poverty and eliminate hunger. She likewise mentioned that it is essential to guarantee full universal access to health and education with a clear sense of equality while eliminating stereotypes or canons where the trend has been to assign women roles that should be shared between men and women, such as child care and the care of elderly people. She then mentioned that leaders are required to break patterns in order to achieve the full inclusion of women in decision-making in companies, board of directors, and leaders in politics who can fight for equality, gender, and confront the negative effects that climate change is producing, taking measures, such as responsible consumption, reducing the effects on the environment, minimizing the carbon footprint, taking care of marine resources, and all natural resources in general. She proceeded to invite the Body to hold a fruitful dialogue in order to exchange practices that can help us achieve the 2030 SDG Agenda. She further reported that Chile's Chamber of Deputies during the last election reached 23 percent of female representation, and that after years, they have decided to change the name of the Camara Diputados, which is all masculine, to Camara de Diputados y Diputadas. From seven female members in the Parliament in 1990 to 54 female members in 2023. In the Chilean Congress, 55 are women and 100 are men or 35.5%. Out of these 55 women, only 11 hold the Chairpersonship in the 27 Committees, but two hold the position of Vice-President.
14. Hon. Indira Rosales San Roman of Mexico expressed concern for women who live in poverty and related the prevalence of violence against women. She recognized that progress in their country has been slow, but also highlighted some achievements, such as its Senate being composed of 50 percent women and having two women candidates in the next presidential elections, which ensures that the next President of Mexico would be its first ever woman President.
15. Hon. Liudmila Skakovskaya of the Russian Federation highlighted that the Russian parliament has given a significant attention to increasing the number of women leaders and their commitment to gender equality, as shown by the Eurasian Women's Forum that their country holds every 3 years since 2015. This forum brings together women from Europe and Asia to discuss and address key issues related to

gender equality, women's empowerment, and the advancement of women in various fields. Before concluding her speech, she invited all APPF member states to the Fourth EWF to be held at Saint Petersburg from September 18 to 20, 2024.

16. Hon. Piyachat Wanchalerm of Thailand declared her country's support for gender equality and they continue to make significant changes by instilling and implementing Thailand's 2017 Constitution and National Development Plan and Strategies at all levels. She added that the National Assembly of Thailand has integrated gender equality in their annual budget and National Development Plan with the aim to convert such plans into reality via projects and initiatives implemented nationwide. She reported that Thailand's 2015 Gender Equality Act develops policies to protect all individuals from gender-based discrimination by developing a curriculum on gender roles that cultivates positive attitudes and acceptance of gender equality in children from an early age. She encouraged parliamentarians to share lessons, experiences, and knowledge, and initiate necessary National Economic and Social Development Plan to focus on people, reducing social inequality, providing further opportunities for women to participate even more equally in national development.
17. Hon. Thai Quynh Mai Dung of Vietnam reported that Vietnam has nationalized the realization of SDGs through the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. She proudly stated that Vietnam has remarkable achievement in gender equality and SDGs, in particular: (i) gender integration has been one of the mandatory requirements in the drafting and appraisal of legal documents, creating an important basis for the effective implementation of gender equality goals; (ii) women's opportunities for management and leadership positions are institutionalized and enhanced; (iii) gender gap in politics has gradually been reduced with data showing that Vietnam has among the highest rate of female political participation in the world; and (iv) Vietnam takes into account the proportion of women in the workforce and the extent to which women participate in management and business activities and thus ranked among the top 45 percent of countries globally and the top three in ASEAN for having no legal instructions on freedom of movement, work decisions, and starting and operating a business, property ownership, and on marriage-regulated regulations with ratio of businesses owned by women is almost 30 percent. She proposed the following in order to strengthen partnerships and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region and to promote implementation of the SDGs on gender equality and gender-related issues: (i) strengthen the role of the member parliaments in continuing to improve the national and regional legal policy and law to create a legal framework for sustainable recovery and gender responsiveness; (ii) coordinate to conduct gender-responsive impact assessment of socio-economic solutions made by member parliaments; (iii) share experiences and good practices between member-parliaments; (iv) strengthen cooperation and share experience among groups of women parliamentarians in the Asia-Pacific region, speak with one voice on gender equality for sustainable development and common prosperity; and (v) make gender sensitive decisions on the national budget for the implementations of SDGs, and mobilize resources and support from the international community for women in various fields.
18. Hon. Flordeliz "Gigi" Osler of Canada encouraged the Body to pursue greater equality in our home countries through efforts directed to attaining SDG 5, and to monitor our country's progress in achieving women's full participation in all aspects

of political, economic, and social life. A pronouncement was also made that Canada supports initiatives to strengthen women's influence and capacity to take part in public life and decision-making including in elections in democratic institutions and in the public sector. It was also manifested that Canada advocates for the availability of accessible and affordable child care which contributes to gender equality and supports women's participation in leadership and all aspects of life. Implementation of policies and measures to eliminate violence against women in the workplace, in public and private spaces, and online, and ensure that women are aware of and have barrier-free access to education, training, mentorship, and networking opportunities were also recommended. Lastly, a call for the support for meaningful integration of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality considerations was expressed.

Women Participation and Leadership

19. Hon. Geraldine Roman of the Philippines and Chairperson of the House Committee on Women and Gender emphasized that women bring unique perspectives and experiences that enrich the entire governance process. Women leaders often prioritize healthcare and education, and ensure that policies are not only equitable but also inclusive, catering to the needs of the most vulnerable sectors of society. She also mentioned her proposed legislative measure that will require political parties to have a 40 percent gender quota in order to break down the barriers that prevent women from ascending to leadership roles.
20. Hon. Michelle Landry of Australia voiced her concern that despite some advancements, the presence of women in leadership roles within the government and corporate sectors in the Asia Pacific region still falls below the global average of 25.5 percent. She reported that after the May 2022 election in Australia the newly established 47th Parliament demonstrates an improved gender balance, with the election of 58 women to the House of Representatives, which, however, still remains a substantial underrepresentation of women in both parliament and executive government. Less than one-third of parliamentarians and one-fifth of ministers are women, which falls short of the United Nations' recognized threshold of 30 percent. She added that efforts were made by Australia with the establishment of the Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, which released its report entitled, "A 10-year plan to unleash the full capacity and contribution of women to the Australian economy". The task force has put forth seven comprehensive recommendations aimed at enhancing women's workforce participation in the coming decades and focuses on addressing barriers for women in the realms of caregiving, employment, education and skills, the tax and transfer system, and government processes. It also advocates for the Prime Minister and the Minister of Women to provide annual reports on the advancements made in enhancing economic participation for women and proposes legislation to establish universal, high-quality, and affordable early childhood education and suggests an extension of the paid parental scheme to 52 weeks. Australia also provided the Investing in Women program, which is a multi-country initiative concentrated on fostering women's economic engagement both as employees and entrepreneurs.
21. Hon. Mom Sandap of Cambodia stated that the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia has its first woman elected as President of the National Assembly of the

Kingdom of Cambodia; hence, showing that Cambodia has faith in women's leadership and capacity. She reported that many women started to hold leadership and important positions in Parliament and the Royal Government such as the Minister of Women's Affairs, Minister of Culture and Fine Arts, Minister of Commerce, and Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia. She added that Cambodia's National Assembly partnered with the Parliamentary Center of Asia to launch a campaign called "Girl Leader", which aims to teach girls between 14 and 17 so that they understand and know that they too can engage in political careers. She further reported that in terms of female entrepreneurs, Cambodia comes in at number 25 out of 153 countries with 61 percent of them being women and the Royal Government has been successful in achieving 50 percent of women to work in the public sector

22. Hon. Victor Oh of Canada mentioned that Canada prioritizes women's leadership through a gender-balanced Senate and cabinet and is implementing several initiatives to enhance women's political participation domestically, including adapting existing legislation to reduce barriers to participation in electoral process by amending the Canada's Election Act, enacting legislation that enables the House of Commons and the Senate to provide maternity and parental leave for parliamentarians and introducing a Code of Conduct Against Sexual Harassment that includes an official complaint resolution process. He further informed the Body that since 2015, the Women's Program Act, Women and Gender Equality - Canada has invested over \$13.9 Million in 30 projects to promote and enhance women's participation in politics. In 2021, the Clerk of Provincial Council also released the call to action on anti-racism, equity and inclusion in the Federal Public Service.
23. Hon. Wu Zeng of China shared that the Electoral Law of China stipulates that the deputies to the NPC and local people's congresses at various levels should be widely represented, and there should be a certain proportion and number of women deputies. Currently at the NPC, they have 790 women deputies or 26.54 percent, which increased by 1.64 percentage points over last year. Other practices China is using in protecting women's ecpolitical rights in promoting women's participation include: (i) improving the legal framework for women's participation to the equality is a basic national policy enshrined in our law and the Constitution and the other institutional mechanisms are providing for women's participation; and (ii) capacity-building for women's political participation; (iii) raise public awareness and create a conducive environment for women's participation in political processes.
24. Hon. Himmatul Aliyah of Indonesia shared her country's experience in women leadership in their parliaments. Currently, 126 of 575 or 20.20 percent of the Member Parliaments of the House of Representatives of Indones are women and for the first time, there is a woman speaker.
25. Hon. Shinohara Takashi of Japan expressed concern for the high barriers set for women to become a parliament member. However, the ratio of women among the candidates and winners was the highest in the history of Japan's parliamentary election.
26. Hon. Susan Chemerai Anding of Malaysia reported that her country has constantly undertaken efforts to make incremental improvements in relation to women's

leadership and gender equality through the implementation of various strategies and initiatives. Moreover, substantive progress is also reflected in Malaysia's national development plan and federal budget to ensure better representation of women in politics, the economy, and the social sphere. She added that the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development appointed 44 Gender Focal Points and that the Malaysian government has also integrated a gender-responsive budgeting approach in all ministries. Further, she informed the Body that in 2019, Malaysia appointed its first female Member of Parliament as Chairman for the Public Accounts Committee. In 2020, Malaysia appointed the first female Member of Parliament as Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives. In 2021, the first female civil servant was appointed Chief Administrator of the Parliament of Malaysia. Moreover, she stated one of Malaysia's initiatives to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls is the gazetting of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 2022, which has been enforced in stages.

27. Hon. Merlynn Abello Alfonso of Federated States of Micronesia informed the Body of the recent victory of the women in the FSM parliamentary elections whose parliament has largely been exclusively male-dominant since its inception. She explained that the presence of women in parliament changes the political agenda and the priority issues to be addressed such as gender equality, women empowerment and equity, and equal access to health, education, and many more. Despite male domination in Micronesian culture, she reported that the Federated States of Micronesia is taking baby steps and this is a positive start.
28. Hon. Indira Rosales San Roman of Mexico called on APPF member-States to accelerate actions to achieve the targets of SDGs; to establish measures to end poverty, food insecurity, provide quality education, and improve the current conditions of women and girls; to consolidate joint efforts to address recommendations for gender-based violence ensuring women's leadership positions and universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and promoting a more equitable division of unpaid household and care work; to promote inclusion of women in the development of digital technologies; to agree on prevention and recovery of policies in favor of women in the face of climate change effects; to prioritize healthcare especially for children and women in the face of future pandemics and emerging diseases; to maintain equal representation in negotiation or mediation teams in conflict zones; to follow-up on their commitments adopted at the APEC Women and Economic Forum to advance care, climate change, and access to global value change. She ended her speech with reporting to the body that for the first time, Mexico will have a woman as President come next year.
29. Hon. Jiratchaya Sapso of Thailand stated that in her country women have greater opportunities to participate in several aspects of society and they are given the same opportunities as men in many fields. The Thai government has promoted the roles and participation in the society that is consistent with SDG 5. She mentioned that equality of all people, the equal rights of women and men, the prohibition of unfair discrimination against a person, the proportion of women in an ad hoc committee related to women matters and the equality between women and men in a list of candidates for election have been prescribed by Thailand's Constitution of 2017. She added that in Thailand, women's representation in leadership roles is low across sectors. This lack of representation extends to decision-making issues on climate

change and COVID-19; thus, urgent action is needed to achieve SDGs by 2030. To promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination that is challenging women's participation and leadership, Thailand formulated a five-year women's development action plan from 2023-2027 as a guideline for women's capacity development and as a clear direction that Thailand should properly respond to social transformation and emerging challenges to women's participation and empowerment.

30. APPF Member Parliaments noted that it is everyone's duty to ensure that all countries achieve gender equality and that every aspect of society is inclusive and participatory, because it is through the equal participation of women can we achieve a well functioning society.
31. APPF Member Parliaments advocated for the integration of gender perspectives in legislative processes and national development agenda, as well as the allocation of resources to support initiatives that advance gender equality and women's empowerment. They also emphasized the need for gender-responsive policies and approaches to address the impacts of the pressing global issues, such as the impacts of climate change and armed conflicts on women.
32. APPF Member Parliaments emphasized the importance of increasing the representation of women in parliaments and politics, leadership positions, and elected bodies, pointing out that this contributes significantly to the promotion of inclusivity and effectiveness in the decision-making process. They highlighted that such an increase would redound to the benefit and welfare of women, acknowledging the potential positive impact of greater female participation in shaping policies and initiatives.
33. APPF Member Parliaments recognized that women make up a significant portion of the workforce and their contributions are vital to economic growth and development. They highlighted the importance of gender equality in the workplace, equal pay for all, career advancement opportunities for women and the support for work-life balance.
34. The APPF Member Parliaments highlighted that in the pursuit of gender equality, the role of men is also crucial. By working together, men and women can create a more equitable and inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.
35. APPF Member Parliaments highlighted the need to establish strategies for the development and execution of policies aimed at enhancing the status of women, which include ensuring financial and institutional backing, such as offering social security, accessible healthcare, quality education, training programs, and affordable childcare. Additionally, the elimination of gender-based violence and discrimination, promotion of equal employment opportunities, and the facilitation of inclusive digitalization have been recommended as key components of women's empowerment initiatives.
36. The APPF Member Parliaments underscored the need for stronger collaboration and partnership between governments, civil society, and the private sector to advance the agenda of gender equality.

37. Parliamentarians are urged to work closely together, support each other, build networks and to constantly discuss measures that will bridge the gender gap and ensure the success of all SDGs.

Working Group

38. The Working Group discussed two draft resolutions: (a) *Joint Draft Resolution on Gender and Sustainable Development Goals*, to which Chile, Japan, Mexico and the Philippines submitted their draft resolutions; and (b) *Joint Draft Resolution on Women's Participation and Leadership* to which draft resolutions were submitted by Australia, Canada, Mexico, Philippines, and the Russian Federation.

Gender and Sustainable Development Goals

39. Canada raised its concern pertaining to Operative paragraph No. 1, clarifying the details as to who will create the platforms and what kinds of platforms will be created. Chairperson Hon. Pia Cayetano expressed that the intention was to showcase all kinds of platforms and to not limit the resolution to specific platforms.
40. Canada proposed to replace the word "Create" with "Encourage" in order to reflect the intention to encourage the use of all kinds of platforms. Chairperson Hon. Pia Cayetano's counter proposal was to rephrase Operative Item No. 1 to reflect: "**Urge** APPF Member Countries to create platforms to showcase successful practices that promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming around the world." Canada agreed to this proposal. The discussion on this item was then closed.
41. The Russian Federation commented on Preambular paragraph No. 5, which reads: "*Deeply concerned* that according to post-pandemic reports, the world is not on track to achieve the 17 SDGs by 2030 and is regressing on gender parity." The Russian Federation requested to change the word "parity" to "equality".
42. Japan commented and expressed its concern on the Russian Federation's suggestion, referencing the Russian draft stating that the traditional value of mother and children should be recognized and strengthened. In view of its concern that Russia intends to undermine the significance of parity, Japan proposed to keep the word "parity" in the joint resolution.
43. The Russian Federation clarified its intention in replacing the word "parity" to "equality", elaborating that it aims to reflect the true intention of the resolution, which pertains to selecting women in certain positions because of their competence and professionalism, and not just to meet the required percentage of women in certain positions, which can be discriminatory to men and does not reflect true equality.
44. Chairperson Hon. Pia Cayetano suspended the session and privately discussed Japan's contention with its delegate. The session resumed and the Chairperson announced that the word "equality", as suggested by the Russian Federation, is accepted. The discussion on this item was then closed.
45. The Russian Federation commented on Operative paragraph No. 8 and proposed to amend it to delete the phrase "Gender-responsive Climate Action which recognizes the impact of climate change on women and girls". Their new proposed resolution

reads as follows: “**Promote** active participation and leadership in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction efforts, while simultaneously addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities and challenges, and prioritizing the leveraging of women’s knowledge and expertise in these areas.”

46. Noting that the topic line “Gender-Responsive Climate Action” is an advocacy of the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee, who is a specialist in climate change, Hon. Pia Cayetano recommended keeping the “Gender-Responsive Climate Action” exactly as it is, but the drafting committee will be made aware of the Russian Federation’s reservations. In light of this, the Russian Federation agrees with the Chairperson.
47. Canada noted that they support the wording “Gender-responsive Climate Action” proposed by the Philippines because it is consistent with their climate change expert, human rights expert, as well as the stand of United Nations and World Health Organizations. Accordingly, Canada reiterates its support for the Philippines' original wording.
48. The Kingdom of Thailand raised its concern on the use of “APPF member parliaments” and “APPF member countries” in the proposed Joint Draft Resolution. A proposal was then made to use the phrase “APPF member countries” for consistency. Chairperson Hon. Pia Cayetano accepted this request, and to this end an omnibus amendment was adopted.
49. The proposed *Joint Draft Resolution* had received no other feedback or recommendations, so a motion to accept and approve it as a whole was passed.

Women Participation and Leadership

50. In Preambular paragraph No. 9, the Russian Federation proposed eliminating the word "gender" from the term "digital gender gap." Consequently, Canada upheld the notion that gender is a social construct that is malleable and supported the original language, retaining the term "gender."
51. To be clear, Chairperson Hon. Pia Cayetano noted that the Russian Federation is actually attempting to change a specific clause in the resolution they have presented, and after careful consideration, the Russian Federation has decided to keep the word "gender." Thus effectively withdrawing the proposed amendment.
52. The proposed *Joint Draft Resolution* had received no other feedback or recommendations, so a motion to accept and approve it was passed by the Body unanimously. The resolution on Women’s Participation and Leadership without any amendment is now for submission to the Drafting Committee.

Submission to the Drafting Committee

53. Both *Joint Draft Resolutions* were submitted to the Drafting Committee for further discussion and approval.
54. The Chairperson expressed her appreciation of the delegates’ active participation and kind cooperation.