

## RESOLUTION ON EMPOWERING WOMEN TO COPE WITH FUTURE CRISES

### *Draft Resolution Sponsored by Thailand*

We, the parliamentarians of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), gathering in Bangkok, Thailand, for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the APPF under the theme *Parliaments and the Post-COVID-19 Sustainable Development*:

**Reaffirming** international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR1984) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979), which aim at enhancing the protection and promotion of women's rights;

**Recalling** the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) as a progressive roadmap for enhancing equality, development, and peace for all women and girls;

**Recalling** the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 5 on the obligation to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls in order to end discrimination and eliminate all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls, value unpaid care and domestic work and ensure equal opportunity for leadership, access to feminine health care and equal rights;

**Noting** that there is a linkage between the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and gender equality, which requires collective actions to help advance the women and girls' global agenda;

**Recalling** the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review, held on 27-29 November 2019 by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, which acknowledged the progress and challenges of gender equality and women's empowerment in the region;

**Recalling** the 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> APPF Annual Meeting resolutions regarding gender equality and empowerment of women and girls to increase political, economic, and social participation of women, to promote gender equality for sustainable development and shared prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region by increasing women's participation and representation at all levels;

**Noting** that the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionate impacts on women and girls, and, therefore, could aggravate gender inequalities and social, political, and economic vulnerabilities;

**Drawing attention** to the United Nations policy brief: the impact of COVID-19 on women;

**Expressing concern** that the outbreak of COVID-19 has adversely affected progress towards gender equality and women, especially those in the most vulnerable situation, who find difficulties in accessing primary health care services, and the majority of women are forced back into traditional roles, to undertake unpaid domestic work, and to face an increased risk of domestic violence;

**Bearing in mind** that female health professionals, all frontline healthcare workers, and caregivers at home are at risk of infection and loss of life during the time of the pandemic;

**Highlighting** that women are more likely to be front-line workers and health facility service staff at risk of exposure to infectious diseases and stressing that the future crises affecting women will be not only health-related but also environmental;

**Recognizing** that climate change, natural disasters-and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have a disproportionate effect on women and the vulnerable groups and pose barriers to achieving the gender equality SDG and empowering all women and girls, which requires proactive efforts in preventing and responding to these impacts;

**Also recognizing** that STEM education and access to technology, particularly information and communication technology, are important and that technology should be gender inclusive and technological innovations should be gender-responsive in order to benefit everyone;

## **RESOLVE TO:**

1. **Urge** APPF Member Parliaments to strengthen community cooperation, collaboration and partnerships as a long-term solution to gender challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future;
2. **Call on** APPF Member Parliaments to act on the commitments to human rights, women's empowerment and gender equality treaties, agreements, and other relevant legal and regulatory frameworks made at regional and global summits and conferences;
3. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making and planning for all COVID-19 responses in order to reflect and address women's gender-specific concerns;
4. **Emphasize** that governments should apply international gender perspectives to the COVID-19 responsive policies, social assistance initiatives and fiscal stimulus packages covering all women and girls affected by the socio-economic impacts to better attain gender parity, equal opportunities, and social protection;
5. **Request** APPF Member Parliaments to review national laws to support and promote women to leadership positions and their participation in decision-making processes, particularly in the parliaments, so as to achieve gender equality through legislative frameworks;

6. **Remind** their respective governments to develop and implement suitable policies on the unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by women, recognizing the significant impact of such policies on economic value and necessities for sustaining societies;
  7. **Affirm** national response COVID-19 plans to support the rights of all women and girls in implementing effective measures and developing mechanisms for eliminating all kinds of discrimination and violence against women and girls;
  8. **Call upon** their respective governments to implement gender-responsive economic and social policies to build more equal, inclusive, and sustainable economies and societies for sustainable development;
  9. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments to establish networks and connections among women parliamentarians in order to increase the effectiveness of measures to cope with a variety situations in the event of future crises;
  10. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments to pay attention to the role of women as frontline health workers by fostering appropriate protective measures and ensuring equal access to public healthcare for women and girls;
  11. **Recommend** APPF Member Parliaments to encourage their respective governments to adopt necessary policies and mechanisms in order to pave the way for achieving sustainable development for women and vulnerable groups affected by climate change;
  12. **Encourage** APPF Member Parliaments to reinforce gender norms, eliminate occupational segregation by encouraging the diversification of occupational alternatives, especially in science and technology fields, stimulate and promote the equal presentation of women at all levels;
  13. **Monitor and implement** legal and regulatory frameworks in reducing gender-based education gaps and barriers for women and girls to access an equal education, in particular, training in ICT and STEM areas in order to increase the attractiveness of digital and STEM studies and close the employment gender gap; and
  14. **Urge** APPF Member Parliaments to prevent women and girls from technology challenges in order to find effective measures and solutions.
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