

**UNDP-APPAN Workshop on "Parliament's Role in Relation to the Millennium Declaration" and APPAN Third Steering Committee Meeting**  
*15-16 March 2004 • Philippines*

**PLENARY I**

The Opening Programme commenced at 10:00 a.m. with the introduction of the speakers by Mr. Henrik Lindroth of the UNDP PARAGON Regional Governance Programme. Ms Deborah Landey, Resident Representative of the UNDP Country Office delivered the Welcome Remarks, wherein she provided a brief historical account on the establishment and purposes of APPAN, the significant role of legislatures today, and how UNDP is ready, willing, and able to support them in their roles towards improved governance. Similarly, the parliaments' critical role in championing the eight Millennium Development Goals (resulting from the Millennium General Assembly) towards poverty alleviation was emphasized.

On behalf of H.E. Sanjbeegz Tumur-Ochir, Chairman of the State Great Hural of Mongolia, Mr, Namsraijav Lunsanjav, Secretary General of the Mongolian Parliament, then delivered the Inaugural Address. The Address revolved around the establishment of the APPAN, based on the commitment of member parliaments towards instituting a regional partnership, and how the network has thrived in support of several governance/policy analysis thrusts (i.e., gender equality, civil society participation, humane governance). With confidence, he states that APPAN will come to actualize its potential and the sub-networks envisioned shall soon become a reality.

The Philippine Senate President, Hon. Franklin Drilon imparted his message to the group. He commends UNDP and APPAN in their efforts towards the fulfillment of the Millennium Declaration and mentions the critical tasks of the parliaments, in support of the Millennium Development Goals. He cites his own participation as Senate President, authoring several pieces of legislation towards these ends. He informs the body that he has accepted to become the next Chair of the APPAN, as recognition to the Philippines' commitment to the MDGs and to its active role in the Asia-Pacific region.

Hon. Jose de Venecia Jr., the Philippines' Speaker of the House of Representatives, likewise imparted a message, commending UNDP in initiating APPAN. He views the workshops as an opportunity for APPAN members to adopt the MDG as a framework for parliaments to defeat poverty as a main thrust of parliaments in the region. He emphasized the need to "capture" the heads of parliaments, the Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, and the Department of

Budget to bring forth action. Parliaments should make sure that adequate funds are appropriated for health, education, and to fight poverty. He cites the current Philippine initiatives that support poverty reduction. He urges the parliaments to make a solemn commitment in APPAN. They must ensure that significant amounts be appropriated to fund the eight Millennium Development Goals.

The Keynote Address, entitled “Implementing the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Achievements and Challenges,” was made by the UN Special Ambassador for the Millennium Development Goals for Asia and the Pacific, Ms. Erna Witoelar. The Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals, and the MDG challenges were presented, as well as the need for national ownership of MDGs, by not only governments, but by parliamentarians and civil society as a monitor for government’s fulfillment of the MDGs. Parliamentarians should work towards the creation of a system for monitoring achievement of the MDGs of their governments.

The six core values of MDG were presented, as well as the achievements in the Asia-Pacific on MDGs, both in the regional and national levels. The major challenges were also presented. Ms. Witoelar mentioned that APPAN is a powerful network that can push for more serious commitments for the MDGs. The recommendations for actions are: to strengthen linkages between the goals for a more holistic development approach, and to work towards the joint campaign/movement for the achievement of the MDGs.

At 11:25 a.m., the participants were asked to go down to the lobby stairs for the APPAN group photo.

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**PLENARY II:**

**The Millennium Declaration and the Parliamentarians**

**The Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific**

By 11:45 a.m., the Programme continued with a presentation entitled "The Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific" by Mr. B. Mulari, Regional Programme Division, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific of UNDP Headquarters. He mentioned that the MDGs in UN agenda, not only UNDP's agenda, and all have an equal role and stake for countries to achieve MDGs by 2015. The two partnerships, namely the UN Millennium Project and the UN Millennium Campaign, are engaging Asia-Pacific in the MDG movement.

The results of the UNDP-UNESCAP 1st Regional MDG Report in the Asia-Pacific has led to UNDP committing US\$5M to achieve the MDGs. On the 11 targets, findings present that 9 are unlikely to be achieved by 2015; hence, it calls for very proactive policy making at the national level. It was recognized that the core initiatives have to come from the country level, which is why UNDP will provide catalytic support towards localizing MDGs relative to country targets. The identified strategies for achieving MDGs in Asia-Pacific should be the formulation of proactive, pro-poor policies, and the establishment of strong partnerships for development (CSOs, media, UN system, parliamentarians) to achieve MDGs by the target date. The 2nd Report is underway with UNESCAP, to be presented in October 2004.

**Parliaments' Role in Relation to the Millennium Declaration**

Dr. Paul Oquist, Senior Governance Advisor for Asia, UNDP Pakistan, then made his presentation entitled "Parliaments' Role in Relation to the Millennium Declaration." His presentation revolved around the role of legislators, namely: (1) enabling gender budget and impact analysis of budget appropriated--to poverty, to environment; (2) legislative oversight (watchdog function to include the MDGs); and (3) governance leadership (political agenda, articulation of political will to mobilize resources.

The APPAN, Women's Caucuses, and civil society networks are elements to word towards achievement of the MDGs. It was mentioned that civil society is eager to participate. One concrete example is the Social Watch of the Philippines, which identified ways parliamentarians can contribute, namely: by providing funds, promulgating laws for a legal framework for MDG (monitoring the progress through Committee meetings, public hearings, written reports), involving civil society and the private sector, and actively pursuing goal number 8.

### **Millennium Declaration Implementation: Remarks from Three Countries**

At around 12:15 p.m., the Programme continued with the Millennium Declaration Implementation: Remarks from Three Countries.

The first spokesperson was from Cambodia Ms. Sichan Pum, Senator, and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission of Finance and Banking. She shared that at present, Cambodia has 12.5 to 13 million people. It has a 4.5 to 6.5 GDP growth rate annually. It was said that Cambodia has shown commitment to achieve MDGs by 2015. They intend to achieve the poverty reduction goal through improved food security, among others. The budget for the social sector has been increased, especially in the field of education to combat gender gap in education because it has immediate ramifications for employment opportunities for women. Cambodia has made progress in improving access of the poor to education. Education enrollment rate improved from 87 per cent in 2002 to 88.9 per cent in 2003.

Gender equality-gender relationships in Cambodia: Women are becoming a more integral part of the economic sector. Another issue is that there is low representation of women at all levels – the legislative and executive. Their commitment is to increase the number of women through lobbying, advocacy for them to get involved in the process while partnering with civil society. It was also mentioned that their infant mortality rate seems to have increased slightly over the last few years. However, Cambodia will have difficulty in meeting the under-five mortality rate by 2005. Malaria and tuberculosis are also an issue, and government has set targets to be achieved by 2015.

Environmental sustainability: Parliament has adopted laws aimed at improving, and monitoring the conservation of natural resources. In their country, there has also been a drastic reduction of land mines. Cambodia commits to reducing the number of land mine victims by 2005. The Senator also mentioned that Cambodia became part of the WTO in Cancun, Mexico in 2003. The Parliament played a significant role in supporting the government for the adoption of laws for entering WTO. As a member of the WTO, they appeal to developing and developed countries to continue to provide financial and technical support.

Regarding the issue on environmental sustainability, the Cambodian parliament has adopted a law on forestry, which is aimed at improving monitoring and conservation of natural resources. On behalf of the Cambodian delegation, the Senator noted that she believes this conference will affirm the commitment of all with respect to the MDGs.

The second spokesperson was from Mongolia, Mrs. Bolormaa Nordov, Member of Parliament. Ms. Bolormaa started off by commenting that the MDG report is an important instrument in tracking progress and building consensus for strategies in the future. Her first good news is that their country is on track on achieving the following: providing primary education to girls and boys by 2015, and reducing by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate, if they continue what they are doing. Progress achieved in these areas is substantial given Mongolia's low level of income.

Ms. Bolormaa stressed two common things: first is that Mongolia reflects progress made but it is clear to them that disparities still exist in these areas (primary enrollment in urban areas has reached 96 per cent, rural areas 85 per cent). Next, a more difficult step is taking MDG into rural and remote areas and disadvantaged provinces. It calls for more comprehensive local action to realize MDGs and greater support for local action. The second matter stressed was whether progress achieving quantitative goals reflects adequate social services, like the need for teacher training and curriculum reform. She also stressed that institutional arrangements/control mechanisms must be put in place.

It was also pointed out that poverty has urbanized and deepened, and that they need to enhance their financial and trade system (i.e., continued support for micro-financing), diversify exports (move to non-traditional items). She mentioned that their exports will never be competitive or contribute substantially to poverty reduction.

She also said that the MDG report is not a one-time exercise but a continuous effort if tracking and monitoring progress, and noted that this workshop's added value is that it is a starting point of rethinking of plans and actions to ensure that they are in sync with the MDG (particularly poverty reduction).

The third spokesperson was from Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Faez Tamman, Member of Parliament. He began by saying that the purpose of this gathering was to assess and further strengthen the realization of the parliamentarian's role in achieving MDG, and human development perspective in WTO. He also stressed that the parliament is the highest policy making body, with varying degrees of influence in countries. In Asia, he said, every country has different focal points of power, but ends up emanating from the parliament.

MDGs are broad-based milestones, which are to be accomplished; and in Pakistan, they have realized that. They have a perspective development plan from 2000-2011. Poverty reduction strategy was put in place in Pakistan, and it actually coordinates and aligns with the MDGs. He also shared that Pakistan experienced reduction in poverty in the 70s and 80s, but has risen to 32 per cent now. Simultaneously, that trickle down effect of economic growth has not yielded the desired result.

It was also shared that in the 1990s, Pakistan economy was held hostage by their international debt commitments and to their unfortunate relations with India, due to the cause of Kashmir, and escalating defense budgets.

He also said that Pakistan claims to be a nuclear power and that comes at the expense of development. It was also mentioned that education is another prime area, which needs urgent attention and they have known this. He shared that primary education and primary health care programs were financed by ADB and this set up enough schools and employment for teachers, not taking into account enrollment levels – whether people have income or awareness to send children to school. Therefore, there was no check on the service delivery of these established schools. They have become more of an employment provider versus service provider. Their government is actually providing a certain supplement for girls to attend school. Enrollment rate is 42 per cent to 45 per cent now, and they are hoping literacy rates will rise to 86 per cent by 2015. He stressed that minimum quality standards is something they have to work on, and that provision of education is not important unless a certain quality is in store.

Gender issues and gender women empowerment was another area of quantum leap taken by Pakistan after realizing its dismal figures. He also said that women should be part of the decision-making process so budget allocation will be a reality.

Another major initiative in Pakistan is devolution and decentralization process. Pursuant to which, education and sanitation, water supply, and other social sectors have been devolved and further down.

They were able to influence decision-making over in Pakistan. He also said that development strategy needs to take into account two factors: economic growth and human development growth.

The next part of the programme, which began at around 12:45 p.m. was "Advancing the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals: the Role of Parliamentarians. It was a panel discussion with concluding remarks. The highlights of the discussion are as follows:

Regarding the question on how to articulate civil society relationship – It was said it can come from very formal partnerships. The Philippines is an example of many institutionalized instruments and processes, which allow for NGO party list participation in decision-making. It was also pointed out that on the other hand, it can be loose networks, too. The areas of working together include advocacy and lobbying.

It was also mentioned that for doing research on policies, academe and research institutions can participate by informing parliaments.

Civil society organization networks may serve as think tanks of parliaments. Civil society can play a role in monitoring, evaluation, serve as watchdogs, and point out things that are difficult to arrive at.

On the issue of financing, 90 per cent was on education in the Philippines.

It was also mentioned that there is a need to look at the resource picture. The existing budgets of nations have no opportunity to meet financial requirements. This is where trade flow becomes very important in determining resources that arrive and ensure that trade and investment flow does not have detrimental impacts. Globalization has positive and negative impacts. There is need to know the impact on small producers, merchants, and whether it impacts on employment that have large numbers, in terms of population, should be thoroughly analyzed. Analyzing what these impacts are, are lacking. Parliamentarians need to make informed decisions, and optimize positive impacts.

Civil society and proactive change agents can also help increase transparency and accountability. It is a prerequisite to reaching MDGs.

If percentage of contractors' rackets is reduced, or if corruption is reduced, it will help achieve MDGs.

Regarding the issue on poverty, the representative from India asked how do they begin to impact on poverty. She shared that in India, the shared development assistance is really small. It was also said that what is needed is not really so much to increase aid, but how resources in the country can help address poverty issues. It was added that there is a paradigm shift on how poverty is looked at. The real poverty reduction story lies in enabling countries to shape pro-poor policies. It was said to have two streams: first, the traditional approach, but merely bring some million people above the US\$1 mark is not enough. What matters is quality of life of people—maternal mortality rate, etc. Despite enormous reduction in income poverty, the percentage of people lifted out of it is huge. But has it really contributed to reducing poverty?

It was also noted that there are four countries here, which should still submit their MDG reports. They should get their MDG reports out by 2005. Each of their reports will contribute in a big way.

Some also answered the question from China. Communication process is increasing in Mongolia. Civil society relationship — two years ago, there were talking groups and steering committees working together with legislators. They have a national law on NGO and civil society. They will also have a law to have friendly legal environment for civil society relationships and NGOs.

Pro-poor policies need to be put in place. GNP has not helped achieve poverty reduction. Pro-poor policies and development cannot be sustained because the economy is not growing. Services come from economic income of the country. For Pakistan to achieve this, they have a two-pronged strategy, taking into account their population growth. Also, their pro-poor policies learn from mistakes of the trickle down effect. If you are talking of safety nets and pro-poor policies, there are a lot of similarities between these two major items.

Another comment was about income and poverty. Mr. Murali answered the difference between income poverty and human poverty. He said that one of the intellectual works of the UNDP was ways of viewing human development. One way of measuring, aside from the GNP, was the human development index that has three basic indicators. It looks at: first, the universally prized values of life; second; increased standard of living; and third, knowledge (adult literacy rate and school enrollment rate). Next, is the ability to live a long healthy life. Growth should be translated. The latest human development ranking shows Pakistan, in terms of GDP per capita income (around US1,800 per year). But, if you bring in other dimensions like school enrollment rate, it is so low, and that is where the other dimensions come in. The Human Poverty Index has been in place since 1997, and it looks at specific indicators. It also looks at the illiteracy rate.

#### Advancing the Implementation of the MDGs: The Role of Parliamentarians

From the framework and perspectives derived from the presentations and discussions on the MDGs by Dr. Paul Oquist to include the remarks delivered by Cambodia, Mongolia, and Pakistan on the implementation of the MDG, small group discussions were conducted from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the following:

How the collaboration among parliamentarians through APPAN will be able to enhance the implementation of the MDG;

How women parliamentarians address the MDG; and

How parliamentarians can help APPAN members to promote trade.

**GROUP 1: MDG**  
***(Cambodia and Lao PDR)***

Initially, the group identified common issues and problems affecting human conditions. Poverty is considered the most pervading issue that related directly to corruption, inadequate capacities of institutions and public administration and the like. As deduced from the discussion, conditions of poverty speak of deprivation of access to basic services and resources. MDG focuses on basic services and opportunities that will help improve human condition.

By consensus, the group proposed that through APPAN, collaboration among member parliamentarians could help enhance the implementation of MDG through the following:

Awareness-raising among parliaments on how best to address poverty and corruption that contribute to deteriorating human conditions;

Advocacy assistance to influence financial institutions (IMF, WB, ADB) with respect to achieving pro-MDG/pro-poor policy for loan restructuring;

Policy monitoring across parliaments as good and bad practices of governments; and

Capacity building of parliaments to improve institutional reforms, fiscal management, and foreign assistance priorities.

**GROUP 2: Gender**  
***(Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Pakistan, and the Philippines.)***

In relation to MDG, the group further analyzed how women parliamentarians can work together to address MDG, particularly gender equality, focusing on the following concerns:

Women parliamentarians and the MDGs: The Way Forward

Organizing with a Difference: National Women's Political Caucus (Cambodia and Thailand)

Adopting a resolution on the formulation of a Regional Women's Parliamentarian Caucus

**Agenda 1:**

***Women Parliamentarians and the MDG***

As women parliamentarians, the group raised the question as to how women can help each other to achieve MDG no. 5 on: elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and all levels of education not later than 2015. The group was convinced that this is probable, in terms of achievement.

Women member parliamentarians must promote, know problems, share experiences (more interactive workshops, more getting together, interaction) in different countries

Knowledge on Information Management by sharing experiences through parliamentary exchange via electronic networking with women parliamentarians through opening web sites, e-groups, etc.

New exchange either through the media or through electronic exchange of experiences and developments

There should also be a magazine/journal of women parliamentarians, which every parliament must have in their library

**Online resource**

Resource mobilization — The proposal is to have gender responsive budgeting. Gender issues and concerns need money for pushing these targets. Sources of budget could be internal or external

Internal sources of budget may be identified. In the Philippines, there is a 5 per cent allotment for a gender budget; in Sri Lanka, there is 1 per cent. Example, Malaysia's Ministry of Finance is looking at gender responsive budget by looking at the internal budgets—how much is it in relation to the national budgeting? Do a beneficiary assessment—how many girls went to school/stayed in school? Look at its percentage in the public sector expenditure.

**External sources**

Broaden the base of resource mobilization; not just UNDP.

There's a lot to tap in the private sector.

Philanthropy is very intact in the private sector.

Legal reform — Women parliamentarians should look into existing laws and to initiate, amend, and repeal discriminatory laws. Mandate the political parties to have one-third of the party list of women. Monitoring of the implementation of the laws and initiate new laws is one thing. Implementation is another.

In the sharing of laws among women parliamentarians, it is best to look not only at sharing the contents of the law, because it might not be applicable, but of the process of the enactment of the law. The process of advocacy is very instructive—what techniques were used, how they dealt with players. All these parliamentary groups should stress the government.

Establishing Civil Society Legislature Relationship as a means to establish collaboration with people outside the parliament to achieve the MDG.

Capacity Development by empowering women in terms of getting in the door (women voters), and being effective once inside.

## **Agenda 2:**

### ***Getting Organized to Make a Difference: The Women's Political Caucus***

Increasing number of women in parliament — In Pakistan, 17 out of 42 are women. Do they make a difference? 10 out of 225 in Sri Lanka; and in Vietnam, 28% are women in the parliament.

We should have information on how women can vote for women "getting them in the door"—how to influence women to vote for women. This can be part of the agenda of the caucus.

There should be a body where women can get in the door. For a party to qualify to win seats in parliament, it should have x number of women in the party to qualify.

Ways of "getting in the door" through political party—one-third of the party membership should be women; assigning a watchdog; making arrangements among women. All political parties should have women in the central executive committee.

**Agenda 3:**

***Resolution on the formulation of a regional women's caucus***

The resolution should have the following:

Statement of commitment, and of goals, and of objectives, MDGs, APPAN Charter

Statement of the situation—of the problem—in terms of representation (Except for Vietnam, no country in Asia has reached women representation in parliament of at most 30 per cent.

Actions to be taken

Experience sharing  
Knowledge management  
Capacity building  
Resource mobilization  
Legal reforms

**GROUP 3: Trade**

**(China, Vietnam, Mongolia, Pakistan, and the Philippines)**

The group tackled the question on how parliamentarians can help APPAN members to promote trade. Given the limited knowledge of the group on trade, the members of the group tried their best to share their knowledge and information about trade situationers and practices in their respective countries.

Most of the issues and concerns raised by the group include import taxes to protect Mongolian industries. China has nothing much to share, yet as it is still in a transition period from 2001 to 2006 into WTO, but how to improve domestic demand is still a problem. The Philippines expressed concern over managing impact of international trade to losers. Its agricultural products are threatened, industries are weakened. However, short term benefits are realized and long-term benefits, in terms of additional employment for the people.

Somehow the group was agreeable that international trade is beneficial, but how to manage losers is the issue. Members of the group shared also the observation that developed countries have more subsidies; developing countries are on their own. APPAN should be able to help by giving the right information to make decisions and determining the policy instruments that should be in place. Awareness-raising among parliamentarians should be able to deepen their understanding of trade issues and hence, not become vulnerable target for lobby groups in the handling of these issues.

Other issues discussed include very liberal practices of the Philippines to the detriment of the local industries; losses of returned exports due to quality standards, incurring great losses; ways of strengthening industries; and strengthening local competitiveness. These cover other related issues as in the case of the WTO membership of China, which is a threat for the Philippines due to lower labor costs in China; and how Parliaments work so competitiveness is maintained and result in regional growth.

The group also pondered on how APPAN should position itself. Is it for opening trade against subsidies, and is it for multilateral trade? However, the group agreed that APPAN members should work together in influencing decision-makers in developed countries as in the identification of common products that affect the APPAN countries through information exchange (possibly on the web, video conferencing...)

In the long run, the group agreed that:

APPAN should help identify common agricultural products in the region that have comparative advantage and that could gain benefits.

APPAN should create an ad hoc working committee/group to raise awareness on the possible benefits for both developing countries (to increase markets) and developed countries (to have barriers/subsidies lowered). The findings could be presented in workshops or in the web page or through video conferencing.

Upon consideration of these recommendations, some members still raised concerns over introducing knowledge to member parliamentarians like that of agricultural trade to make informed decisions and market access to other sectors aside from agriculture, like in fisheries, textile and clothing, etc. that should be considered.

## PLENARY III:

### Trade and Human Development Post Cancún and goal \* of the Millennium Declaration

#### I. Asia Trade and Human Development

The second day of the meeting started at 9:00 a.m. with a presentation by Mr. Swarnim Waglé, Research Officer, and UNDP Asia Trade Initiative. Discussions revolved around WTO agreements on major sectors and other regional/global trade issues relating to human development issues in Asia. As presented, the observations and recommendations were made in the following areas:

- a) Agriculture, Food Security, and Rural Development. In agriculture, legislators should be informed of the agriculture trade issues to obtain a deeper understanding of the position that must be taken and what should be lobbied for. The WTO on agriculture failed to reflect the role of agriculture in Asian and developing countries, and that of industrialized countries. The direction of continuing reform in this area calls for supportive government policies relating to trade in agriculture that could promote human development.
- b) Fisheries. The non-tariff barriers (SPS, HACCP) have been a constraint for the developing countries. Small-scale fishermen have not been able to derive benefits from international trade and have suffered from resource degeneration. Wide range of issues affects this sector, including tariffs, sanitary regulations, subsidies, and environmental issues, which impact on human development of the poor and vulnerable sector.
- c) Geographical Indications (GI's) and Traditional Knowledge. The Region should work towards the protection of indigenous knowledge. Many products in Asia that are not internationally known should be ascertained (legal protection/intellectual protection and secured market access). The TRIPS (Article 23), which provides high protection for wines/spirits should be pushed to extend to intellectual protection to other products. In the Movement of Natural Persons (MNP's), Asia has a comparative advantage in labor; however, things have not progressed in this area due to other political constraints (visa, etc.). The aim is to bring workers to the developed countries, if a less restrictive regime for the movement of people can be in place. At present, there is only a movement for high skilled workers, not much of the middle and low-level skilled workers. Developing countries should work for reciprocity during bilateral negotiations with developed countries: foreign investments trade-off for the movement of workers.

- d) **Energy Services.** A huge business, with high potential to increase economic growth since access to energy is crucial. However, it is highly capital intensive. There is a need to bring in the capital and technology of developed countries into Asia to explore the potential of this sector. Other issues (environmental services, key investment measures) were also mentioned. Most developing countries are confronting the challenge of making strategic response, which will balance contribution of foreign capital and technology, while ascertaining public control, employment, access and opportunities to the population.
- e) **Environmental Services.** Developing countries are confronting the challenge attributed to making a strategic response to ensure that liberalization does not penalize the poor, and empowering them at the community level to protect their own environmental assets.
- f) **Movement of Natural Persons (MNP's).** Strategic response must also be done to address the negative impact of this on human development, such as the social consequences of the separation of family members, exploitation and abuse of workers, particularly women workers that need corrective measures.
- g) **Investment.** The real question is whether policy measures are indeed for the interest of developing countries as they impact on human development. New disciplines on investment should be pursued at the bilateral and regional levels.
- h) **Accession to WTO.** The concern of acceding countries, especially the LDC's are fragile and therefore their accession must not constrain their human development policies, such as the protection of the vulnerable agricultural producers, adequate fiscal receipts, and preserving cultural integrity.
- i) **Textile and Clothing.** There is an evident need to provide assistance to countries and sectors of the population that would be severely affected or impacted upon by a quota free system, and protectionist interest in developed countries.
- j) **Regional and Bilateral Free Trade Agreements.** As most Asian countries are engaged in negotiations on FTA options, it is important to analyze and study their impact on human development.

## **II. Trade Initiatives from Human Development Perspectives: The Pakistan Case**

On behalf of Mr. Onder Yucer, PPRR/PARAGON Regional Governance Programme for Asia, Dr. Paul Oquist, Senior Governance Adviser, UNDP Pakistan, made a presentation on the Pakistan experience. Some of the identified trade initiatives are: the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) that will be signed by SAARC member countries by January 2006 that will lead to significant Indo-pact trade lowering tariff barriers, and will likewise ease the tension of some countries; Pakistan's new trade policy 2003-2004 geared trade policy towards human development and determining the impact of trade policies to human development. He presented UNDP's project initiative in Pakistan to better equip the people to understand the impact of trade policies as one of its objectives. The project components include technical support documents, consultative meetings, and the development of implementation of modalities. The project strategy is on the subject of participatory national seminars; constant interaction with stakeholders; donor coordination; and partnerships. Some examples of technical support documents—textile and clothing; countries that need clear, strong rules in a multilateral agreement due to dependency:

## **III. Legislators' Ability to Defend Human Development Goals in Trade Negotiations**

The next spokesperson was Mr. Kobsak Chutikul, Member of the National Assembly of Thailand, Member of the IPU/EP Committee of Parliamentary Meeting on WTO and Deputy Leader of the Chart Thai Party.

- a) Parliament represents the people and has legislative power, but in the speeches that were given, a western model is being followed. It is a model based on American congress and therefore, must be analyzed in Asian context.
- b) There is a need to know where parliaments stand in many of our developing countries to include individual roles, whether they are part of the state machinery or not, and what role they have in influencing policy and legislation. Certainly, as individuals, even one person can make a difference.

- c) There are other actors, in terms of advancing the MDG that are equally important, which we should not overlook. It is the hope now that MDG will be implemented by parliaments by 189 governments, which have signed the MDG's. But the owner of responsibility is still with the governments who signed them. Responsibility will have to be taken by other groups. Government cannot absolve them of what they have signed into. We also have civil society groups, NGO's. We should also try to turn to them to become active players.

#### **IV. Advancing Global Market Access for Developing Countries: The Role of Parliamentarians**

- 4.0 Theoretically, parliaments represent the people, which perform legislative power. But it seems that is a western model (roles and powers of the US Congress) — the US case is unique. It is important to see the context in terms of analyzing parliamentarians in the developing world.
- 4.1 Be upfront on where parliaments stand, if they are really part of the state machinery, and defining individual roles in influencing policies and understand constraints in its ability to influence policies and advancing the MDG's. Governments should accept responsibility to what they have signed on to, especially in its implementation.
- 4.2 The major function of parliaments is lawmaking, but in support of the fulfillment of the MDG's, a mechanism should be created for its implementation at the country level. In initiating legislation, there are limitations. The budget cannot be completely altered by the parliament, as the government decides on this. Only small appropriations/adjustments can be made to focus on the MDG implementation.
- 4.3 Due to country-specific constraints, which delimit capability of parliamentarians in pushing for the MDG's, there is a need to work in alliance with many other groups (i.e., intellectual/academic support, civil society participation).
- 4.4 Parliamentarians can make aware the MDG goals to the citizens and its government.
- 4.5 The main problem in developing countries is how to keep the continuity in policies. The first priority of a parliamentarian is to be reelected to ensure continuity in policies, such as the advancement of MDG's; but elected or not, a parliamentarian is a citizen of the community and should continue to become the voice of society.

- 4.6 In Thailand, resources have been brought down to the provincial levels. The concern though of the national parliament that instead of effective decentralization, this move could be the cause of spread of corruption. However, it is true that in the implementation of the MDG's, the local governments are important actors in the fulfillment of the MD since they are the closest to the people.
- 4.7 Trade policies are not gender neutral but gender blind. Government should be the most responsible in implementing policies for gender and it should not only be UN's role. There is a need for disaggregating data to become the basis of women friendly policies. International trade at the macro level is really against blanket protectionism towards countries not focused on gender; this is the focus of efforts at present.
- 4.8 Since UN has a membership of 189 countries, the responsibility is still with the UN system to have that global drive towards committing governments to MDG's. Parliaments have different arrangements in each country. Some are not informed of the actions of their governments (i.e., danger of bilateral free trade agreements). UNDP is helping in its role to de-mystify technical trade issues for the people. Parliamentarians themselves should be informed on the trade issues. They must demand for information and greater transparency from their governments.
- 4.9 Legislatures still have a major role in globalization, in creating safety nets for domestic producers/losers in globalization, providing social welfare, etc. Globalization is not an option. The option is to make it work. Parliamentarians should continue to play the role that can be played in globalization—taking into consideration constraints of parliamentarians in a country-specific setting.
- 4.10 In the Movement of Natural Persons (MNP's), the aim is to export people to developed OECD countries. However, developed countries are also coming (managers, experts, skilled workers to developing countries), which should be guarded against. People also move from developed to developing countries. All these should be taken into consideration, as well as demonstrating complexities and pros and cons of trade issues.

## **PLENARY IV: Organizing to Make a Difference: The Women's Political Caucus**

1.0 Plenary IV started at 11:30 a.m. with Dr. Socorro Reyes, Senior Gender Advisor, Gender Support Programme, UNDP Pakistan, speaking about "Women's Political Caucuses and Best Practices: Getting the Work Done."

a) Women's political participation is a means to address the MDG's, from poverty to global partnerships for development. It was mentioned that they know that they have increased the number of women in our parliaments, but the women are not making a difference in discussions, parliament agendas (whether in committees or in plenary sessions), difference in voting, oversight in the implementation of laws. The reason is not because they face barriers. Parliament is a male structure, male values, male rules, and male processes because it has been dominated by men for many years.

b) The way for women to make a difference is to pool their resources together. They have to develop synergies and translate their numbers into a political force—into strengths that will enable them to influence the agenda, budget allocation, oversight of implementation.

c) They key, of course, is for the women to counter inter-party conflicts; to have smooth relationships with each other; and to respond to issues that demand solidarity and unity.

d) Regarding best practices, there are success stories. There is a women's caucus in the US and in Uganda. In the US, they have been able to pass legislations like the Violence Against Women Act, Ownership Act, Family and Medical Leave Act. In Uganda, there is use of gender sensitive language in the Constitution, and they have established the Equal Opportunities Commission.

e) There is a need to establish a Regional Caucus of Women Parliamentarians through the APPAN because the more the women get together, the more they are able to emerge stronger.

2.0 At 11:40. a.m., there was a panel discussion on "The Women's Political Caucus: What, How, and When?"

3.0 The women panelists included Mme. Souvanpheng Bouphanouvong (Member of the National Assembly, Lao PDR), Congresswoman Cynthia A. Villar (Member of the House of Representatives, Philippines' Lone District of Las Piñas City), Lt. Col. Thitiya Rangsitpol (Member of Parliament, Thailand), Ms. Fouzia Habib (Member of Parliament, Pakistan), Ms. Priyaneer Wijesekera, Secretary

General of Parliament, Sri Lanka), Dr. Sanjaasuren Oyun (Member of Parliament, Mongolia), and Dr, Socorro Reyes.

4.0 Mme. Bouphanouvong (Lao PDR) mentioned that in socioeconomic terms, women's representation seems to be stronger in poorer provinces. She also pointed out that if women are to be effective in parliament, they must be active in committee work. Capacity development of women members would build their confidence in non-traditional areas, like in security. There is a need to increase women's participation in key committees in economic/finance and legislative. If women's caucus is to be effective, should be involved in developing the strategic plan.

5.0 Congresswoman Cynthia Villar from the Philippine House of Representatives said that women are represented in all branches in government. They saw their challenges as 2-pronged: to convince male colleagues of importance of gender-sensitive legislation, and public information drive to reach out to women and children. They also formed Lady Legislators of 12<sup>th</sup> congress, but it is not a structured organization-they worked on a consensual basis. In order to make presence in lower chamber, the members agreed to actively participate in committees and hearings. They devoted time to study budget issues, economic, social, etc. issues of national concern. Membership of Lady Legislators of 12<sup>th</sup> Congress is nonpartisan, cuts across party lines, so as to improve the status and quality of life of women, children. Within relatively short time, they were able to push for passage of bills that seek to address leading problems that mainly affect women, children and family. Like the: Anti-trafficking act of women and minors including stiffer penalties for violators, Anti-child labor act, Violence Against Women Act.

6.0 According to Lt. Col. Rangsitpol of Thailand, women are powerful in the family but in parliament, women are still a minority. In Thailand, despite gender equality and the 1997 Constitution, men and women should have equal rights, but in practice discrimination against women still exists. Thai women caucus was established under parliamentary regulations-members include women house representatives, women senators, former house reps and senators invited by executive committee, honorary members who are invited. Caucus budget comes from contributions, donations, financial support from national and international organizations. The challenges summarized are as follows: 1) time commitment of members 2) attitudes towards gender roles 3) lack of true understanding of awareness regarding gender-issues and consequences

7.0 Ms. Habib of Pakistan mentioned that there is no such caucus in their country, though the role of women in politics in Pakistan has been vital and effective. "We are aware of the fact if women's caucus was to form, they would gain strength and enable them to address basic issues-education, health. We have to definitely make an improvement in order to facilitate our women. "In 1977, their democratic process was disrupted and with this, the women's opportunity of getting into parliament was also abrogated. In 1988, they saw revitalization of democratic

process and they saw few women in parliament. Yet, women play a very effective role and it was a good change, but again, the 1988 parliament was dissolved prematurely. Then after, we did not see women in parliament. Women-reserved seats were rid of and not able to restore. The civil society can play a vital role on women's empowerment and to remove communal misconception and get women to participate. Men have various roles in society to play and have so much power-mainstreaming, and cannot be carried out without the supportive hands of men. Men have to be included in women's participation for their election candidates. Women must be in parliament because it is the only way to improve women's status in their society. They also have to provide funds to finance the election costs as it is expensive to campaign/go into elections.

8.0 Ms. Wijesekera of Sri Lanka mentioned that there are only less than 5% women members in the parliament, considering that it is the country that produced the first women prime minister, and the current president is also a woman. The situation is same at local level. Steps are taken to form women's caucus following parliamentary election in 2000. Things did not proceed very far because that parliament dissolved in 2001. In early 2002, women's caucus formed and it consisted with all female members of parliament irrespective of their party. The whole objective of this caucus is to improve women's situation. Women comprise majority of workers of the garment and tea industry. Women account for 90% of migrant labor. The objective of this women's caucus to address particular problems faced by the women - giving suitable education, amending labor laws, malnutrition among female children, assisting female refugees due to civil war, prevention of domestic violence - these are some matters taken up by women's caucus. The caucus had plans to act as catalyst to sensitize people about women's rights. Some Issues and challenges confronted by caucus is it has so far functioned unofficially, and needs to be recognized formally. It also needs to harness support of various government agencies, and it will need budget allocation, and it will try to increase women's participation in politics.

9.0 Dr. Oyun of Mongolia stated that many years of communist and communism promotes women's participation so many women's organizations are funded mostly by the state. There are many educated women-60% of graduates are women. But despite high education and reaffirmation of equal rights, was still underrepresented in decision-making. Signed many HR treaties, international conventions. The problems are social barriers and mentality, reluctance of women to enter politics, economic barriers to enter politics, and political parties are reluctant to introduce women candidates. They have worked with NGOs in drafting law against domestic violence. The challenge they face is the absolute majority of one party, so there is centralized decision-making so women have to follow.

**UNDP-APPAN Workshop on "Parliament's Role in Relation to the Millennium Declaration" and APPAN Third Steering Committee Meeting**  
**15-16 March 2004 • Philippines**

**PLENARY V:**

**Concluding Panel Discussion and Workshop Summary**

China : One question is how to link APPAN with UNDP. How do we define stakeholder here? Do we mean government? Business community? Or whether each country needs to make a contribution? What is the role of parliaments in realizing MDGs in the next 10 years. I think the role of parliaments in achieving MDGs is that parliaments from different countries can work together to achieve them.

Atty. C. Arceño : APPAN Charter says that it is a forum of parliamentarians of the Asian region. May I suggest we go through Charter article by article? Each question can be answered by each article.

Prof. E. Leyco : This is an international forum for Asian parliamentarians but it does not preclude us from working with CSOs or other groups, but this is a forum primarily for parliamentarians

Dr. Paul Oquist : This should be about parliaments themselves and not the parliamentarians themselves (who face turnover) which is important. We should keep this as virtual as possible. I recommend that others be included in discussions in light of issues to be discussed.

Prof. E. Leyco : (goes through Charter article by article) Article 1 any clarification needed or suggestion?

Dr. S. Reyes : It is not gender equity it is gender equality.

Prof. E. Leyco : So second to last sentence should read "promotion of human rights and gender equality?"

S. Waglé : Should say "and enhancement of trade relations"

Dr. Paul Oquist : Answer to relation of APPAN and UNDP. Inversely UNDP will work closely with APPAN. But this is the APPAN Charter and it states APPAN's approach to the relationship. Chairing should rotate from country to country and Secretariat should rest with whoever is chairing. This is a virtual organization versus one that has a physical building with overhead costs, etc.

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 4: each member will make annual contribution, giving a nominal contribution.

Atty. C. Arceño : Since membership to APPAN is open to parliaments, and it involves a budget, I think it should be the general assembly who approves the amount.

Atty. C. Arceño : Article 6: Can I suggest that we also define first the authority of the General Assembly. May I suggest that it read so that at least one woman will be part of each national delegation.

Dr. S. Oyun : Think it reads okay and we should not start putting too many stipulations

Prof. E. Leyco : Suggestion withdrawn

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 7?

Atty. C. Arceño : Since Steering Committees determines agenda, can we add not just time, place, but also agenda?

Prof. E. Leyco : Okay

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 8?

Atty. C. Arceño : APPAN committee will choose the chairpersons. Maybe the mandate should come from a bigger number of members of the General Assembly?

Prof. E. Leyco : Any comments? No comments, so it is agreed upon

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 9?

Atty. C. Arceño : I suggest that Article 9 be moved to Section 4 because it refers to the Steering Committee

Prof. E. Leyco : Okay

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 10?

Atty. C. Arceño : We can scrap it. The Chair agrees.

Atty. C. Arceño : May I first ask what it means by consensus, does it mean all members shall agree?

Prof. E. Leyco : Probably means on an no-objection basis

Dr. Paul Oquist : If the house must be divided, then rule number \_\_\_?\_\_\_ comes in. It is agreed upon.

Atty. C. Arceño : May I suggest that the article read this way so as to give a system on how to vote?

Mr. Bakhtiyar: Instead of mentioning forum, we can just put simple majority of those present and voting.

Prof. E. Leyco : It is agreed upon.

Atty. C. Arceño : Can we define Steering Committee? Can it read this way so as to be the implementor of APPAN programs?

Prof. E. Leyco : It is agreed upon.

Prof. E. Leyco : Article 15 defines APPAN Steering Committee

Atty. C. Arceño : Can we change it to member parliament instead of member country?

China : All of the participants mostly are from Senate or are representatives, but I am not.

Prof. E. Leyco : We can amend this to read non parliament members as associate members

Atty. C. Arceño : Maybe we should just limit Steering Committee to be only member parliaments. Otherwise it is open to associate members.

Dr. Paul Oquist : When there are no parliaments in some countries, in that interim, perhaps provision should be made so as to not lose participation of those countries until and when a parliament should be constituted.

Atty. C. Arceño : I think that qualification should be stated in this Charter so that it is clear.

Dr. Paul Oquist : So for those members who do not have parliaments, is not in session, or it is not constituted, then the secretary of the parliament can represent in the interim.

Atty. C. Arceño : In reference to death, how about a designated substitute be appointed by the member country until a representative replaces him or her?

Mr. Bakhtiyar : This level of detail is not necessary

Atty. C. Arceño : We encountered this problem that is why I raised it.

Atty. C. Arceño : Article 16. Aren't we referring to member parliaments, regular rotation between member parliaments?

(Didn't catch the answer here)

Dr. Paul Oquist : Article 17. It was incorporated and gone upfront. Has changed its place. Article 18 becomes Article 17.

Atty. C. Arceño : Article 19: Meeting of women's caucus should be held every annual session.

Prof. E. Leyco : Okay.

Dr. Paul Oquist : This does not disable the women's caucus to meet at other occasions, this is just the formal meeting referred to here.

Atty. C. Arceño : Article 20: On letter G, what do you mean by representative institutions?

Dr. Paul Oquist : Think this is minor error, should be relevant institutions. If it was struck I don't think anything would happen.

Mr. Bakhtyar : I have an observation. Definitely taking into account financial implications, we should have a permanent secretariat irrespective of where the chair is.

Dr. Paul Oquist : This is why the virtual network approach removes such financial implications. Since chairs are Speakers who have their own staff and infrastructure. There are financial implications but they are built on existing platforms so they are reduced. But then the experience of the first 3 years shows that it is wise to have chair and secretariat in same place

Dr. S. Reyes : We should make some provision for expenses of the APPAN secretariat because we cannot overburden or add on to an organization a number of tasks and not provide for budgetary resources. Nowhere in Article 20 is budget mentioned.

Dr. Paul Oquist : This issue has been discussed earlier and will be resolved through UNDP channel until APPAN has its own finances. I don't think it is a matter to be included in the Charter. But when APPAN has its funds, it should have a mechanism.

Atty. C. Arceño : The ideal situation is to have a permanent secretariat but since there are financial considerations involved, perhaps members should consider that in relation to our contributions.

Prof. E. Leyco : In terms of sourcing, this has been left out. Perhaps we can generate this from other means.

Dr. S. Reyes : In other organizations you are part of, are there provisions for budget?

Atty. C. Arceño : Yes

Dr. S. Reyes : So, why can't we have it here?

Dr. Paul Oquist : IPU is very highly institutionalized and formal so that is a different case.

Atty. C. Arceño : The smaller organizations started with same arrangement we have here in APPAN, but then developed a way to assess contributions of each member.

Dr. S. Reyes : Is it possible for example to include under Article 4 something like contributions go towards defraying costs of secretariat?

Dr. Paul Oquist : We are belaboring this point because there is no money. We are using other funding sources now. It is not an issue to be included in the Charter.

Prof. E. Leyco : Budget approved by Steering Committee. When the budget is prepared, we can address sourcing adequately. I think we have measures to take care of that later on.

Prof. E. Leyco : Let's move to amendments to Charter Article 21

Atty. C. Arceño : Earlier on, we approved Article 11, which talks to those being present and voting

Prof. E. Leyco : So, defer major decision-making to the Assembly rather than to the Secretary

Dr. S. Reyes : In Article 20, what do we mean by coordinator?

Dr. Paul Oquist : That is the head of the secretariat.

Mr. X. Liu : I am not a member of the steering committee. I want to make a suggestion on how to improve the charter. I would like to suggest that each member appoint a contact person since participants from each country always change.

Dr. Paul Oquist : This organization has existed for 3 years on informal basis. No objections at this point in time. Suggestion from Steering Committee was a letter from heads of each parliament confirming membership and participation. It is quite understood everything is add-referendum. Question is whether there are further recommendations

Atty. C. Arceño : Under minutes of Steering committee meeting regarding membership. Members of this meeting will be founding members of the APPAN Charter. But not all participants here are member parliaments. Only those who are member parliaments should be included as founding members. Ratification will be on next General Assembly.

Dr. S. Oyun : I think it is time to adopt the Charter.

Dr. Paul Oquist : I think the letter from heads of each parliament/legislature has same effect you (Phils) mention

Lao PDR : In the invitation and agenda you sent, you have not mentioned that we would have to approve this document. I agree with China.

Dr. Paul Oquist : This is add-referendum so each parliamentary authority in each country can approve and send letter approving acceptance and even confirm participation.

Lao PDR : I understand that point. We are listening but we are not clear about the objective of this exercise.

Dr. Paul Oquist : What we are trying to do is formalize what has been an informal network. Steering Committee was provisional because it did not have a Charter.

Prof. E. Leyco : In recognition of the work that has been done over past 3 years, there are parliaments who are ready to accept it. For those who are attending for the first time, may be required to go back to consult with their parliaments and ratify next time.

Dr. Paul Oquist : Is there any objection to sending this Charter as revised to parliaments to ask for their opinion as to whether they agree and then whether they will become members formally. No one has been asked to sign anything.

Prof. E. Leyco : We would include a letter inviting membership.

Atty. C. Arceño : If we want to formalize APPAN, we need to do it with the appropriate procedure. This body does not seem to have the authority to approve the Charter.

Dr. Paul Oquist : The exception is that not all countries here have formally joined APPAN. So it is not the same thing as to accede to an organization. So I think the letter to the head of parliaments will be necessary. But the draft charter should be sent also so they can give opinions on it and for their consideration.

Atty. C. Arceño : So this body will approve this charter as a draft?

Prof. E. Leyco : Some are ready to sign, some need to consult their parliaments. We would like to be at the same starting gate, but we cannot wait until we formalize. We are not asking for membership what we want to have is to end up with a document good enough for some to sign and for sending out to heads of parliaments.

Dr. S. Oyun : I was thinking of approving the charter but looks like best thing is to approve a draft charter until Gen. Assembly approves it.

Cambodia : Does APPAN have anything to do with UNDP or is it independent?

Dr. Paul Oquist : It is a donor relationship, but that will continue until financial sourcing of APPAN gets on proper footing

Prof. E. Leyco : Motion was to approve draft charter and sending of letter to heads of parliaments

Dr. Paul Oquist : If we can do both?

Prof. E. Leyco : It is clear so are there any objections? (There are none)

Address on Workshop and Workplan Follow-Up

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Niyom Rathamarit,

Deputy Secretary General, King Prajadhipok's Institute (KPI)

Deputy Secretary APPAN

Dr. Paul Oquist presents Workplan

It was seen by Steering Committee and changes introduced.

One thing needs to be done is followup to this meeting, particularly MDGs and WTO issues

Regional Women's Caucus Resolution was approved so activities should begin with this regional caucus

CSO subnetwork can begin also by identifying those CSOs who support parliaments, only 2 have been identified  
PARAGON has taken projects with some organizations in China and \_\_\_\_  
There is the gender equality issues not only womens' caucuses should be concerned with but all of APPAN should be  
There is also devolution of major reforms.

With regards to upcoming APPAN meeting, thinking of having next one either in Kuala Lumpur or Bangkok in Oct or Nov of this year. 2005 in Pakistan for Steering Committee. 2006 possible Steering Committee location and date to be determined.

With regards to these venues, and public accountability policy area, one of founding members Daniel Laziz, very kindly put APPAN in contact with IDRC. IDRC interested in possible relationship with APPAN in future  
Steering Committee considered Pakistan was appropriate country given the offer of Minister Chairman of Reconstruction Bureau  
Malaysia offered to host an APPAN meeting. Malaysian delegation is not here because their elections are in one week. Then we need to wait for results of election and then take up this issue after the fact.  
Belgium has facilitated funds to UNDP for parliamentary work and CIDA is also interested in this work also and can figure in this resource mobilization strategy.  
This is what the Steering Committee approved regarding upcoming and ongoing APPAN activities

Atty. C. Arceño : Will there be a General Assembly?

Dr. Paul Oquist : Not until 2005 in Pakistan.

Pakistan : There is not much left to say after approving the draft charter and going into every detail of it. This is our first experience and these last 2 days have been very memorable, informative and enhanced level of relationing of Asian countries and understanding their perspectives. I hope that we'll endeavour to formalize APPAN and hopefully members of IPU will be quoting high level of skills of APPAN.

Atty. C. Arceño : Phils will be incoming chair and on behalf of the Philippine Congress we will give it utmost support. I will report back to our two chairs about the meeting outcomes (de Venecia and Drilon).

Ms. P. Wijesekera: Wish to express the same sentiments. Want to particularly thank UNDP for providing opportunity for this meeting and for inviting me.

Mr. Tram, Dong : Very positive meeting enhancing parliamentary capacity. I would like to extend my highest gratitude and appreciation to government of Philippines and UNDP for their warm welcome and hospitality and best wishes to all of you.

Mongolia : ON behalf of our delegation to the organizers of UNDP and secretariat. We learned from each other on implementation on MDGs. We initiated regional women's parliamentary caucus and approved draft charter. We wish new chairs of APPAN every success and thanks to the Philippines for its warm hospitality

Lao PDR : I would like to thank UNDP to give us the opportunity to attend this meeting. I don't have any doubt about APPAN, but I am not in a position to improve it, please understand me.

China : Thank you Chair and UNDP for providing this wonderful opportunity to share our experiences of how to deal with MDGs in next 10 years. I think I was requested to make a presentation in national conference on MDGs and I will share with my colleagues there the new ideas I learned here.

Cambodia : Thank you UNDP and conference organizers to discuss and what is more important is that we have strong will and courage to realize this. We are confident that all the MDGs are incorporated into the trading process adequately. On behalf of the Cambodian delegation we ask you to do the best to implement the MDGs. Wish you good luck and good success for gender equality.

N. Rathamarit : I would like to speak on behalf on Thai delegation. These 2 days has been constructive and informative for the Thai delegation. It shouldn't be a problem for Thailand because it is active in working on poverty eradication according to the current government. It hopes to wipe out poverty in 6 years time. So UNDP don't have to worry about the Thai case. For gender equality, I think if you have a chance to observe what is happening in Thailand, you will be surprised to learn that those attending university are mostly women (more than half). On behalf of KPI, like to thank UNDP for sponsoring this workshop and also would like to thank all the delegations who have spent their busy time to make this an interesting and constructive workshop. Thank you to CLD for taking over secretariat function and we are willing to cooperate with CLD.

Address by CLD on workplan follow up

## **Closing Address**

Delivering the closing address, Dr. S. Oyon stated that over past decade; issues faced by parliamentary have grown in complexity-human rights, gender equality, etc. Now, with technological changes, has changed the nature of concerns beyond borders. APPAN has been identified as a tool to strengthen Asian parliamentarians policy analysis. Contributions of parliamentarians in advancing MDGs have been focused on. Collaboration among members has been discussed. Strengthened parliamentary analysis on public accountability, devolution, and civil society think tank network will be expanded on in the future. This draft charter approved signifies our continued commitment and further formalization of APPAN. "Data is not information, information is not knowledge, and knowledge is not \_\_\_\_" let's not forget our main mission which is to reduce poverty in our countries it is with great pleasure that I hand over chairmanship to the Philippines. We hope you will continue in the work of APPAN.