



24 January 2008

Media release
Hon Margaret Wilson

16th Annual Meeting of the
Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF)
Auckland, New Zealand, 20 - 24 January 2008

APPF DELEGATES CALL FOR ACTION ON MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUES

Resolutions on 23 issues of regional concern were passed at the 16th Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) which concluded in Auckland today.

Delegates from 20 APPF member states approved a Joint Communique and resolutions on a diverse range of topics. They included climate change, the situation on the Korean Peninsula, disaster preparedness and pandemic disease, women's participation in politics and the economy, and cluster munitions.

APPF President and Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon Margaret Wilson said the forum provided a unique opportunity for regional parliamentarians to debate the "big issues."

"It is a chance to talk to each other on issues that matter to us all," she said. "This builds greater awareness and understanding across the region, and over time contributes to better quality decision-making by national governments."

This year, for the first time, New Zealand invited nine Pacific Island states and Brunei to take part in the Forum as observers.

"This initiative was very successful," Ms Wilson said. "The observer delegates contributed well, and their views were listened to."

A resolution on dialogue between civilisations and faiths urged member countries to orientate their migration policies towards integration, with preservation of ethnic and cultural identities and promotion of cultural diversity.

"New Zealand was especially pleased with this resolution, given the Government's support for measures promoting such dialogue, including our hosting of the regional Alliance of Civilisations meeting and Interfaith Dialogue last year," Ms Wilson said.

Another resolution on South Pacific regional fisheries management, calling for the establishment of a regional fisheries organisation and convention, was a welcome development on an issue of particular concern to our immediate region, Ms Wilson said.

Around 350 participants, including 160 delegates, attended the meeting from 20-24 January. Delegates agreed that next year's APPF meeting would be held in Laos.

END

For the Joint Communique and full list of resolutions, call Brad Tattersfield, 021 784 101



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