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APPF 1st day Meeting in Lao PDR

The 17th APPF inaugural meeting began today in Vientiane

The 17th annual meeting of Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (17th APPF) was officially inaugurated this morning in Vientiane capital in a colourful Inaugural Ceremony gathering more than 300 delegates from 23 countries, who arrived yesterday in Vientiane, Lao PDR to voice their countries' opinions in a 5 days forum on regional issues. One observer country (Brunei) and the Secretary General of IPU are also attending the Forum.

In his inaugural speech today morning, Hon. Thongsing Thammavong, President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR and Chairman of 17th APPF, highly valued the contribution of the delegates in sharing ideas and experiences for “effective cooperation and assistance to implement the socio-economic development plan of the member countries, thus to benefit the common peaceful, secured and sustainable development of the region”. This is the important goal of this Forum. He stated that this Forum is a historical event in Laos and the National Assembly of Lao PDR will try her best to furnish the fruitful discussion of the Forum.

Starting today, inputs of the participants will be incorporated in resolutions and a joint communiqué which will be circulated to their heads of state and government and subsequently transferred in laws that will be passed by members of parliament. This is the APPF practical contribution to regional and global development.

Lao PDR hopes that the Forum can do more for the practical cooperation of the Asia-Pacific community to surmount the difficulties and it wants to take the lead in making it part of the regional political and economic system, which has been growing more uniform.

APPF forum is made up of peoples representatives of widely different countries in the region. This diversity is the main value of the regional cooperation.

South-east Asia has been accumulating experiences in inter-parliamentary cooperation for several decades. It has inter-parliamentary structures, called AIPA, embracing

eight parliaments of eight SEA countries and two others special observer countries and a structure of SEA government and extended link of ASEAN Plus Three that work together on a multilateral, sub-regional and bilateral basis. Lao delegation in this Forum has proposed an important resolution which calls upon ASEAN members of APPF to implement the ASEAN Charter and other APPF members in North East Asia, America and Oceania to support and assist the realization of the ASEAN Community as mentioned in the Vientiane Action Program.

This 17th Forum also discussed amendments of APPF Rules and Procedure for ensuring its effectiveness.

This Forum also provides opportunities for member countries to learn from cross continent experiences of parliamentary life in the region. Based on this exchanges, sub-regional establishment has come into being, such as Russia, China and Central Asian states modeled the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The Pacific integration structures are set up not to fight other countries or force specific views on them, but to promote equitable cooperation among all regional states. The APPF members in the current integration process are acting in this spirit, an attitude that will ensure success.

The Executive Committee Meeting

Prior to the Inaugural of 17th APPF, the Executive Committee has met yesterday to discuss interval reports between the 16th and 17th Forum and had decided on the agenda and topics of discussion to be submitted to the plenary meeting for consideration and approval. The Organizing Committee of Lao PDR has received 33 resolution submitted by member countries.

The President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR has addressed the yesterday Executive Committee Meeting also held in the Don Chan Palace Hotel. At the Executive Committee meeting, H.E.Mr. Thongsing Thammavong President of APPF and President of the Lao National Assembly emphasized the necessity of the Asia-Pacific community in “striving to promote cooperation for development and peace protection” and he stressed further that “the world nations are facing several challenges, especially the global financial crisis, food shortage, climate change”. Pursuant to the spirit of the declarations of APPF, he encouraged the delegations to be actively involved in discussing important issues, such as Politics and Stability, Economics and Trade, Cooperation among other issues in order to foster the continuation of cooperation between different Nations in the region to support each others to cope with these challenges.

Topics and Resolutions

See the List of Draft resolutions lodged. The Drafting Working groups will be dealing with the drafts improvement for the plenary sessions for discussion and adoption.