

**Report on the East Asia
Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting:
“Toward Gender Equality in East Asia”**

I. Introduction

1. The East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting was convened to exchange opinions on 1) the importance of gender equality and 2) ways and means to promote gender equality. One goal of the meeting was to pursue the promotion of gender equality in East Asia by prioritizing the importance of gender equality inside the region and beyond. The meeting also sought to contribute to the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women.

II. Organizational Matters

A. Opening and Duration of the Meeting

2. The East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting was held at the Keio Plaza Hotel in Tokyo, Japan on 30 June and 1 July 2006. During the course of the meeting, five sessions and a closing session were held to discuss gender equality in East Asia.

3. The Meeting was attended by 16 countries of East Asia and 2 international organizations. Participating countries/organizations are: China, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, India, UNESCAP, UNDP, Japan.

4. In the opening session on June 30, Dr. Kuniko Inoguchi, Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs of Japan delivered an opening address and Dr. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), made a keynote speech. This was followed by Session 1, with reports from all representatives on the subject of Progress of Gender Mainstreaming in Each Country and Problems to be Solved. The meeting then moved on to lively discussions on specific themes: Work-life Balance and Gender Equality in Session 2 and the Function of National Machinery in Session 3. Theme-based discussion continued on July 1, followed by discussion of the draft Joint Ministerial Communiqué. Session 5 featured a guest speaker, Mr. Morio Ikeda, Senior Advisor to Shiseido Co., Ltd., who gave a presentation entitled, "The Importance of Gender Equality in Companies." In the closing session, the Tokyo Joint Ministerial Communiqué was unanimously adopted.

5. Ms. Haniwa Natori, Director General, Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office of Japan, served as secretary of the Meeting.

B. Officers

6. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Kuniko Inoguchi, Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs of Japan.

III. Proceedings of the Meeting

A. Common Characteristics of Gender Equality in East Asia

7. In the opening session of the meeting on 30 June 2006, Dr. Kuniko Inoguchi, Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs of Japan, made the

opening speech and Dr. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, addressed the meeting on the subject of common characteristics of gender equality in East Asia.

B. The Progress of Gender Mainstreaming in Each Country and Problems to be Solved

8. In session 1 on 30 June 2006, the Meeting heard representatives from the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, India, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Australia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, and Japan. A representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also made a statement.

C. Work-life Balance and Gender Equality

9. In session 2 on 30 June 2006, a roundtable discussion was held on work-life balance and gender equality. This was led off by speeches from representatives from New Zealand, the Republic of Singapore, and Japan.

D. Function of National Machinery

10. In session 3 on 30 June 2006, a roundtable discussion was held on the function of national machinery. This was led off by speeches from representatives from the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, Republic of Korea, and Malaysia.

E. Further Promoting Gender Equality

11. In session 4 on 1 July 2006, a roundtable discussion on further promoting gender equality and a discussion on the Joint Ministerial Communiqué were held. This was led off by a speech from the representative of the Republic of the Philippines.

F. The Importance of Gender Equality in Companies

12. In session 5 on 1 July 2006, a speech was made on the importance of gender equality in companies by the senior advisor of Shiseido Co., Ltd.

G. Adoption of Joint Ministerial Communiqué

13. In the closing session on 1 July 2006, the Meeting adopted the Tokyo Joint Ministerial Communiqué.

14. The Meeting welcomed the willingness of the Government of India to host the Second Ministerial Meeting in 2007 and of the Government of Republic of Korea to host the Third Ministerial Meeting in 2008.