The 3rd Meeting of the ICAPP Women's Wing
(Baku, September 2, 2015)

Baku Statement on Women in Asia

We, the representatives of political parties from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iran, Federal Republic of Iraq, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Thailand, and Turkey, attended the 3rd annual Meeting of the Women's Wing of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan under the auspices of the *Yeni* (New) Azerbaijan Party during September 1-3, 2015. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL), and the Council of African Political Parties (CAPP) as observers.

The meeting was conducted under the main theme of "Accomplishments, Challenges and Way Forward for Women in Asia", with three plenary sessions on the topics of poverty alleviation, health and education, and political participation of women.

The meeting was of special significance as it coincided with the 20th anniversary of the 4th World Congress of Women (WCW) held in Beijing in 1995, the target year of the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the formulation of the post 2015 development agenda. We agreed that substantial progress has been made to advancing women's status in our societies through various international and national initiatives and activities, in particular, through the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), and the U.N. MDGs.

We shared the view, however, that overall progress in achieving the goal of complete gender equality in our societies has been slow and uneven due to pervasive historical and structural unequal power relations between men and women. While numerous legal measures and institutional strategies have been made at all levels, and have broadened the opportunities for women in many dimensions, there still remain many challenges ahead to achieve our goal.

In this regard, we welcomed the new global initiative to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets at a special U.N. Summit to be held in New York during September 25-27, 2015, and the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development last July. We appreciate that China and U.N. Women will co-organize a "Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action", to be held at U.N. Headquarters on September 27, 2015.

We expressed the hope that the BPfA will be fully implemented. We also expressed the hope that we will build upon the achievements of the MDGs, seek to address their unfinished business in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and work for the achievement of gender equality in the post 2015 development agenda.

We recognized the need for establishing more concrete and reliable goals that can be implemented in all areas, especially on poverty alleviation, health and education, and political participation of women. We stressed the absolute need for equality in both opportunities and

outcomes in achieving these goals. We agreed that these goals can be successfully achieved by collaboration and partnership among governments, international organizations, political parties, civil societies, and other stakeholders. We also affirmed that gender equality can be achieved when men take full responsibility, working side by side with women, to readdress the dynamics that hinder progress.

In this regard, we urged our respective governments to not only establish and reform legal framework on gender equality, but also to strengthen monitoring, evaluating and feedback system on gender equality policies, taking lead in action, encouraging full participation of all stakeholders to eliminate the fundamental causes of gender inequality. In particular, we agreed to encourage the participation of men politicians in the future activities of the ICAPP Women's Wing.

We reaffirmed our determination to continue our fight against human trafficking, which we believe is the most heinous crime against humanity. In this regard, we endorsed the Phnom Penh Statement on Human Trafficking adopted at the 2nd ICAPP Workshop on Human Trafficking which was held in April 2015. And we agreed to continue our efforts to raise public awareness on the seriousness and urgency of the human trafficking, form trans-border networks of cooperation, and establish a fast-track punishment system, as we had agreed in Kathmandu in January 2014 and again in Phnom Penh last April. We also shared the view that at least one more ICAPP workshop on human trafficking should be convened in 2016.

We expressed our appreciation to the departing Members of the Bureau of the ICAPP Women's Wing for their contributions to enhancing women's status in our region, and welcomed the election of the new Bureau Members, and entrusted to them the responsibility of developing strategies, programs, and activities for the ICAPP Women's Wing for the next two years.

We extended our sincere gratitude to the *Yeni* Azerbaijan Party and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the excellent preparations for the meeting and warm hospitality during our stay. We also noted with great satisfaction the skillful efforts of the ICAPP Secretariat in organizing the meeting.

Adopted in Baku, Azerbaijan, on September 2nd, 2015.