



【Lecture hosted by Sasakawa Peace Foundation】

Political Leadership and Diversity

Global trends and Japan's path to take

Conference Minutes

Date & Time: Friday 19th February, 2016 18:00-19:30

**Venue: Conference Room, 2nd Floor Nippon Foundation
Building**

Program

- 18:00 Opening
- 18:00-18:05 Opening Remarks : Ms. Junko Chano (Executive Director, SPF)
- 18:05-19:00 Lectures :
- [Speaker (1)] Ms. Leena Rikkilä Tamang
 Regional Director for Asia and Pacific, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)
- [Speaker (2)] Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu
 Senior Programme Manager, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)
- [Comment] Professor Mari Miura
 Faculty of Law, Sophia University
- [Moderator] Mr. Jun Kitajima
 Senior Researcher of Business Ethics Research Center (BERC)
- 19:00-19:30 Question and Answer
- 19:30 Closing

Short Profile of Speakers

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Ms. Leena Rikkilä Tamang

Regional Director for Asia and Pacific, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance



Regional Director for Asia and Pacific, at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) since January 2014. Prior to that she was Head of Mission at the International IDEA Nepal Office in where she has been coordinating IDEA's programme on Supporting Constitution Building Process in Nepal. The objectives of this initiative are to support national initiatives aiming at forging consensus on political reform; federalism and devolution of power being at the heart of that debate. In that capacity, she was also closely involved in State of Democracy in Southasia assessment, coordinated by the CSDS/New Delhi. Leena is former Secretary-General of Finland's Advisory Board for Relations with Developing Countries (Ministry for Foreign Affairs). She is a member and former chair (2001-2002) of Network Institute for Global Democracy (NIGD) and former board member of the Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF). Amongst her work with NIGD, she has coordinated the projects promoting North-South Dialogues on democracy and globalization, and been involved in the World Social Forum (WSF) process. She has also been teaching at the University of Tampere (Finland) in the Department of Political Science and International Relations from where she graduated.

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Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu

Senior Programme Manager, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance



Senior Programme Manager (Democracy and Gender Global Programme) at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) based at the Headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden. She is a gender equality advocate and practitioner with at least twenty five years of progressively responsible engagement on gender equality and women’s political empowerment advocacy and policy development. Her knowledge and experience has been gained through programmes’ implementation working at national, regional and international levels in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). She has a Master of Policy Studies Degree (specialisation on Gender in Policy Making (2000), a B.Sc. Honours Degree in Sociology (1990) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Women’s Law (1996)

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Professor Mari Miura

Faculty of Law, Sophia University



Professor of Political Science, Faculty of Law, Sophia University. Ph.D. from University of California, Berkeley. Author of *Welfare Through Work: Conservative Ideas, Partisan Dynamics, and Social Protection in Japan* (Cornell University Press, 2012), *Making Our Voices Heard—Revival of Representative Democracy* (in Japanese, Iwanami Shoten, forthcoming), co-editor of *Gender Quotas in Comparative Perspectives: Understanding the Increase in Women Representatives* (in Japanese, Akashi Shoten, 2014). Academic advisor to the Working Team of the All-partisan Caucus for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Politics. Deputy Director of the Promotion of Gender Equality Office at Sophia University. Board member of the Japan Political Science Association.

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Mr. Jun Kitajima

Senior Researcher of Business Ethics Research Center (BERC), Tokyo.



Specialist in subject of bribery of foreign public officials and frequent speaker on topic, author of Commentary of FCPA, UKBA, and many articles on international anti-bribery legislation. He was former Director, Forensic & Litigation Consulting, Global Risk and Investigations practice in U.S. global firm with 4,300 employees. Prior that he was Policy Aide to members of Parliament, including Chief Cabinet Secretary, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Chairman of ruling party’s Diet Affairs Committee, and Director-General of Treasury Bureau of LDP. He is a graduate of University of Tokyo (B.A. in Law) and received his J.D. from law school, Kyushu University.

1. Opening

(Moderator)[Interpreter] Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming despite your busy schedule. We would like to now begin the Sasakawa Peace Foundation event – ‘Political Leadership and Diversity – Global Trends and Japan’s Path to Take.’ This will be a panel discussion. Let me introduce myself. My name is Akiko Horiba, Program Officer, Sasakawa Peace Foundation. I am most happy to be serving as the master of ceremony. On behalf of the host, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, let me call upon Dr. Junko Chano, Executive Director of SPF for opening remarks. Executive Director channel please.

(Junko Chano) [Interpreter] Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for coming to the panel discussion on ‘Political Leadership and Diversity – Global Trends and Japan’s Path to Take’ hosted by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

Sasakawa Peace Foundation since April 2015 has been conducting research and surveys on what measures are necessary in order for diverse voices to be reflected in the political world at the parliament, which is the supreme organ of the national authorities as well as representative organ of the people.

Especially with regards to the advancement of women, we have been doing research on what measures are being taken place in order to increase women’s participation in politics by various countries. The low number of women in politics has spurred a political debate as a major challenge. In Japan, the women parliamentarian ratio in the House of Representatives is very low, as low as 9.5%. According to 2015 survey of Inter-Parliamentary Union, Japan was ranked as low as 119th amongst 190 countries around the world, a very pathetic situation.

With the cooperation of the experts at IDEA, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Sasakawa Peace Foundation has been conducting various studies on measures taken in the world with regards to women’s participation. And also with the cooperation of Professor Miura and other researchers as well as Mr. Kitajima who will be serving as the moderator who has had experience as government paid secretary to politics as well as journalists, we have been hosting various debates on reasons why there are so few women in politics and what needs to be done in order to increase women’s participation.

And at today’s panel discussion as part of this project on research and studies we will be hearing from the two experts of IDEA on what measures are necessary in order to reflect women’s voices more heavily in politics and to increase the diversity of parliaments. And what efforts are being made to increase the number of women’s parliamentarians in various countries around the world.

Further, Professor Miura and Mr. Kitajima will educate us on the measures taking place in Japan as well as the status quo at Nagatacho, our Capital Hill. And today, from the headquarters of IDEA in Sweden we have Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu and from Asia-Pacific branch we have Ms. Leena Rikkilä Tamang. Ms. Rumbidzai-san is the senior program manager of gender and democracy and has been cooperating with governments and political parties of various countries to provide support for participation of women in the decision-making process. And she has been involved in women’s in Parliament in Zimbabwe and Haiti.

Leena-san is the Regional Director of Asia-Pac of IDEA and has supported many Asian countries for democratization and has been heavily involved in the enactment of the constitution in Nepal. And as commentator, we are happy to have Professor Mari Miura, who teaches at Sophia University. And in addition, she also serves as advisor to the Parliamentarian League of promoting women’s participation in politics. And also, she is involved in these grassroots activities called *Ikareru Joshikai*, Angry Girls Club, in order to increase the women’s voices in politics.

And we have with us Mr. Jun Kitajima, Senior Fellow, Business Ethics Research Center, as moderator. His expert field is bribery-related law but he has experience in being the assistant to members of the LDP in policymaking, so he is well-versed with the situation in Japanese politics.

On a slightly different note, Sasakawa Peace Foundation is involved in various programs and today we had luncheon with the group of US Congressmen. And three Congressmen were there but we talked about how they became members of the US Congress. And one said that right before the birthday of her first child, as one-year-old birthday party, she was able to be elected for the first time. And the other two ladies said that they were state senators or members of the state house and then they became the first member of Congress therein after as females who became members of the National Congress after being senators or congressman of the state.

So, they have made their own efforts but at the same time they had the institutional backup that served as their tailwind to become congresswomen in the United States. So, those are some of the aspects we hope to be raised during the course of the panel discussion.

And based upon what will take place in the panel discussion this evening, we hope that we can offer some food for thought in order for you to think about how we can open the avenue towards women's parliamentarians and how we should be changing the institutional regime. We cordially invite your active participation.

Now I will give the floor to Mr. Kitajima to serve as the moderator. And last but not least let me thank you once again for coming here. Mr. Kitajima.

(Moderator) [Interpreter] That was executive director channel and her opening remarks. Leena-san and Rumbidzai-san will deliver their lectures. There will be a comment by Professor Miura and then the discussion to follow will be moderated by Mr. Kitajima. Mr. Kitajima, the floor is yours.

2. Lecture

(Jun Kitajima) [Interpreter] Thank you. Good evening. My name is Kitajima. Thank you very much. I am most happy to be serving as the moderator. I am the senior researcher of Business Ethics Research Center. Executive Director Chano said my expert field is bribery law. But my previous boss was Director General of Accounting. And just to avoid the misunderstanding, I am on the side of prevention of bribery, not on the side of accepting bribery.

Now we have with us two experts from IDEA, The Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an international organization. How many of you knew IDEA before you came here? Please raise your hand if you already knew the organization IDEA. Oh, I see a few hands up. In fact, IDEA stands for Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. You may have obtained the impression that it's a research institute. But there are 29 sovereign states that are members to this organization and it's an international organization. And the Secretary General is Yves Leterme who has served as the Prime Minister of Belgium in the past and the focus is sustainable democracy and election system, electoral system which serves as the very basis of democracy and they conduct not only theoretical research but also practical research as an international organization.

Today, we have two interpreters who are well-known as interpreters of international conferences who has also served as the interpreter of Prime Minister Abe. So whichever language you prefer can be used. Japan has been participating in IDEA as observer from

2004, so Kuniko Inoguchi, former Minister of State had been involved in IDEA activities as advisor.

And today we will talk about what assistant programs that IDEA offers. We have two experts that have great experience in offering such support to various countries on behalf of IDEA. So please stay until the very end and enjoy every minute.

And we have Professor Miura who will be making a comment after the two speeches. There is no one that would be more appropriate than professor Miura of Sophia University as the commentator of this session. Women's political participation is her area of expert and she is the authority of Japan in this field.

We now would like to go to the lectures. First of all Ms. Leena Rikkilä Tamang, the regional director for Asia and Pacific of IDEA will be speaking for about 10 minutes. Leena please.

[Speaker (1): Ms. Leena Rikkilä Tamang]

Thank you. Distinguished participants, friends, and colleagues, very good evening to you all and thank you very much for coming this evening to take part to this discussion on women's political participation, leadership, and diversity. And I do want to thank Sasakawa Foundation for inviting us to Tokyo and for organizing the most exciting program this week when we have had the opportunity to interact with members of parliament, with trade union representatives, with academia, with civil society, ambassadors to discuss the issue of women's political participation.

The title of my presentation is 'Women's Political Participation Strategies for Japan?' And I do not claim to be an expert on Japan but what I would like to do is to share some of observations, our observations based on those discussions that we have had this week and share perhaps some comparative experiences from around the world which have proven to be effective in this regard and then perhaps test or propose a few methods or strategies that might be for your consideration.

Through our conversations this week, we have been trying to find an answer to our question, why are women underrepresented in political life in Japan? And interestingly, almost all our interlocutors are asking the same question back to us. What do you think, why are women underrepresented here in Japan.

I think answer is critical when you are choosing the right strategy to remedy the situation. As we are describing a medicine to a sickness, we have to first diagnose what is the nature of the sickness, otherwise the end result may not be very good if you end up with the wrong sort of a medicine.

I will start with a little bit of the State of Play, where does Japan stand in comparison to the rest of the world. And as Madam Chano already mentioned, if you look at the list of IPU, Inter-Parliamentary Union classification of the countries in the world, where do they stand on when it comes to women in the Lower Houses or Houses of Representatives in the world. Number one is at the moment Rwanda and number ten is Finland, is the country where I originally come from. And Japan stands as 119th alongside with Botswana.

But if you look at this top ten list, I think there are perhaps a couple of things to be noted. One is that only three of them are OECD countries: Mexico, Sweden, and Finland; rest do come from the developing, so called developing world. All but one are using some sort of a gender quota system voluntary or legislated quota system. The one that doesn't use is Finland where I do come from. And another one is that all of these countries are applying electoral system which is proportionate electoral system or parts of it at least PR system. I come to the question of electoral systems a little bit later.

But if you would have all the top 20 countries, then you would have all the rest of Nordic countries, some European countries, but also the countries such as Namibia, Mozambique, and Timor Leste are amongst those countries.

So there is OECD studies suggest that actually there is no reliable relationship at least between how rich a country is and how many women are in parliament. And there is a figure from OECD average from 2004, but it is the same at the moment, about 25% is the average OECD country average. And it is even this high because Nordic countries take it to the 40%. There are a number of countries which are under 15 such as Japan, Italy, United States; France I think is now on 25%. But then on the other hand what is suggested is that there seems to be a link between the percentage of women who are in employment and the parliamentary seats that are held by women.

Just to give you a few figures, Finland women are 56%, Japan 48% as per the UN Gender Inequality Index from 2013. Under Japan also the figure is not that bad. But what is referred to as a source of a worry is the gap that there is between women and men. In Japan, the men percentage is 70% which is very, very high globally speaking, and the gap between men and women in employment is quite high.

I read from somewhere from the OECD papers, there was a Goldman Sachs made an assessment that Japan by increasing this women's employment rate could increase 12.5% of GDP. True or not I don't know, but that was what Goldman Sachs is claiming at the moment.

There is another figure or another ranking, I simply want to show it quickly to you which is the Economist Intelligence Democracy Index, which was just launched maybe 1 month ago. We as IDEA, we are not the great fans of these sort of democracy rankings as such. They can be very problematic. But nevertheless, given 'The Economist' is a widely acclaimed newspaper and magazine around the world and it is often referred to, I would have thought, I would quickly show it you wherein this index this year Japan had dropped in the rankings to number 23 to the category of so-called flawed democracies which is, I don't know, how good as a concept or definition that is. And it was the indicator on the political participation that is particularly low on that one.

And of course last year there were the incidences on the media censorship that may have influenced that figure as well.

While discussing with the Sasakawa Foundation and based on the research that they also have carried out, some of the results are indicating that the major issues that impact women's political participation relate to political parties, candidate selection, they do relate to election campaign, campaign finance issues, electoral system, and they do relate to the fact of what I call here glass ceiling that even for women who do get to high positions, be members of parliament, it is still very, very difficult to take that next step, to become the CEO, to become the Finance Minister, to become the Speaker of the House. Even if you become a minister, you may not get the most important portfolios.

And then of course is the issue of traditional views that are prevailing in a society about the gender roles, about what men should do, what women should do, how the division of labor in a society is considered. I will just speak very briefly to some of these and my colleague will touch upon more on the issue of gender quotas and the way they have been applied. About the political parties, I think today in the democratic systems it is really candidate selection is mostly controlled by political parties rather than voter's decisions.

It is really the political parties which are the gatekeepers of the candidate selections. And I think when you look at your political parties here in Japan, I think the issues relate to the

democratic processes and transparency in electing the candidates or creating the candidate lists in the first place. Who decides the candidates, who are the members of these election committees, what are the criteria, are these criteria transparent, are they known, are the selection processes formal or are they somehow informal, they happen because someone knows somewhere or recommend someone that somebody knows?

And the evidence shows that more transparent, more formal, some of these processes are, they tend to be more favorable for women to be able to access these. Since time is short, I will simply talk a little bit more in detail about the political finance issues and the gender. We all know democracy is not cheap, we do need funds. Funds are absolutely necessary and certain financial risk is part of the game of becoming a politician. However, it is a global trend that elections are becoming and politics is becoming more and more expensive affair. And I think that is a worry from the point of view of democracy around the world that the elections if it becomes an arena where only those who have an access to funding are able to be represented.

There are various measures from around the world that have been applied which relates to legislated measures to the level of playing fields, to campaigns. And especially when it comes to women's political participation and women's access to funding. If you have, there are a couple of examples then in the documentation about if you do have – for example, if would you have some sort of a gender quota in place, there are ways of actually enforcing them. There are sort of sanctions that if you don't comply, your funding may be reduced. And especially if you have a public funding like you have here in Japan, it can be a powerful tool or a measure that can be used.

But it also can incentivize, so there are parties can be rewarded with money or funds for nominating more women as a candidate. There are a number of countries, Cape Verde, Georgia, Haiti, which have applied for that. And for example, what maybe one interesting example is the Haiti where the political parties that run 30% of women candidates, and if they succeed in electing 20%, they will double their political funding.

And also in Finland, there is a 12% from the annual party subsidy that needs to go for the women's wings. Then there are number of sort of non-legislated measures which are sort of voluntary measures. For example in Canada, the Liberal Party has established a special fund to raise and spend money in support of women candidates. And these kinds of examples can be studied under research and seen if any of these could be applied. We heard this week that the democratic party does have a sort of water and seed fund, but I don't know about the amounts, how known such a fund is, how well is it functioning and so forth, that maybe probably some of you know even better.

There is just quickly a reference to Emily's list which is the American Democratic Party initiative referring to early money; early money is like yeast, so recognizing – that is, in the beginning of your campaigning, in the beginning of your career, before you are actually going to attract with your name the funding, it is at that stage that you need such seed money to be able to proceed.

And I do understand one of our – you have a WIN WIN here in Japan and actually one of our interpreters, I learned this week, is the founding members of the WIN WIN. But we also discussed with her as well how there are some challenges and how now over the last recent years it has not perhaps been as successful as it could be.

Since I am given a notice that my time is coming up, I will leave the issue of electoral system and the importance of the electoral system choice from gender perspective to my colleague, simply to perhaps to again refer to some of the IPU data about the FPTP or the majority versus proportionate systems. It is very clear evidence from all around the world that the proportionate electoral systems are more conducive for women than the majority systems.

In 2012, the countries that actually used PR systems, the average of women was 25%; and if you use those who used mixed system like Japan is using, it's 18%; and if you use the majority systems only, the FPTP systems only, the average is 14%.

And also, regarding one of the most effective measures to increase women's political participation and so to strengthen one's democracy are the candidates or the gender quotas. But I do skip that part, I will let my colleague, Rumbidzai to discuss more in detail about the gender quotas.

So to conclude, we can jump to the slide regarding the glass ceiling and cultural constraints. In reference to the fact that how in many countries the women have not been able to take that final leap of taking the most highest positions in the world in politics. And I do think these kinds of role models are more important than we realize. At least I can admit that in Finland which is fairly equal society in many ways, when we did get our first elected president as a woman in 2000, it was year 2000, I did feel a real great relief that actually this final bastion was finally proven that we can have a woman in that position. And it was actually my nephew who was born in 2000 and it was 2010 he was 10 years and he was asking is it actually possible for a man to become a President in Finland? I said yes, it is possible my boy, but it may take some time.

And we have directly elected – a President which is directly elected by people by the voters system.

Then is the big question, how do cultures change? If that was identified as the one of the most, the biggest issue, the traditional cultural constraints, there are no easy answers. Obviously cultures change over time because of technology, because of globalization, because of interactions with the rest of the world. Sometimes they do change because of the some tragic events.

You know that Rwanda is number one in context to women's political participation, but we all know there is also a very great prize that was paid through the genocide which brought women to be part of the political life and the measures that were taken ever since and we obviously don't want that to happen to anyone.

But I think there I just simply would like to emphasize the very importance of the civil society or the activist and the kind of the very thought never to underestimate power of very few, even very few but committed individuals who can make a change. I don't think there is any country in the world where women's political participation is more than 30%-40% where they wouldn't be in a strong, strong rights movement behind and demanding these changes. It is not necessarily sufficient but is at least needed.

I have zero minutes left. I will simply refer the measures that are in Japan. You have Basic Act for Gender Equal Society. Your target is set 30% by 2020. But many politicians this week have repeated this target. But when you request and ask for more details, how are we going to achieve, then the answers become more vague and I think there we are in need of a list of proposals for very concrete measures regarding transparency, regarding reforms in political parties, internal democracy considering some form of gender quotas, considering changes in funding. And in ways of cultivating, inspiring civil society to move forward and take more initiatives. Thank you very much for your attention.

(Jun Kitajima) [Interpreter] Leena-san, thank you very much. We wanted to listen to you on and on. But sorry, with the constraint of time we give the microphone to Ms. Rumbidzai. Ten minutes please.

[Speaker (2): Ms. Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu]

Thank you moderator. Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you to Sasakawa Peace Foundation for this initiative and for allowing us to be engaged one way or the other in the great nation of Japan. As our theme rightly says, it's about political leadership and diversity and I think one of the fundamental issues that we need to explore is how political leadership and diversity from a gender perspective is a democratic imperative. And I think that will – in a way it will assist us in terms of situating the entire discourse on gender quotas and gender equality in the broader context of sustainable democracy and development, especially given the recently adopted sustainable development goals and the fact that we have standalone SDG number 5 on achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

This presents now the challenge to say as countries to what extent are we going to be able to step up to the challenge and be able to introduce measures that speak to the need for transforming societies from a gender equality perspective. And I would like to hasten and say that gender equality in terms of women's political participation and representation is just one major indicator. It doesn't necessarily follow that when we have attained some form of gender equality or the gender quotas, then it means all the problems pertaining to gender inequalities will disappear.

As a result, from the international idea perspective we really tend to place emphasis on looking at gender equality issues even in the context of what we call the electoral system. Because one way that countries of course claim and proclaim to be democratic is tied to having elections. But then it's important to highlight that elections are not an event, they are a process. And if we can go to slide on the electoral cycle, with that understanding it helps us to see how problematic the elements pertaining to achieving gender equality in terms of the equal participation and representation are very, very entrenched in the political institutions.

They are also very much linked to the electoral systems that we use. They are also very linked to the legal frameworks. They are also very linked to the role of the media and issues pertaining to campaigning and political financing and even to a very large extent the civic and voter education levels that are in existence. Whereas in Japan, the country which is developed with very high levels of education, but probably there is also a connection in terms of how that is transcending at the levels where people see that also as an asset for their ability to participate in political issues and in a dynamic way whereby there is diversity of views not only on the basis of gender but probably even on the basis of intergenerational perspectives and opinions.

If we look at the status of the world right now, only about 41 countries have managed to achieve at least 30%. And it's at least 30% which is like a critical minority though when it was coined within the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action.

So, if we look at the number of countries at the moment, it's only about 41% that have managed to attain at least 30% women's representation in Parliament, and the emphasis is really on at least 30% because sometimes the translation becomes like 30% is the ceiling. But this was just a way of providing a benchmark for countries in order to be able to track the progress that they are making. And if we look at these countries from the 41 countries that have attained at least 30%, several of them have got some measures. It's not just happening by some evolutionary miracle. And at the same time we have got several countries that still have less than 15% of women at least in the parliament, House of Representatives. And Japan is among those countries that have less than 15% the world over, compared. It's not in the top 41 that have attained at least 30% women's representation in parliament.

And I think this presents challenges in terms of saying what needs to be done? And the answers are amongst ourselves with respect to what happens within political parties, what is the connection also with the electoral system, what is also happening in terms of the media,

even coverage and profiling of women in leadership. Because to a very large extent also it influences society's perspectives and views about women's leadership roles and how they are effective in terms of when they are in positions of power and decision making.

But the central element about the intra-party democracy processes, especially with regards to the identification, selection, and nomination of candidates, it's very essential. And as International IDEA, we have done some analysis in Latin America in the Caribbean, and also in countries in Africa where it clearly shows that where political party's policy documents such as constitutions, manifestos, their rules and regulations. And manifestos, we want to call them marketing documents because political parties especially in developing countries tend to develop that during the campaign period.

So sometimes they put all the nice promises in the manifestos. But when you go into the constitutions which are like the founding documents of the political parties, a lot of the political parties across the world tend not to have any specific commitments to gender equality starting from inside the political party. So if as a political party gender equality as an objective is not embraced broadly as a democracy issue and also as a political and sustainable development issue, it becomes very difficult for the political party to then produce enough 50:50 women and men percentage to be presented as candidates to the electorate so that people can be able to choose whether they want to vote for men or women.

Another element that I also need to emphasize is in a number of instances – and I think there is still some reflection similar to this in the context of Japan – is that the gender quotas there tends to be some negative connotations around having gender quotas, especially towards the fact that a number of people see it as maybe a process of doing women a favor. When women have failed to prove themselves that they are of quality and they have the merit and competence, then they are asking for a favor to be put into positions of power and of leadership where they are not capable for and they won't be able to deliver.

But I think it's important from the work that we have been doing as International IDEA to emphasize that gender quotas are a measure for addressing gender imbalances, for addressing the gender gap in participation and representation, for addressing gender inequalities. And if you realize, I am not making reference to women's quotas where I am talking about a gender quota. Because in the current status of our phase of the world, maybe as societies develop it might also be necessary to have guarantees for men's representation. So a gender quota functions in making sure that there is a guarantee that at any point in time men are not underrepresented; and at any point in time in the history of a country, women are not underrepresented. And that way it really makes the connections and the interconnections with democracy-building because democracy is about representativeness; it's not so much about winning elections. But is just that we commercialize elections and it becomes all about winning. But democracy and elections per se are essentially about representation.

And if we look at the concept of representation, then it gets us to say how do we ensure that in our societies where the population distribution is almost 50:50, and of course we know there are women who do not want to be in political leadership just as much as there are also men who do not want to be in political leadership positions. But how do we ensure that being male or being female does not work to somebody's disadvantage. And it think this is how we really need to get the connection between democracy building, sustainable democracy, and the notion of participation and representation. In a number of countries, you will realize that women are able to participate almost equally with men in terms of there is the equal right to vote and to be voted for. But participation is one thing and representation is another. So you find that women are essentially the world over able to participate in going to vote for others, but them as a group they are not able as much as possible to be represented in comparison to the size of the population. And a lot of people put forward arguments that the reason why this pertains is because women do not vote for each other.

But at the same time again, it shows very maybe, let me say, skewed regard in terms of democracy building from the perspective of saying both women and men are responsible for promoting gender equality. Like for instance here, a lot of the stakeholders were asking us, so tell us what difference will it make if we have more women in parliament. We went to the Diet Session one of the days and of course I can say the first thing, it will bring some color, more colors into the Diet's composition. But in terms of diversity of perspectives and views, I think it's very fundamental because that will also allow the physical presence of women as a group being a majority who are marginalized. So that then in a way helps to create the voice, the issue of representation – that you just don't participate but you also have a voice in these spaces.

And currently as it is, you might find that of course Japan has the advantage of being a developed nation so maybe certain things just flow because people expect a lot and they also deliver a lot per say in the context so far the level of development.

But I think it's very difficult for the 9% women in the National Assembly to really be so visible in terms of making contributions, whereas when people demand and say, what are they doing, what difference do they make? This is why there is always a connection with the at least 30%, which is a critical minority; even we can't even call it a critical mass still, it's a critical minority.

And I believe at this stage whilst Japan has got the good legal framework – as I mentioned at the beginning that there are several issues that are interconnected and one of them is the legal framework. There is the good legal framework or enabling legal framework, for instance, the gender equality quota, the Gender Equality Act. And when we met with the members of the House of Representatives, the committee, they are also discussing about a Gender Quota Bill.

How are those legislative frameworks going to be implemented into reality? Because policies and laws can look good on paper, but what are the enforcement mechanisms, what is the role of civil society, the academic, the different stakeholders to ensure that there is – beyond the legal framework what then gets translated into reality. And what are political parties doing because they also have a very fundamental role to play, especially in the context of Japan.

So I would like to conclude by saying there is no one size fits all and I think each country depending on the different context, political context, pertaining to political parties, electoral systems, civil society organizations, mobilization and movement, the population distribution. People have to define a solution to start some way because that is I think probably where we sense there could be a bottleneck to say this cannot work in Japan because our electoral system is this, this cannot work in Japan, we can't have legalized legislated quotas. But I am sure there is room to start somewhere and it might not give us the complete – because democracy is a process anyway, it might not deliver immediately but at least it could be a starting point for going forward and ultimately contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals at an international level and also at a national level.

Thank you Mr. Moderator, and ladies and gentlemen for your attention.

(Jun Kitajima) [Interpreter] Rumbidzai-san, thank you very much for the valuable lecture. We've now heard from the two experts and I will now call upon Professor Miura of Sophia University for her comment.

[Comment: Professor Mari Miura][Interpreter]

Thank you for the introduction. My name is Mari Miura, nice to meet you all. SPF has planned a wonderful symposium. And first and foremost I would like to extend my gratitude to Sasakawa. Two members of IDEA are here and this week they are visiting Japan. And as

a scholar of democracy, IDEA is such a well-known international organization. I am most honored to be able to meet them, they have done and is communicating the results of various results and gender and politics are the fields of these two experts. And they are betting on the situation in Japan.

And why Japan being a developed nation is so lagging behind in terms of women's participation? And their visit to Japan is an evidence of how behind we are. And what measures is made available in Japan in order to increase women's participation in politics. They have given us some clues and we are truly hoping that these findings will be widely shared in the Japanese society. So, I am most happy to see this plan being realized in the form of this symposium. The two have been kind enough to give us very valuable advices to Japan.

And let me try to speak about those advices. You have heard the IPU, this is an organization whose memberships are parliaments of various countries around the world. And on monthly basis they come up with the ranking of countries in terms of women's participation in politics. There are 190 member countries and monthly ranking is announced. They are somewhat biased. And Japan is 155th place from top, so it's quicker to count from the bottom, 9.5% is the ratio of female in the House of Representatives, so we are the countries below 10%.

There are 37 countries that don't have 10% female ratio in the parliaments, so Japan is one of the countries that is lagging behind, least developed. With 20 years past, with aggressive introduction of quota, countries around the world have been supporting women's participation. But in Japan, no specific measures had been taken so in comparison to 20 years ago the ratio of female parliamentarians have grown by three-fold, but very much behind other countries. And I come with a standard deviation because Japanese are familiar with the calculation of standard deviation. And according to my calculation, it was 41 standard deviation of Japan. So that shows how behind Japan is in terms of women's participation. So, how can we bring the ratio up to 22%, which is the global average; and then 30%, to the critical minority level?

So those are the biggest challenges faced by Japan. There are several means available, increase the employment ratio of Japan politics and cultural aspects. Many viewpoints had been shared. But we have to be quick in terms of making progress, so we have to be very strategic. So, where do we set the strategic targets? And I think the most important would be the electoral system. And that was in a way offered as a clue from what they spoke about; quota being incorporated in the electoral system so that it is made easier for Japanese females to participate. So we have to think about an effective quota system and electoral system.

Another priority is political parties. In the end, we want Japanese parliamentarians to increase; that means we need more female candidates. Who selects the candidates? It's the political parties that select the candidates. So what criteria do they use to select the candidates and what is their pool of potential candidates? There has to be a higher level of transparency and there has to be public vetting on the process that they select. Like media scrutinizing, is there a system of excluding women from the potential candidate pool? There has to be more scrutinization. But in Japan, political parties are in a black box and celebrity becomes a candidate of the next election.

Suddenly it pops out on the media out of nowhere, but no one knows how that process went by. And the selection process, from the perspective of democracy is that the right way of selecting candidates? I think that's the question we need to ask the political parties.

So, political parties are gatekeepers they said. Yes, if we are to support democracy, it is the political parties that are the fundamental organs to support democracy. So what are they doing. Don't make it a black box. We have to look inside what's going on and to make sure that democratic rules are introduced.

The two said there has to be clear rules. So if quotas are to be introduced, then it has to be embedded into the party charter. It's not that we don't have any quotas in Japan. The social party has a quota in their party rule. But Japan is not counted as one of the countries that have introduced quota. I have had contacts with IDEA and there is a quota project in Sweden that has contacts with IDEA. I visited them and I told them in the social democratic party's rule they have the word quota. But why isn't Japan is counted as one of the countries that introduced a quota system? It's because they don't have specific numbers in the social democratic party's rule; they don't have numeric specification. So it may be a soft quota but we don't count soft quota as proper quota.

And there was another example, Liberal Democratic Party, you may be surprised but Junichiro Koizumi in 2005 did the privatization of Japan Post. That was the election. We don't call it really quota but scholaristically it could be a tantamount to quota. Because in proportional representative listing, in number one he specified women, so to a certain extent he did allocate on gender basis, so it was in effect a quota.

If there wasn't a quota, what would have been done? The LDP was successful in increasing female candidates by 6 back then in that particular election, so there is true result. But after he stepped down, there has been no one in LDP to introduce quota. So if there is a strong leader like Mr. Koizumi, then there could be a quota system introduced. But unless that's stipulated in the party rule, then the next successor president of that political party may not take over that policy. So, putting it explicitly in the rule is very important, which is evidenced by this kind of example.

And political funding was also mentioned. There reform is surely necessary. And the quota parliamentarian's league exists in Japan and gender equality is being promoted by this parliamentarian league and they are drafting a bill to be submitted to the Diet which was already mentioned. Not just such political institution but many efforts are necessary. But especially, civil society and press needs to have more interest.

And there has to be competition between political parties. It's not the case that introduction of quota will immediately increase female parliamentarians. Even when quota is introduced, political parties will find loopholes to escape. And so there has to be civil society organizations and the media who become angry to such political parties. And when such competition exists, then maybe a political party may truly try to do an effort to increase women parliamentarians. And then if the different political party feels that they will not be able to win the next upcoming election; if they don't also introduce quota, that will sort of incentivize the introduction of quota. So, there is a role to be played by the civil society in the drafting of the bill and. After the bill passes the Diet, the involvement of the civil society is truly important to really put into practice.

There were a few very impressive words that struck my heart. But political representation of women was also mentioned. The system of representation in parliament differs country by country and that's very much important in democracy. Democracy building was another phrase you used. Seventy years ago, we introduced democracy in Japan, so we are one of the oldest countries in terms of introduction of democracy. And the experience of democracy may have become obsolete because those who were active back then have already passed away, so young people may not really attach themselves to the world of democratization because we already have 70 years of history.

But if we look at the female parliamentarian's ranking, we are one of the bottom 30 somewhat countries. So in terms of democracy building, we have to make it a clear strategic goal, so that is the status quo Japan is put into. And I think we should re-recognize our position as such.

Thank you for those valuable comments.

[Question and Answer]

(Jun Kitajima) [Interpreter] Thank you very much. We would like to have a discussion session now. Listening to you, there were some phrases and contents which surprised me. For example, as Professor Miura said, during Koizumi administration LDP already introduced a gender quota system in a soft way. And it was indeed successful in producing plus six women parliamentarians.

Rumbidzai-san said that there is no free size. Every country has to consider its cultural and historical context in trying to find a solution. Really, those are expressions that really hit me hard. Now, I would like to confirm key concepts before going into discussion. Professor Miura, gender quota, gender equality, these are the words. In Japanese terms, what are they?

(Miura) [Interpreter] Gender equality means gender byodo in Japanese. So political fund assistance is equal and gender based discrimination is not introduced. Why do you use the word gender because including the sexual orientation or irrespective of biological sexes there has to be equality, that's why gender is used.

Danjo Kyodo Sankaku is the term used by the official documents in Japan for gender equality.

(Kitajima) [Interpreter] It's not the biological gender but social context difference of sexes, that is gender, is that right?

(Miura) [Interpreter] Yes it is. And it is not a dichotomy. Biologically the men and women are fixed, so it is not that way, the male like thing, the feminine like things, there is a range and then there are certain nuanced elements, that is represented by the word gender.

(Kitajima) [Interpreter] Gender quota what does it mean?

(Miura) [Interpreter] The allocation quota means it's not quarter, sometimes people misunderstanding quota to be quarter. No it's not one quarter, it is quota, allocation. So usually it takes a percentage, the critical minimum is 30% that's generally accepted. The women quota, gender quota are two different concepts. Only the advantage – the quota would be given to women and women should be more than 30%, that's women quota. But I think the quota should be provided to both sexes, so both sexes should have somewhere between 40% to 50%. So both sexes would have a quota, that is more democratic and more equal; that is why it is called gender quota.

(Kitajima) [Interpreter] Last confirmation, critical minority. In Japanese, how would you translate critical mass usually that is known.

(Miura) [Interpreter] Critically minority, critically minor existence, I think the critical mass – mass comes from physics terminology. When a certain change happens, you have to have a certain mass otherwise the change doesn't happen. When 30 is there, then the change; all of a sudden big challenge happens, but 5 or 10 would not affect any change. It's a physics word. And it's, roughly speaking, 30%. It maybe 25, it's not an exact rocket science. It may be 25, it may be 35, its case by case. Around one-third, around 30% is the level from which a big change would occur.

(Kitajima) [Interpreter] Thank you very much.

Now we will open the floor for discussion. But Leena-san or Rumbidzai-san, Leena-san do you have any comment to Rumbidzai-san's comment or Professor Miura's comment.

(Leena Rikkilä Tamang) I am interested in hearing what are the views from the audience. But professor Miura, you referred that LDP already had a voluntary party quota once. But one of the issues that was brought up to us in the discussions with the representative from that party was the challenge of the incumbent, that MPs who have been, who are now sitting there, who yes have a big experience, long experience, community relationships, constituency relationships, and that those people tend to stay for very long. So one election after another election, hence there are no free seats. So even if you had a voluntary quota or a quota system, those seats or the places are so few that it doesn't make much difference if you always allocate the candidacy to the incumbent.

So I do wonder if there has been any discussion in Japan about will it be possible to have a retirement age. Like for being a politician being like any other profession, maybe not as low as you have for the profession but some. Or term limit. I mean, you have to get your priorities, either you want stability and status quo and have the same good experienced people. Or you want to have a change and bring in more women or younger people. It's a choice that needs to be made but it should be a conscious choice, not just because things have always been like this.

(Miura) [Interpreter] In Japan there is no public age limit. But 70 is the highest age. Some party rules exist depending on the political party. In gubernatorial elections if a Governor wins many terms, there is criticism. But when it comes to national parliament, currently the general public doesn't really criticize one specific person winning several times.

And the constitution, it's very difficult for women to run in a place where there has been historically occupied by certain people. And also, 90% of the parliamentarians are male, so it's very difficult for single seat constituencies. So I think it would be easier for proportional representation. And in Japan there is a high percentage proportion in the House of Representative for proportional representative. But in Japan there is a dual candidacy and someone who loses a single seat may be able to regain candidacy in proportional representative.

And so dual candidacy – most political parties, they list the same people in number one ranking or number two ranking in the list. So proportional representative is usually a system that does contribute to the wider pool of candidacy but it's not that way in Japan. Originally, it is supposed to be compensating for certain people not being able to run in single system.

But because of this dual candidacy procedure existing in Japan, it's not working that way.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] Rumbidzai-san, do you have any questions to Professor Miura.

(Miura)[Interpreter] May I ask a question? I have a question to both of them. Whenever we discuss quota in Japan – as you said, if you have a quota incapable women will come to the political arena. That's usually criticism and you refuted that.

Also in international research, with the use of quota system women parliamentarians will increase in number, then the quality of democracy will go up, sometimes the people say so, because parliament floors would be activated. It's not the policies would change but the quality of democracy would be enhanced, some people argue that. Do you have comments about that? Do you have any concrete examples with more women MPs quality of democracy would improve? Can you talk about it?

(Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu) Thank you. I think I am just thinking of at least a country which has become my home, Sweden. And I think Leena being from one of the Scandinavian countries can speak better to it even from a historical perspective that with the

spaces opening up and more women coming in, more women being able even to go to work because services just on childcare and support are provided. And also, more and more men at least are seen to be taking responsibility for childcare. Sweden, I suppose is one of those countries where you can say the quality of democracy is quite substantive. It's not just, for lack of a better word, a fallacy, a theory that is up there for the few but it allows – it's a system that allows both women and men to make inputs. But whether we can specifically say we have researched and it's well documented this is what has happened because more women have come in, it's still debatable.

But in several countries – like for instance if I can cite examples from African countries, the presence, the minimum 30% representation of women have led to parliaments adopting laws that, for instance, deal with issues of domestic violence, criminalizing, violence against women, and even increasing sentences on sexual crimes which – in the years before there was a huge presence of women in parliament, the prison sentences for sexual crimes were very pathetic, almost like an insult for even someone to go and report that there is discrimination. So there have been in the past at least an increased development with regards to creating enabling legislative measures, especially from African countries that help to promote women's rights and eliminate various forms of discrimination against women.

But I cannot say we have done conclusive research and it's something that we have even been discussing with the Inter-Parliamentarian Union to say maybe we need to start documenting and saying what are the issues that are brought to the parliament and debated by both women and men. Because it's not only women parliamentarians who are responsible for gender equality when they go into parliament or for women's right issues, it is both women and men. But the presence of women sometimes brings a perspective which our male counterparts might probably miss because we are really wired differently. Those are some of the concrete examples that I can think of really from the African context.

(Mari Miura)[Interpreter] Thank you.

(Mari Miura) We have the arguments here why women, we have the justice argument, 50%; we have the experience argument, women bring a different experience on the table. But there is also the kind of interests argument because of conflict of interest. Sometimes on some issues there is a conflict of interest between men and women, hence men cannot really represent a women's perspective. And I think that nurtures and nourishes the debate so that men and women together then come up with the better decisions and better results.

We all know this Economist Democracy Index has its own problematics but if you look at the top ten countries where as per those indicators that economists have used in terms of determining the most democratic countries in the world, they are also the most equal, many of them are the most democratically gender equal countries from the gender point of view.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] Thank you.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] Thank you very much. We have heard from the three experts and they have given us various valuable comments. But we now open the floor for questions. Those of you have questions please raise your hand and at the outset please specify to whom you are addressing the question. Any questions? The person in yellow please.

(Participant A)[Interpreter] Thank you very much for the wonderful lecture. I am Reiko Ueda, member of Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly. Against 127 seats, there are 25 female assembly members. Ms. Leena, you said that LDP is the biggest political party in Japan and we call them the rock on ??pickles??. There are people and parliamentarians that have stuck to their constituency historically for a long time. And even if it's taken over, it's not

succeeded by female parliamentarians. No parliamentarians that would advocate gender equality.

So we are concerned that even when female parliamentarians increase in number, will there be more gender equality? But even then, 30% would be better. I am an independent, I am not affiliated to any political party. But why don't we do regional parliament assemblies first? Because multiple constituency system is introduced in regional parliaments, so it's easier for civil society members to run for local assemblies. And also, mother parliamentarians number is very low, so I have already began a campaign to increase mother assembly members. So if its hard in national parliaments, Leena have you found any better results in local assemblies than national parliaments? Thank you.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] She is a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and she asked her question being a metropolitan assembly member, a local assembly. Critical minority, 30% being reached, does that change the quality of the debate in parliament. That's her first question.

(Participant A) [Interpreter] My question is whether reaching this critical minority 30%% will improve the quality. And the other question was maybe its quicker in local assemblies, so have you found such examples in other countries of doing first local assembly.

(Jun Kitajima) [Interpreter] Yes, even if 30% is reached in political parties, would there truly be improvement in the quality? And her next question was local assembly first over national assemblies.

(Leena Rikkilä Tamang) We discussed the issue of quality just a few minutes ago. But indeed, the local level is absolutely critical and so important. I think in many ways and in many countries being part of the local level governance really can be a stepping stone to think about maybe entering into national politics, to parliaments, to national level politics not always, not everyone. I think there are lot of people and women and men who do want to influence their own localities, their own issues that they think are close to their heart. But no, absolutely.

And if you think that there would be a chance that it would be easier to introduce some measures, quota, gender quotas, electoral system reforms at the local level, maybe that is the way from where in Japan you could really start. There are a number of countries which have gender quotas at the local level even if they don't have them at the national level; for example in India and in many other countries too, in Africa, many of the African countries that Rumbidzai knows more in detail. But yes, that is a great suggestion for Japan to consider.

(Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu) I think in addition to what Leena is saying one of the examples that comes to mind in terms of starting from the local level, at least with what is documented, it is actually recorded that Norway in the early 1980s, that's the model that Norway adopted to invest at the local government level, more women to come into leadership and in governance issues at the local government level as a stepping stone, like Leena said, to then present themselves as candidates for the next level.

Because I think it's important, like you rightly say madam, that the issue is not just about gender quotas pertaining to parliament, they are also representatives. In fact it was an omission on our part not to make reference to the local governance level. And Norway is reported to be one of the countries at least that is now in the forefront in terms of women's representation at national level but they started investing at the local government level in the early 1980s as a way of preparing women and developing a pool of candidates. Because one of the issues that different stakeholders, especially political parties were raising and presenting to us was about where do we find the pool of women candidates. And that is

something I think that still needs to be pursued and explored in different options for making it possible.

(Participant A) [Interpreter] Taking about local assembly rather than national politics, women participation is even worse; there are local assemblies, 20% of local assemblies no women member. So it's very important to increase the women participation in local areas. When you look into the local areas, especially the matters pertaining to the local assembly would be close to everybody's lives, like childcare and caring and so forth. So it's on extension of NPO's activities through which you can enter the assembly. So I think local politics is indispensable for women.

But the important thing is quota is something to control and bind political parties. In selecting candidates, gender quota would be introduced. But the Japanese political parties are not based on local areas. There are so many independents in Japan, so quota is to be introduced to local assemblies. It's not effective, it's not – the political party is not controlling it. There are many local assemblies but there are areas where the size is very big, then as institutional reform could be various ideas would be possible. So daringly, the seats would be allocated and local politics should have the principle of 50:50; that principle can be introduced, then the situation could change in a large way.

Did they answer your question?

(Participant A) [Interpreter] Yes thank you very much. I want to launch a local party and I want to realize local based party.

(Jun Kitajima) Other questions, yes please.

(Participant B) I really learn a lot from your talks. I would like to share. As Ambassador of Republic of Macedonia, I would like to share experience in Macedonia. The Republic of Macedonia was once part of Yugoslavia and then we separated from Yugoslavia in 1991. And you can say that we are a young democracy when we start as independent country. And even though during Yugoslavia we had a socialist system and that by definition meant equality. But also that meant that women should work together with men in the mines to dig heavy metals and all that, so equality really consisted of that kind of equality too.

However, when we constituted the parliament at the beginning, there are only 4% of women. And as you can imagine, those 4% out of 120 candidates they felt that if they don't do something the number will continue decreasing because they are really such a minority in the parliament.

They talk to their colleagues, male colleagues that something needs to be done but the male colleagues did not want to listen. Then they said okay, let's do some kind of recommended quota because it was process of democracy-building. And there was a recommendation to political parties to have quota. However when it's voluntary, no one is really following the advice.

And again, female parliamentary members, they were thinking oh no, this is not going to work like this. So they united and approached several NGOs in Macedonia and together they launched campaigns to promote female representation in parliament and political life. And they started a large campaign in the country, sharing leaflets, pamphlets, going door to door, grassroots movement. And they even had one campaign on TV which was very interesting that said 'how come there are 96% Romeo's and only 4% Juliet' thinking about our parliament, to catch the attention of the public and to really make everyone listen what they are talking about.

And then they proposed a law in the parliament. The law was that every political party in Macedonia must have on their nominated list at least 30% of the underrepresented gender, they did say female or male because based on the constitution every citizen of the Republic of Macedonia have the equal right to express their political will; that means men, female everyone. So we were I think very lucky that this law was voted in the parliament in 2002. And since then on I can proudly say that Macedonia have 33.4% of female in the parliament. And they have female committee, they have many parliamentary groups, and they stand stronger now. So, my question is and it's to all of you, is it possible to have that kind of combination of law and movement also in Japan for such a change to happen. Because the way I see it, even though we have in maybe former Yugoslavia so-called equality, if society doesn't really continue building strongly that democracy, it can be undermined in certain period of time and maybe for a very long time. Thank you very much.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] Thank you very much. In interest of time just a short comment from each of you. Professor Miura?

(Mari Miura)[Interpreter] System and campaign, they should be both wheels of a vehicle. In Japan with that combination change is possible. But as you may realize listening to the discussion, in international meeting like I always feel that everybody should be more passionate about democracy. I think they are. We consider very seriously is it really democratic, is it really equal under the democracy, is the current situation really equal? Everybody should get involved very seriously and passionately. And what kind of things that that we should do in order to realize that. I know that internationally such a discussion is done passionately. But looking back into Japan, the understanding is so superficial. So in order to cause a real campaign I think we have to have a fresh look at the democratic values. The democratic things, is it really something that we are attaching great importance, we have to ask this original question once again to ourselves. Thank you.

(Jun Kitajima) Leena-san any comment?

(Leena Rikkilä Tamang) I really cannot comment on what is possible or not possible in Japan. But interesting what you said ambassador about the type of gender quota that you had, that it is for the underrepresented gender and hence it was not against the spirit of your constitution. And I do understand that that debate is going on here in Japan as well, whether introducing a gender quota would be unconstitutional. But I do wonder if the formulation and debate and discussion – if we do formulate it in a way as you have done that we are talking about the underrepresented gender to have an equal, to ensure representation of everybody. Because your constitution certainly says that there should be equality in society and citizens should be equal in their right, to exercising their right to representation. But that's for I guess constitutional scholars and the general public and media to debate about.

(Jun Kitajima)[Interpreter] Thank you. Thank you very much. I must apologize that time is already up. But I thank the two persons who had asked the question.

What's your impression after having participated in this symposium? We had experts for IDEA who is a wonderful an international organization and also Professor Miura of Sophia has been kind enough to offer her insight. Once again can we thank the members on the podium with a round of applause.

(Moderator)[Interpreter] Thank you to the members on the podium. Already a round of applause has been offered and I was about to say with a round of applause myself but I will skip that line.

With that we conclude the panel discussion. We truly hope that today's debate will contribute to diverse political leadership in Japan. And those of you who were in the audience, please

talk about the necessity of diversity in parliament, and especially women's participation and advancement in the political circle of Japan.

If you have any specific ideas in order to deepen this debate on this subject, please contact us any time. SPF will further conduct research and use your insight as well in our future work.

Thank you very much. And please leave the simultaneous interpretation receivers on your seats. And we have distributed to you a question sheet. We would very much appreciate your feedback as we plan for future activities and therefore we would appreciate if you could fill the response sheet. The questionnaires will be collected at the exit. Once again, thank you for coming.

[End of lecture]