

APPF 
CANBERRA 2000



Cooperation and security –

key issues at January 2000 parliamentary conference

Regional cooperation and security issues in the Asia Pacific Region will feature on the agenda of a major international parliamentary conference to be held in Canberra in January 2000.

East Timor, nuclear and missile proliferation and the economic situation faced by countries following the 1997-98 economic crisis will be among regional issues debated by delegates to the 8th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), to be held in Parliament House from 10 to 13 January.

With parliamentarians from 26 Asian and Pacific countries, the APPF Annual Meeting represents a significant opportunity to foster greater understanding and cooperation in the Asia Pacific region. A number of the issues considered by the Forum at its 7th Annual Meeting in Lima, Peru in January this year are again on the agenda for the Canberra meeting. Nuclear and missile proliferation and international terrorism were of particular interest to Australia at the Lima meeting and continue to be so. But it is East Timor that will be of particular interest to many of the Australian delegates at the Canberra meeting.

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Discussions about economic issues affecting the region will be a further feature of the Forum. The widespread severity of the Asian financial crisis means that economic conditions are of continuing

interest to all APPF members and the January meeting will feature reporting on the recovery process and debate about the way forward.

While Australia has weathered the Asian economic crisis better than many of its neighbours, it remains vitally interested in fostering recovery and economic stabilisation throughout the region. Recent APPF meetings have seen an increasing interest in, and desire to foster links with, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries. Against this background, New Zealand will report on the September APEC Ministerial Meeting in Auckland.

In addition to the APPF Annual Meeting, the Australian Parliament will host another significant international conference in January 2000 – the 15th Conference of Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers. From 5 to 8 January parliamentary leaders from more than 50 Commonwealth countries will meet to discuss the latest developments in relation to parliamentary practice and procedure. In a spirit of cooperation, this conference provides an opportunity to share knowledge and improve understanding between Commonwealth parliaments. Australia previously hosted this conference in 1978.

Two web sites are being created on the Internet for both events and they will provide a means of finding up to date information about both conferences. Transcripts of discussions will also be available on these web sites. The addresses are: www.spoc.aph.gov.au and www.appf2000.aph.gov.au. It is also hoped that the Internet will be used to broadcast at least some of the proceedings of both events.

For further information on the conferences, contact the conference secretariat on Telephone: (02) 6277 4555; Fax: (02) 6277 8452; Email: appf2000@aph.gov.au