

BIOPOLITICS INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

Climate change dangers, vulnerabilities and policies in ASEAN countries, Korea and Japan

**Luncheon discussion under the auspices of H.E. Benny Bahanadewa
Ambassador of Indonesia**

Athens, September 13, 2016

PRESS RELEASE

A timely and stimulating luncheon discussion on climate change dangers, vulnerabilities and policies in ASEAN countries, Korea and Japan, was hosted by the Ambassador of Indonesia, H.E. Benny Bahanadewa, at the China Center restaurant in Athens, on September 13, 2016. The luncheon featured Prof. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis, President and Founder of the Biopolitics International Organisation, as keynote speaker, with the Ambassador of Thailand, H.E. Joompol Manaschuang, and the Ambassador of Vietnam, H.E. Tran Thi Ha Phuong, also making brief interventions.



From left to right: the Ambassador of Indonesia, H.E. Benny Bahanadewa; B.I.O. President, Prof. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis; the Ambassador of Vietnam, H.E. Tran Thi Ha Phuong; and, the Ambassador of Thailand, H.E. Joompol Manaschuang.

The event was attended by distinguished diplomatic delegates from several Asian countries, including: **Sheila Tario** and **Rowena Maria Corpuz** from the **Embassy of the Philippines**; **Yoko Maejima** from the **Embassy of Japan**; **Yoosik Kang** from the **Embassy of Korea**; **Yayat Sugiatna**, **Bayu Novita** and **Bharata** from the **Embassy of Indonesia**; **Rungnapa Srivannavit** from the **Embassy of Thailand**;

Sujan Debnath from the **Embassy of Bangladesh**; and, **Grang Dang** from the **Embassy of Vietnam**. **George Roupas, Head of the Ganesha Association for Hellenic-Indonesian Friendship**, was also in the audience.

The **Ambassador of Indonesia, H.E. Benny Bahanadewa**, welcomed all participants and expressed how pleased he was to host this most important discussion in the most crucial area of climate change. “We opted for this informal setting in order to be more relaxed and have a better opportunity to exchange views and experiences. With the ratification of the Paris Agreement by 175 countries in April 2016, in New York, the international community made a historic step towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the gradual elimination of coal and gas, and the restriction of global warming to between 1.5 and 2 degrees Centigrade. Climate change adaptation and mitigation are of great interest to Indonesia. As a country situated on the ocean conveyor belt and home to some of the highest levels of biological diversity in the world, Indonesia plays a most important role in global climate change strategies. The vulnerability to and impact of climate change is a major concern to all ASEAN countries, which have made a significant commitment for climate change mitigation by sharing experiences and ideas. It is a distinct honor to have with us today Prof. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis, who has been working tirelessly to promote climate change policies worldwide.”

B.I.O. President and Founder, Prof. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis, took the floor and emphasized how greatly she values the support of the Ambassador of Indonesia and deeply appreciates their cooperation. “With your participation in our recent meeting at the Bank of Greece and through your interest in the B.I.O. efforts, you have always been active in upholding our ideals. It is a joy and privilege to be here among such great friends – the Ambassadors of Thailand and Vietnam – and all the distinguished representatives of the Philippines, Bangladesh, Korea and Japan. B.I.O. has strong ties with Japan. Notably, Professor Jiro Kondo, Chairman of the Central Environment Council, who was a leader in the Kyoto discussions and an eminent B.I.O. Trustee. Many wonderful friends from Korea, the Philippines and Bangladesh have also shared our ideals and we feel grateful for having such great supporters around the world.

Many of you often ask: What is Biopolitics? Our goal – through politics in the Platonic sense – is to protect *bios*, life. Humanity has been spending billions to discover life on other planets and has neglected our most pressing responsibility – that of protecting this unique gift on our own planet. We forget that the Earth is just a speck of dust in universe and yet we keep dividing it into even smaller increments. If we consider the beauty and symmetry of the intricate processes of bios, the millions of chemical reactions taking place at the microscopic level every second in a single cell, the revelations are staggering.

*Galaxy or galaxies
are small dimensions
not infinity*

*Neutrons are small
very small
not infinity*

*And what am I
a neutron to the galaxy
or a galaxy to the neutron?*

The B.I.O. vision for a society of hope is strongly based on the concept of bio-diplomacy. Through the process of differentiation, a single fertilized egg can lead to the formation of an entire human being. Differentiation – in culture, race, religion – is crucial for our survival and needs to be preserved. Diversity and interdependence are the wealth of humanity and the wealth of bios. The cooperation of different sectors is required for the world to function in harmony. When one part of the body ails, the entire body suffers. Similarly, the whole body of bios suffers when parts of it are destroyed by climate change.

Regional and global efforts for climate change mitigation can lead to friendship and understanding, as no one can fight this battle alone. We need to acknowledge our interdependence and become useful for ourselves and the planet. Bio-diplomacy creates links and bonds among neighbors and with the life-supporting use of technology we can all join forces to put an end to destruction and promote a society of hope and harmony.”

The meeting continued with interventions from the Ambassadors of Thailand and Vietnam, as well as brief comments from the delegates of the Embassies of Korea, Japan, The Philippines and Bangladesh.



Ambassadors and distinguished delegates at the meeting on Climate change dangers, vulnerabilities and policies in ASEAN countries, Korea and Japan, hosted by the Ambassador of Indonesia and featuring the B.I.O. President as keynote speaker.

The **Ambassador of Thailand, H.E. Joampol Manaschuang**, pointed out that every country needs to undertake the implementation of climate change mitigation measures. “This should not be the sole responsibility of big GHG emitters; all countries must be involved in deeper emissions cuts. Thailand has forcefully joined the international community in mobilizing awareness of the need for climate adaptation and mitigation. Thailand is neither a poor nor a rich country, and has

actively contributed to the global effort for the prevention of climate change by submitting its new climate action plan to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and by signing the Paris Agreement. Thailand fully complies with the work of international agencies in the area of emissions reduction, but has also placed special emphasis on the development of domestic policies. Thailand is committed to addressing climate change by implementing voluntary policies in accordance with the UNFCCC. GHG emissions are to be reduced through a renewable energy plan which will motivate people to take a voluntary stance towards climate adaptation. The goal is to instill in the people that it is everybody's duty to work for climate change mitigation. In addition, in July 2015, the cabinet approved a Climate Change Master Plan for 2015-2050 with the aim of making Thailand a climate change resilient and low-carbon development society following a sustainable development pathway. The plan is to be implemented in the medium term as well, with the goal of strengthening Thailand's capacity for climate policy by 2020."

The **Ambassador of Vietnam, H.E. Tran Thi Ha Phuong**, proclaimed that it is every country's primary duty to be concerned with climate change mitigation. "Every year, hundreds of species are lost and in Vietnam we are particularly concerned about the environment. The shortcomings of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement are that not all industrialized countries have signed them, and this is the biggest reason for the continuation of global warming. Small countries like Vietnam need to actively contribute to international meetings and organize regional conferences, such as the ones already held in cooperation with Laos and Cambodia. It is not only big, industrialized countries that are responsible for climate change. Smaller countries are also a part of the problem through the practices of deforestation and the damming of rivers. It should be made clear that everyone is responsible for climate change mitigation."

Following Ambassador Phuong's comments, **Yoosik Kang, from the Embassy of Korea**, thanked the Ambassador of Indonesia for his invitation and explained that the Korean government fully recognizes and participates in all international climate change agreements. "Korea has signed the Paris Agreement and is at the stage of preparing a new green growth strategy to transform the economy to a low carbon green economy. Seoul is also home to the Global Green Growth Institute and the Green Climate Fund, two organizations fully devoted to climate change mitigation."

Yoko Maejima, in charge of political affairs at the Embassy of Japan, thanked Ambassador Bahanadewa for the invitation and mentioned that the Japanese government has been making efforts to prevent global warming for many years. "Global attempts to stop climate change have not been efficient enough. It is crucial to sensitize every individual on the planet about the urgency of climate change mitigation."

Sheila Tario, Chargé d'Affaires at the Philippine Embassy, expressed her complete agreement with the B.I.O. President regarding the importance of interconnectedness and interdependence. She stressed that climate change mitigation should not be the effort of just one country. "The Philippines is a partner in the global effort against climate change and we have a new National Climate Action Plan to this effect. The Philippines is also one of the countries that signed the Paris Agreement earlier this year."

Finally, the **Second Secretary of the Embassy of Bangladesh, Sujan Debnath**, mentioned that he was very glad to be at the meeting and that the Ambassador sends his regards. He also mentioned that Bangladesh is a very vocal champion of the environment and climate change mitigation, and that he was personally interested in participating in the coursework of the Biopolitics International Organisation in this field.



The Ambassador of Indonesia receives an honorary diploma in recognition of his outstanding contribution in the race to save the environment and bios, by the B.I.O. President.

The event concluded with the **conferral of an honorary diploma** by **Prof. Agni Vlavianos Arvanitis** to **Ambassador Benny Bahanadewa**, in recognition of his **outstanding contribution in the race to save the environment and bios**.

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