Thank you chair. I am speaking on behalf of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, a membership-based women's rights organisation active in 27 countries in the region. During this session on 'Population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific,' I wish to draw attention to the date: today marks the third day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. On that note, delegates in the room should understand that our governments have the power to make policy decisions that have repercussions over generations and can deepen the challenges women and girls contend with.

The report on Population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific mentions the impact of son preference on sex ratios in the region, stating that "It is a violation of the human rights of girls resulting in a surplus of males." A recent piece by the Washington Post finds that India and China together have 70 million more men than women, largely due to female feticide and the one-child policy respectively. The piece is called "Too many men" and it documents the repercussions of this gap, which is larger than the population of Myanmar. Women from Cambodia and Myanmar are being trafficked as brides to China; older women find themselves continuing care work for their adult sons that they had expected to pass on to young daughter-in-laws. Without deconstructing patriarchy, without challenging traditional roles of men and women, without eliminating discriminatory practices we are not going to be able to implement core human rights commitments or realise the 2030 Agenda.

As mentioned in the opening remarks yesterday, inequality within and between countries are increasing, and this goes hand in hand with obscene growth of wealth in the hands of a few. Swiss bank UBS reports that in 2017, over two thousand billionaires grew their combined wealth by $1.4 trillion, more than the GDP of Spain and Australia. Action is needed to address this discrepancy: there is enough wealth, should states choose to redistribute it. Redistribution is one of the five necessary shifts that is the foundation of Development Justice, a collective call that comes from civil society in the region to change our approach to development.

My next point is to do with elements that were raised yesterday about the increase in migration within the region as well as the fact Asia Pacific hosts a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons. These are symptomatic of the states that are in "fragile and conflict-affected situations" such as Afghanistan, Myanmar, and even in the Philippines on a subnational level, in the state of Mindanao which has been under a state of emergency for over a year.

States in the region need to commit to human rights based principles, whether they are dealing with minority and discriminated against populations such as Lumad indigenous people in the Philippines, Rohingya in Myanmar, or Uighur in China; or whether they are receiving migrants and refugees from their neighbours. As the average life expectancy increases, we must not be accepting of discrimination, entrenched poverty and other factors that impact the quality of life and human dignity. A longer life is not a better life unless we act to make it so.