



# asian

## FORUM NEWSLETTER

Publication of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

### ASIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS DETERMINED TO ATTAIN ICPD GOALS



L. to R: Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director, IPPF - Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General AFPPD and Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health Thailand - H.E. Mr. Chaturon Chaisaeng, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand - Ms. Keiko Okido, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP - Mr. Shuyun Xu, Director Asia Pacific Division of UNFPA - Mr. Sergey Kolesnikov, MP Russia

The United Nations Conference Center, Bangkok, was the venue for three important population and development-related conferences, which again affirmed population and development as issues of the utmost importance for development and poverty removal programmes in Asia.

The Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference, the Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on ICPD Implementation, (12th to the 13th), and the Asian NGO meeting all took place from the 11th to the 17th of December 2002.

The Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on ICPD Implementation was organised in cooperation with UNFPA and UNESCAP, and was presided over by H.E. Mr. Chaturon Chaisaeng on the 12th of December.

The Asian Forum brought together around seventy parliamentarians from twenty-four Asia-Pacific and Central Asian countries as well as from the UK, Ireland, France, Georgia, Armenia and Russia to review the status of ICPD implementation and poverty eradication programmes in the Asian region. The question as to whether poverty can indeed be eradicated without first solving the population issue was also debated. Numerous NGOs and representatives from UN agencies and donor agencies were also in attendance.

Taking place shortly after AFPPD's General Assembly held in Beijing in October, the Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on ICPD provided another opportunity for parliamentarians to reflect on the linkages of population with other development issues such as poverty, food security, water and environment.

Special emphasis was given to ageing and emerging population and development related issues and how

parliamentarians can prepare themselves and their governments to address these issues. The focus of the meeting, however, was to review parliamentarians' work in promoting ICPD implementation and to encourage them to work with renewed vigour for ICPD causes.

### Population Growth Impacts on All Areas of Development



H.E. Mr. Chaturon Chaisaeng

**H.E. Mr. Chaturon Chaisaeng, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand**, chaired the opening session of the ICPD Implementation meeting and gave a presidential address. He said that it is imperative to first tackle the issue of population growth, which affects all aspects of development, before we can even hope to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. Chaisaeng, referring to Thailand, said "With 62 million people living in an area slightly larger than California, Thailand once faced a population growth rate as daunting as that of other developing countries. In 1970, the Thai Government declared a population policy to support voluntary family planning in order to solve problems of rapid population growth that caused adverse effects to economic and social development of the nation. As a result of the policy, there has been a dramatic decline in the rate of population growth. The rate of contraceptive use has risen sharply from 15 percent to 75 percent among married women of reproductive age from 1970 to 1992. The total fertility rate has declined from over six births per woman in the mid 1960s to below two in the mid 1990s. Thailand has now been able to achieve a stable 1 percent natural population growth rate per year." *Continued overleaf*



## Population and Development Agenda Under Threat

**Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General of AFPPD and Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health in Thailand**, said in her welcome address that she was dumbfounded as to how anyone could possibly think of addressing development without first considering population issues. "The population and development agenda remains under threat from certain quarters," she warned participants.

Drawing on her extensive experience of government health systems as Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health, she said she was only too well aware of the factors young people and women are up against. "Ensuring women have the choice to decide their own future and providing information to young people about their sexuality is a fundamental human right, and we as parents must realise that in today's modern world, it is better to hand out this information to young people and decrease the chances of them contracting STDs and HIV/AIDS," she stated.

## RH Services a Must for Everyone



Dr. Raj Karim

**Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director, IPPF Kuala Lumpur**, reminded participants that the Cairo Conference marked a historic shift in the formulation and implementation of population and development policies. She said "In terms of reproductive health and rights, we agreed to shift our policies, towards enabling women, men, and couples to have the means for their reproductive health choices,

and to be able to express these choices through information, education, and services. We recognize reproductive rights as a human right, which means that men and women have the right to access reproductive health services and governments have the obligation to fulfill these rights by providing such services."

Continued from front page

He explained that Thailand faces two major problems in relation to population. "The first," he revealed, "is the phenomenon of population ageing, which has already begun and will persist in future decades. It is mainly a consequence of the transition from high to low fertility that started approximately in 1970 as well as substantial declines of mortality. Life expectancy at birth increased from 55.2 years to 69.9 years for men and 61.8 years to 74.9 years for women during the 1960s and 1990s.

The second problem Thailand faces is HIV/AIDS prevalence. The Government now places special emphasis on HIV prevention and provides quality care for those infected with the disease. A good number of national and international NGOs are providing a helping hand in solving the HIV/AIDS problem though the situation does appear to be gradually coming under control.

## It is a Struggle, But We Must Remain Committed

**Mr. Shuyun Xu, Director of UNFPA's Asia Pacific Division**, stated "The struggle to ensure universal access to reproductive health services by 2015 is an integral part of the global effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to alleviate poverty. UNFPA is absolutely committed to the ICPD Programme of Action. The Cairo agreement is a balanced and practical agreement that reflects the concerns of all stakeholders, and all religions and cultures. The Cairo agreement has withstood the test of time and proven its effectiveness. At the core of the agreement is the right of all individuals and couples to choose the number, spacing and timing of their children."

"The ICPD Programme of Action recognizes that advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programmes. It also makes the connections between population, the environment and sustainable development. Population dynamics, such as urbanization, population growth, ageing structures, and migration must be integrated into development plans and policies."

## Globalisation Does Not Mean Domination

**Mr. Sergey Kolesnikov, a Russian MP and representative of the IEPFPD**, detailed the importance of the ICPD PoA. "The ESCAP region," he began, "is home to 60% of humanity, presents some of the most striking examples of the need for the ICPD Programme of Action: both the challenges and the solutions. In some countries where population growth is a major concern, the ICPD shows that choices and access to reproductive health services are the best solution to allowing their citizens to choose the number of children this wish to have."

## Parliamentarians Can Make Valuable Contributions

**Ms. Keiko Okaido, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP**, said "The Bali Declaration and the ICPD PoA have guided population programmes away from a focus on numbers and targets to a human-centred, needs-based approach, focusing particularly on the poor and the most vulnerable segments of population. We are now at a point where we have enough experience to share and move forward with vision to reduce poverty and improve the welfare of the people."

She further said "In this regard, your deliberations during this meeting are extremely important for two reasons. Firstly, you represent the people. Secondly, you are the policy-makers in your respective countries. You have the opportunity to make contributions both formally in your discussions and informally through interactions with the planners and policy-makers of your countries in the outcome of this conference. The Plan of Action adopted at the Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference will guide the secretariat in developing programmes to serve the members and associate members in the decades ahead."

## Implementation of ICPD PoA Review Needed

The first session of the Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting in ICPD Implementation focused on the ICPD PoA and the progress made for its implementation in the Asia-Pacific region. **Mr. Jyoti Singh, President, Population 2005 and former Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA** and **Dr. Indira Kapoor, Regional Director for South Asia, IPPF**, both gave presentations on this topic.



L. to R. Mr. Jyoti Singh, President of Population 2005 and former Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA - Hon. W. D. John Seneviratne, MP Sri Lanka - Dr. Indira Kapoor, Regional Director for South Asia, IPPF

### Many Challenges Still Ahead

"As we approach the tenth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development, (ICPD) in 1994," Mr. Jyoti Singh began, "a comprehensive review at national, regional and international levels of what has been achieved or not achieved towards realising the goals and objectives of the conference is clearly in order. At the national level, several governments, particularly in Asia, have already begun to organise such a review process, comprising compilation and analysis of relevant data and information, consultations among NGOs and other civil society organisations, thematic conferences and meetings etc; and others, I am sure, will plan to do so in the coming months."

Turning to the issue of RH, Mr. Singh said "Adoption of a comprehensive concept of reproductive health care, including family planning, was a major achievement of the Cairo Conference. There is an unambiguous recognition of *'the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice. It also allows them access to other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law.'* Since Cairo," he explained, "this definition is being widely used both by governments and the international community. Laws as well as rules and regulations relating to health services have been changed in many countries, including several in Asia, to incorporate the ICPD definition and more importantly, health services are being reorganised in these countries to implement the definition. Several countries are also paying special attention to the issues relating to adolescents and the young."

### Progress Mixed and Uneven

In conclusion, Mr. Singh said "The progress on the population front we see today remains mixed and uneven. There have also been considerable improvements in the legal, economic and social conditions of women; but there are countries where the situation in this regard has not changed much; and in practically every country inequality between men and women continues to persist in the political and economic arenas."

"Much remains to be done in the area of population and development. The tasks before the parliamentarians remain as urgent as they were at the time of the Cairo Conference."

### Inertia Hampering Progress

Dr. Indira Kapoor reiterated that reproductive rights are a fundamental human right. She also highlighted IPPF's Vision 2000 agenda and some of the results that have come around because of it. "IPPF pioneered a rights-based approach to sexual and reproductive health in its Vision 2000 agenda. Cairo reinforced this position and this has undoubtedly had a strong conceptual impact across the Asia Pacific region," she said. "Numerous governments have amended legal and policy positions and these approaches have also been reflected in regional groupings such as SAARC, ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIC). Recent examples from South Asia include an amendment to Nepal's civil code to guarantee inheritance and property rights to women as well as the introduction of a new family law in the Maldives."

"However," she added, "Despite these advances, the progress has been an evolutionary one and still needs to overcome a significant amount of inertia. In addition, changes to legal and policy frameworks take time to benefit communities at the household level and need to be accompanied by a commitment to raise awareness and change established behavioural patterns. On the whole this is not being done."

### Better Government - NGO Partnerships Must be Forged

Dr. Kapoor stressed the need for increased partnerships between governments and NGOs. "ICPD was clear in emphasising the importance of partnerships to meet the objectives by 2015 and to a great extent this has been embraced," she said. "Since Cairo, effective partnerships have been formed between governments and NGOs that have maximised the strengths of each partner. This has had a positive impact on both policies and programmes and has improved both service delivery and quality of care. There has been a particular focus on South-to-South cooperation, particularly between NGOs. Despite this, inter-NGO rivalry, political instability institutional inertia and a lack of mechanisms for cooperation still present challenges and in particular affect the sustainability of partnerships."

Dr. Kapoor ended by saying, "One of the greatest challenges, however, remains the commitment of the necessary financial resources needed to achieve the objectives of ICPD."



## Parliamentarians Role Pivotal for ICPD Implementation

Session two was based on what parliamentarians can do for ICPD implementation. **Hon. Matt Robson, MP New Zealand**, and **Dr. Jagganath Munda, MP India**, both gave presentations during this session. **Mr. Li Honggui, MP China**, also spoke.

**Hon. Matt Robson, MP New Zealand**, elaborated on the New Zealand Parliamentary Group and the work the group is conducting. “As a member country of the AFPPD,” he commenced, “the NZ Parliamentary Group shares experiences with other countries and participants. With this opportunity our group can discuss international population and development issues such as food supply, water scarcity and biodiversity all of which are critical issues for some of our developing country partners.



L. to R: Dr. Jagganath Munda, MP India - Hon. Matt Robson, MP New Zealand - Mr. Li Honggui, MP China

As fellow parliamentarians you are all aware of the commitment, time and energy that are required to be effective representatives of your constituents. For this reason, four key areas of interest have been identified on which the NZ group would like to focus on so its efforts can be more effective within the limited time that we have. These four key areas are ODA, sustainable development, violence against women, and HIV/AIDS.”

## India Faces Boom in Population Growth

**Dr. Jagannath Munda, MP India**, delivered some home truths to participants saying “A rapidly growing population has a detrimental impact on growth and development in all sectors in developing countries. Population increase puts additional pressure on the limited resources of a country. In agriculture, it leads to fragmentation of land and thus lowers productivity. A larger population generates more demand for goods and services leading to pressure to raise production, which in turn leads to overstretching the limited resources of land, forest and water, and to environment polluting practices. All development gains are cancelled out by continuing population growth in India,” he concluded.

## ICPD Encompasses All Development Issues

Mr. Li Honggui, MP China, spoke on ICPD implementation. He referred to the Chinese programme and said those who believe poverty can be alleviated without first planning population growth are those who only have a small population. “They forget that population programmes are essential for development and that the ICPD PoA is one such UNFPA programme that includes all aspects of development,” he stated.

## Unsafe Abortion Major Public Health Concern



L. to R: Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director, IPPF - Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP and Speaker of Fiji Parliament - Mr. Gilbert Remulla, Congressman, the Philippines

Session three examined reproductive health and the challenges it poses for parliamentarians. **Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director of IPPF**, and **Congressman Gilbert Remulla, the Philippines**, provided participants with plenty of valuable information and gave very interesting presentations.

Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director, IPPF, said “Preventing unsafe abortions remains one of IPPF’s core activities. 105 million married or cohabiting women of reproductive age in the developing world have an unmet need for family planning due to lack of access to family planning services of acceptable quality. One of the major consequences of being unable to meet these needs is unsafe abortion. ICPD recognizes unsafe abortion as a major public health concern. Unsafe abortions in Asia account for 12% of all maternal deaths and half of the world’s unsafe abortions take place in Asia. Abortion can be prevented if women have access to family planning and have control over their fertility. Adolescent abortion is also a growing problem in Asia.”

## Progress too Slow

“Concerning the mainstreaming of gender and reproduction rights in RH, countries are taking their time to translate concepts into programmes, whereas NGOs have begun to address the issue more actively, especially coerced contraception and coerced motherhood,” she added.

## Church Still Refuses to Accept Contraception in the Philippines

Mr. Gilbert Remulla, speaking on behalf of Senator Rodolfo Biazon, said “being fully aware of the domestic circumstances of the Philippine situation and inspired by the significant advances in addressing population and reproductive health issues the world over, PLCPD member legislators are now striving for the passage of two measures in the Philippine Congress: the *Integrated Population and Development Act* and the *Reproductive Health Care Act*.”

“However,” he continued, “the position taken by the Government Executive Branch has not been encouraging. Our high-level officials, upon warnings from the Catholic hierarchy, are now prioritizing Natural Family Planning (NFP) and sterilisation methods and will not purchase contraceptives even when USAID pulls out contraceptive support from the country. I hope that on this occasion our Government may find the opportune time to rethink its policies and reaffirm even more strongly its commitments as a signatory to the ICPD PoA.”



## Reliable Data on the Conditions of Older People Lacking



L. to R: Mr. Mohammed Nizamuddin, former Director of UNFPA/APD - Dr. Rekso Ageng Herman, MP Indonesia - Hon. Ravindra Randeniya, MP Sri Lanka

Session four of the meeting was dedicated to the issue of ageing and examined the progress, challenges and roles of parliamentarians in this area. **Mr. Mohammed Nizamuddin, former Director of UNFPA/APD, and Hon. Ravindra Randeniya, MP Sri Lanka** gave presentations.

Mr. Nizamuddin said “many Asian countries lack reliable data on the conditions of older persons. Yet older persons are consistently and disproportionately found among the poorest of the poor. Many people enter old age in a poor state of health resulting from life-long deprivations and health systems in many Asian countries are ill equipped to address the chronic illnesses that are endemic among many older persons.”

Turning to the role of parliamentarians, Mr. Nizamuddin stressed that parliamentarians have played a significant role in addressing population growth, food security and poverty in many Asian countries in the last three decades. There is however an urgent need to simultaneously address the inevitable consequence of successfully reducing population growth of population ageing. “Parliamentarians should encourage countries that are still going through high fertility regimes to invest in schooling and human resources development to prepare towards a Society for All Ages.” he commented

## Parliamentarians Role Essential for the Betterment of Elderly Persons Lives

Hon. Ravindra MP Sri Lanka said, “As policy makers, politicians are concerned with the changing age structure of the population and the varying demands on social services and support structures it creates. As population ages, different supply and demand issues with regard to basic needs of the population arise. The elderly for instance, will have different demands or support systems than the non-elderly. The increasing numbers of the elderly would create the need for social support and increase health care costs, particularly as people survive to older ages and require costly medical treatment.

He said “In the future, the pattern of care of the elderly will largely depend on the changing socio-economic scenario. With economic development, the role of the family, the State, private agencies, the NGOs and other care providers will become more competitive and each will have a core area of operation and areas of competition and collaboration. Therefore, it is the responsibility of parliamentarians to ensure a wider range of choices for the care of the elderly population through appropriate policies and programmes.”

## Widespread Complacency on HIV/AIDS Undermining Effective Responses

Session five addressed the HIV/AIDS issue and examined parliamentarians' activities on this issue. **Mr. Tony Bates, APLF Adviser UNAIDS/SEAPICT, Mr. Dennis Altman, Professor of politics and President of the AIDS Society of Asia and the Pacific, and Mr. Martyn Jones, MP UK** spoke on the topic. **Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General of AFPPD, moderated this session.**



Mr. Tony Bates

“Around 11 million people in Asia will become HIV infected in the next 5 years (2003-2007) unless the response to the epidemic is greatly increased,” warned Mr. Bates. “Economic and social change is creating conditions in which HIV is spreading rapidly in China, Indonesia, and the Central Asian region. There is a myth that 2 to 3% is a natural peak for prevalence in Asian epidemics and that it will never reach African proportions. In reality, in the absence of prevention, high-risk countries can expect to see a 10-15% peak and lower risk countries 3-5%.”

Myths about the epidemic need to be challenged and overcome as they are blocking – in fact preventing - the effective responses that we know can work, and contributing to a widespread sense of complacency about the serious potential impact of the epidemic. Thailand would have a 15-20% prevalence rate if an intervention programme had not been undertaken in the early 1990s. This shows that African levels certainly are a possibility in this region.”

## Parliamentarians are the Voice of the People

Mr. Altman said “Although most countries have signed on to UNGASS and to the Ministerial Statement of Nov 2001, very few countries have been able to translate these intentions into any sort of effective response. There is no point if parliamentarians on the one hand sign statements that they believe in greater involvement of people living with AIDS, if they are not equally willing to fight all the different ways people living with AIDS (PLWA) are constantly discriminated against, denied basic human rights and denied basic access to the services that all citizens have the right to demand.”

“Working with civil society, and especially those groups who represent marginalized groups,” he continued, “is essential to address these obstacles. If you want to be effective in reaching those groups and if you want their voices to be heard, it is a matter of good public health to involve those groups.”

Finally, he said, “Parliamentarians are in the position to say that they work for the whole population, rather than just for the people who elected them. Those populations include people whose behaviours you may not like, not understand, or may not be comfortable with. Nevertheless, as members of national and international bodies, parliamentarians are their voices. This gives parliamentarians the role to link governments and the most marginalized and underrepresented parts of the community.” Martyn Jones on page 6



## Invest In Women Invest In Change



L. to R: Ms. Trinidad Osteria, Advisor UNFPA/CST - Hon. Lim Bee Kau, MP Malaysia - Ms. Rashidah Abdullah, Executive Director, ARROW, Malaysia

Session six, addressed by **Ms. Trinidad Osteria, Advisor UNFPA/CST**, and **Ms. Rashidah Abdullah, Executive Director of ARROW**, focused on women, reproductive health, and population.

Ms. Osteria said "To address the problem of gender inequality and women's status in a coordinated and systematic fashion, many countries have created institutional mechanisms for implementation of action plans. These national machineries need to be enhanced for their participation in policy debates, planning, implementation and monitoring of gender mainstreaming in programmes through technical assistance and resources allocation."

"The development of appropriate curricula, materials and modules, and the formation of a pool of trainers are essential," she stated. "Knowledge could be shared through appropriate networking where gender mainstreaming tools and manuals could be disseminated and adapted to specific settings."

"NGOs and civil society are important partners in pushing forward the ICPD and Beijing Agenda as well as other gender related instruments. Human rights groups continue to raise awareness on legal entitlements of women, violence issues and reproductive rights while governments ensure access to resources and services. Advocacy activities by NGOs can be strengthened for the creation of broad based political support through coalition building and networking with governments," she concluded.

## Women At Particular Risk from HIV Infection

Mr. Martyn Jones, MP UK from page 5



Mr. Martyn Jones, MP UK

Mr. Jones said "in relation to HIV/AIDS in Western Europe, 550 thousand people are living with HIV/AIDS and 1 million people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. An increasing proportion of new HIV diagnoses are infected heterosexually. A large proportion is acquired in countries with a generalised epidemic and

there is an increase in unsafe sex coupled with an increase in STIs. HIV is moving into poorer/deprived communities in some countries with women at particular risk."

"HIV/AIDS is a global issue that needs to be addressed with political leadership at the international, regional, national, and local levels. Parliamentarians are in a position to advance HIV/AIDS and human rights at all levels. They can do this by influencing public opinion and increasing knowledge, voting on acts, advancing effective prevention and care programmes, mobilising involvement of government, the private sector, civil society, and they can allocate financial resources."

## Primary Health Services Out of Reach For Many

Quoting the ICPD PoA, Ms. Abdullah said "the empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself. In addition, it is essential for the achievement of sustainable development."

"We still have a very long way to go to ensure women have access to the services they need and can afford to pay for them," she lamented. "When ARROW and Southeast Asian partners carried out country level, Beijing Monitoring Studies in this area in the late 1990's, we found that many reproductive health services for women did not exist and were thus not even available, let alone accessible. Overall, we found that there has been no increase in the availability, accessibility and affordability of primary health services. In fact, the cost of childbirth, medication, and reproductive health services has increased with the introduction of user fees in a number of countries." This is an effect of the privatisation of health services as part of health sector reform and globalisation. Reproductive health services remain less accessible to poor women, migrant women, indigenous women and are largely unavailable for unmarried and young women as well as older women."

## The Blue Revolution - Water Matters

Session seven was based on water, food security and population. **Prof. Vo-Tong Xuan, Rector of Angiang University of Vietnam** gave a highly informative presentation. Ms. Mariya Ahmed Didi, MP the Maldives moderated the session.



Prof. Vo-Tong Xuan

"Water infrastructure built in recent decades is becoming obsolete," Prof. Vo-Tong began. "Reservoirs are silting up, irrigation networks are crumbling, and there appears to be a decreasing willingness to fund rehabilitation and replacement of this infrastructure."

"CGIAR embarked upon a 'Challenge Programme on Water and Food.' The development objective is to increase the productivity of water for food and livelihoods in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and socially acceptable. Their intermediate objective is to maintain the level of global diversions of water to agriculture at the level of the year 2000, while increasing food production, to achieve internationally adopted targets for decreasing malnourishment and rural poverty by the year 2015."

In conclusion he said, "AFPPD and its members should bring together a pool of top legislators who can create appropriate policies to mobilize resources, knowledge and technologies, capable of producing breakthroughs in the productivity of water used for food production to cope with growing population. The outcome of the policies is crucial at two levels: Firstly, they must ensure that advances in increased water productivity are directed at foodstuffs and agriculture, livestock and fisheries systems that are relevant for the poor. Secondly, they must contribute to reducing malnourishment and rural poverty, increase levels of human health and maintain or improve environmental quality and biodiversity."



## Parliamentarians Vow To Support ICPD Principles



L. to R: Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director AFPPD - Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General AFPPD and Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health, Thailand - Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP, Honourable Speaker of Fiji Parliament, and Vice-Chair of AFPPD - Mr. Shuyun Xu, Director of UNFPA/APD - Mr. Cengiz Ertuna, Chief, UNESCAP/PRUDD

As the Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on ICPD Implementation concluded, parting thoughts on the meeting as a whole were presented in the closing statements.

**Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General of AFPPD and Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health, Thailand,** said she was very happy participants had pledged to continue their support for ICPD principles and that everyone firmly believed sustainable development is only possible with population focus. She hoped the meeting had encouraged participants to put more energy into national population programmes.

**Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP and Honourable Speaker of Fiji Parliament, and Vice-Chair of AFPPD** presided over the closing session urged parliamentarians to take an active role in promoting ICPD implementation and monitoring Millennium Development Goals. He explained that the Pacific Islands have long been concerned with population issues, and they was looking forward to working with UNFPA to establish the PPAPD Secretariat and play an enhanced role in population and development initiatives in the Pacific region.

**Mr. Shuyun Xu, Director of UNFPA/APD,** spoke of funding constraints for population and development programmes and said that it is imperative to strengthen efforts to mobilise resources both nationally and internationally. "Parliamentarians' role in this is crucial," he stated. He also informed participants that UNFPA offices are open to all parliamentary committees on population and development for any technical advice on formulation and implementation of programmes as well as on substantive issues.

**Mr. Cengiz Ertuna, Chief, UNESCAP/PRUDD** in his closing address, reiterated that population planning is essential if humanity is to enjoy the fruits of development. He warned that we must not push other issues aside such as gender equality, equity and empowerment of women as it is a well accepted and well established fact that the key to lower fertility and reduced infant and child mortality rate is achievable through the education of women. He also said that elected representatives are in the best position to urge behaviour change in their constituencies.

**Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD,** delivered the vote of thanks. He commended the debates the meeting had generated.



Maldives



Cambodia



Indonesia



Kazakhstan



Mongolia



Bangladesh



Iran and Japan



Fiji



Malaysia



Papua New Guinea



New Zealand and Nepal



Kazakstan



Vietnam



Thailand



Philippines



India



China



Tajikistan



Lao/PDR



Sri Lanka



Bhutan

### AFPPD Work on Display

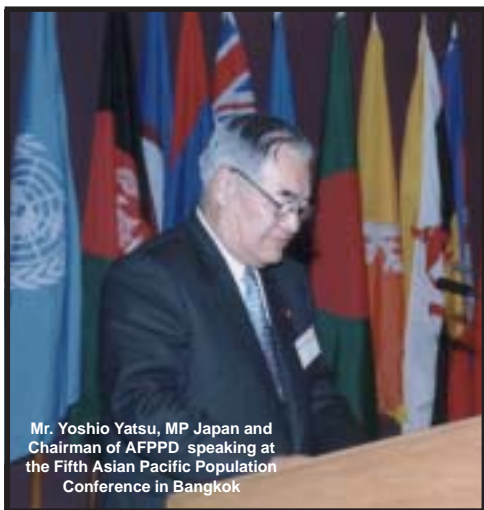
During the Fifth APPC in Bangkok, ESCAP's Secretariat organised a special exhibition related to population and poverty issues. AFPPD set up a booth portraying the Asian Forum's various works.



Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP Japan and Chairman of AFPPD expressing interest in AFPPD's booth

## The 5<sup>th</sup> Asian and Pacific Population Conference Generates New Vigour and Commitment for ICPD

Bangkok- The UNESCAP Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, attended by ministers and senior officials from forty countries, NGOs and other UN Agencies, turned out to be one of the UN's most challenging conferences.



Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP Japan and Chairman of AFPPD speaking at the Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok

The Conference was officially opened by H.E. Thaksin Shinawatra, Thailand's Prime Minister, and the opening ceremony included speeches from UNFPA Executive Director, Mrs. Thoraya Obaid, UNESCAP Executive Secretary, Mr. Kim Hak-Su, and Director General of IPPF, Prof. Steven Sinding.

The conference provided a unique opportunity to discuss a number of issues relating to population and poverty, and to examine in detail the progress made in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

Spanning for five days, long and heated debates on the Conference's Plan of Action's phrasing took place without making much headway. This process had been initiated at the second preparatory committee meeting in October and the draft was then forwarded to the senior official's segment of the conference to be debated in depth. Important issues such as women's reproductive rights, and RH information and services for young people raised objections from the US Government, a member of UNESCAP, and paragraphs pertaining to these issues were placed in brackets for discussion

at a later stage. Unable to reach a consensus, the drafting committee referred the document to the ministerial segment and it was here that bracketed paragraphs on RH rights, information and services for young people were finally agreed upon. High-level diplomacy and canvassing were on high gear and all countries in attendance, with the exception of the US, voted in favour of reproductive health rights, information and services to young people. Nepal and Bangladesh were neutral.

After much discussion, the Asia Pacific and Population Conference's Plan of Action, which reaffirmed the ICPD Plan of Action, was adopted unanimously with the US also voting in favour. However, the US placed its reservations on record saying that it 'does



L. to R: Dr. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director, UNFPA - Dr. Sheila McCrae, UNFPA Representative, Thailand - H.E. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, (Thailand) - Ms. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary, UNESCAP. In the background, (green dress), Ms. Sudarat Keyuraphan, Minister of Public Health, Thailand.



Some of the UNFPA staff who represent the identifying face behind the ICPD Agenda

not support abortion.' This was followed by many governments stating they believe the ICPD Programme of Action 'does not promote either abortion or underage sex.'

The 5<sup>th</sup> APPC witnessed a flurry of activities in the lobby area with national, regional and international NGOs working day and night to provide information to countries and update their press and media at home. IPPF, ICOMP, Population Action International, Action Canada, and many others worked hard to protect the ICPD Plan of Action.

Dr. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA, showed her diplomacy and negotiation skills assisted by UNFPA's Asia Pacific Division Chief, Mr. Shuyun Xu as well as other UNFPA Country Directors. The IPPF team was led by Mr. Steven W. Sinding, Director-General, along with Regional Directors Dr. Raj Karim and Ms. Indira Kapoor. A good deal of the conference's energy came from dedicated NGOs such as Population Action International, (PAI)m and Action Canada on Population and Development, concerned government officials and UNESCAP officials who believe only with population focus can poverty be reduced and that the ICPD Programme of Action is the guiding light. Mr. Cengiz Ertuna and Mr. Seetharam from UNESCAP organised a very efficient population conference indeed.



## NGOs Unite to Protect ICPD Agenda



L. to R: Mr. Praween Payapvipapong, Vice-President, PDA Thailand - Ms. Laboni Jana, Divisional Chief for CINI India - Mr. Montri Pekan, Deputy Director of PPAT - Ms. Pallavi Patel, Deputy Director of WHDR for CHETNA - Dr. Affandi Mochtar, Vice-Chair of LKKNU Indonesia - Mr. Timothee Gandaho, Executive Director, Partners in Population and Development - Dr. Joe Prihartono, Programme Director, YKB Indonesia - Prof. Jay Satia, ICOMP - Ms. Yasmin Siddiqua, Coordinator of the Women's Empowerment Project, BWHC Bangladesh

An Asian NGO Forum was held on the 12 – 13 of December at the United Nations Conference Center as a side event to the Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference. Around three hundred NGOs from Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and America were represented.

The forum was opened by Ms. Keiko Okaido, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNESCAP and was addressed by Dr. Raj Karim and Dr. Indira Kapoor from IPPF as well as Mr. Pitchet Soontornpipit, President of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand, (PPAT), and Prof. Sea Baick Lee, Chair of the Asia Pacific Alliance, Chair of ESEAOR, and President of the Planed Parenthood Federation of Korea, (PPFK). The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Nina Puri, President of the Family Planning Association of India, (FPAI), and Chair of IPPF SAR, and a word of thanks was given by Prof. Jay Satia, Executive Director of the International Council on Management of Population Programmes, (ICOMP).

The NGO forum discussed many issues related to population and sustainable development. The first session was a discussion on 'people, poverty and sustainable development.' This was followed by a presentation on gender given by Ms. Rashidah Abdullah, Executive Director of ARROW Malaysia.

Session two, focusing on 'government, civil society and private sector collaboration' was chaired by Dr. Steven Sinding, Director General of IPPF. Papers and presentations were given on perspectives of government, NGOS, donor agencies, donor-government agencies, and parliamentarians. Mr. Siswanto Agus Wilopo, Deputy Chair of the National Family Planning Coordination Board of Indonesia; Ms. Sandra Kabir, Senior Programme Advisor, ICOMP; Mr. Vincent P. de Wit, Senior Health Specialist from the Asian Development Bank's Social Sectors Division, the Philippines; a representative from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, all spoke during this session.

Session three examined 'south-south collaboration for excellence' and was chaired by Mr. Timothee Gandaho, Executive Director of Partners in Population and Development, and Prof. Jay Satia, ICOMP. Panelists included Ms. Pallavi Patel, Deputy Director of WHDR for CHETNA India; Ms. Laboni Jana, Divisional Chief for CINI India; Ms. Yasmin Siddiqua, Coordinator of the Women's Empowerment Project, BWHC Bangladesh; Mr. Praween Payapvipapong, Vice-President of PDA Thailand; Mr. Montri

Pekan, Deputy Director of PPAT; Dr. Affandi Mochtar, Vice-Chair of LKKNU Indonesia; and Dr. Joedo Prihartono, Programme Director, YKB Indonesia. This was followed by a discussion between the MOFA of Japan and NGOs.

Session four was the drafting of the NGO 'Call for Action' This was chaired by Dr. Raj Karim. The actual presentation of the 'Call for Action' was chaired over by Mr. Shuyun Xu, Director of UNFPA/APD. Mr. Cengiz Ertuna, Chief, UNESCAP/PRUDD, delivered the closing remarks.

**Special Video Conference on HIV/AIDS**

The World Bank organised an Internal Video Conference on AIDS' Day, which was attended by parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS from around the world. The Executive Director of AFPPD, Mr. Shiv Khare also participated along with parliamentarians from India, and Europe. Mr. Neil Datta, Executive Director of the Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, (IEFPD) was also present.

The World Bank Parliamentary Network is planning to organise another meeting in Athens, March 2003, where the involvement of parliamentarians in HIV/AIDS issues will be discussed.

**Dr. Thoraya Obaid at Thai Senate Reception**

Major General Manoonkit Roopkhajorn, Hon. President of the Thai Senate hosted a lunch in honour of Dr. Thoraya A. Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2002, who was in Bangkok for the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference. Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Public Health and Secretary General of AFPPD welcomed Dr. Obaid and thanked her for her continuous support to the parliamentary movement and, in particular, to AFPPD.



L. to R: Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit and Mrs. Thoraya Obaid



## Lawmakers From Seventy Countries Gather At Canadian Parliament To Promote RH Rights

Ottawa, 21 November – “Access to reproductive health care is a matter of life and death,” said Thoraya A. Obaid, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund at the opening of the International Parliamentarians’ Conference in Ottawa. Over one hundred parliamentarians from seventy countries met at the Canadian Parliament from the 21-22 November to identify actions they can take to safeguard women’s reproductive rights, improve access to reproductive health services, (including family planning), reduce maternal mortality and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.



Mrs. Thoraya Obaid

and HIV/AIDS and advance gender equity - remain essential and affordable. We must also acknowledge that the ICPD Programme of Action and the key actions identified in its five-year review provide a solid foundation and are crucial to achieving Millennium Development Goals.”

### We Do Not Need Renegotiations

“This conference is about implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action,” she continued. “We need to increase commitment. We do not need renegotiations; we do not need changes. We need to stay on track and in line with the hard-won consensus that was hammered out in 1994 by conscientious countries for a blueprint to protect and advance gender equality and to give all people the opportunity to plan their families, have safe pregnancies and deliveries, protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, and to stabilize global population by choice and not by any other means. Together we must fulfill that commitment. You must fulfill that commitment. Every country, whether large or small, wealthy or poor, developing or developed, must do their part. This is the true meaning of partnership; this is the spirit of international cooperation”

She further said “As parliamentarians and leaders, you have played an indispensable role. The high level of Institutionalization and coordination of international parliamentary activities in the field of population and development is extremely unique. It is so unique that UN Secretary - General Kofi Annan has asked us to share our model of partnership with the entire United Nations system.

Today every region has a parliamentary group on population and development, joined by parliamentary groups at the global and national levels. Together we have built an active growing global network and together we will continue to move forward.

At this point, I would like to thank you warmly and sincerely for your dedication and commitment. The letters of concern that you sent in July after the United States Government announced its decision to withhold funding were deeply appreciated. I would also like to congratulate you for the united front you displayed to advance our common cause at last year’s General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, at this year’s Special Session on Children, and most recently in Johannesburg at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Just as important as your work at the global level, is your work in your home countries and communities. Those of you in donor countries play a key role in mobilizing the political support needed to secure financial resources to move the ICPD agenda forward.”

### Enabling Environment

“As parliamentarians in developing countries, you play an indispensable role in creating an enabling environment for population and development. Since Cairo, dozens of countries have formulated new national population policies or integrated population into their long-term development plans.

By drafting and passing legislation for population, reproductive health and rights and women’s equality, you move these issues beyond the realm of theory to the books of law. Since Cairo, sixty-seven countries have taken policy measures, passed laws or changed institutions to promote reproductive health and rights. By creating and carrying out policies and programmes that are in line with the Cairo agenda, you move words from the pages in a book to real action on the ground - action that makes a difference in people’s everyday lives.”



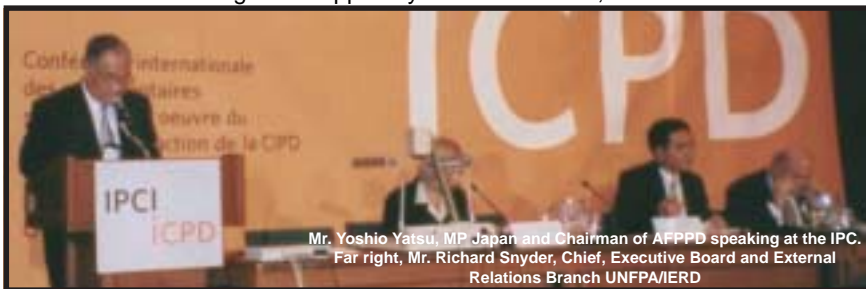
L. to R: Ms. Carolyn Maloney, Congresswoman, USA, and member of PGA - Senator Rose-Marie Loisier-Cool CAPPD - Dr. Jagganth Munda, MP India - Mr. Alvano Alonso, Minister of Labour and Social Security, Uruguay, and Treasurer of IAPG - Ms. Ulla Sandbaek, MEP Denmark, Vice-Chair of IEFPPD



## ICPD Funding

“However, despite growing needs, funding is not keeping pace. At the international Conference on Population and Development, governments determined how much money was needed for population and reproductive health. They decided that the world should provide \$ 17 billion by the year 2000 but so far, only 66 per cent of the funding goal has been reached, even though we are two years past the target date.

International donors have contributed less than half of the target funding, 45 per cent of the \$ 5.7 billion that was expected. Programme countries have contributed 76 per cent of their share, highlighting their commitment. Overall, UNFPA 's core funding has dropped by 26% since 1995, the



Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP Japan and Chairman of APPFD speaking at the IPC. Far right, Mr. Richard Snyder, Chief, Executive Board and External Relations Branch UNFPA/IERD

year following the ICPD, when we had fully expected an increase by this time of upwards of 100%

Of course, UNFPA is not only the victim of the overall decline in official development assistance that has occurred since the end of the Cold War. But as we mobilize to reduce poverty, gender inequality and maternal mortality, we must increase our commitment to the Cairo Programme of Action.

If governments had kept up with their commitments, UNFPA would have resources of at least \$500 million at this time and IPPF would have at least \$200 million. As it is, the two combined are only about \$350 million, far short of what is needed to meet current demands and international goals.

## Challenges

In conclusion Dr. Obaid said “There are those who question the ICPD consensus and UNFPA 's role. One vocal group has gone so far as to state that it wants to drive the final nail in UNFPA 's coffin. Unfortunately their campaign has become systematic and global, and has been given a voice in the legislatures of our major donors. These groups claim to oppose abortion, but they refuse to acknowledge that the only effective counter to abortion is to promote reproductive health in all its aspects, including family planning. My friends, we must not allow a very small but very determined and vocal group of ideologues to reverse progress for women and dilute international human rights and the Cairo consensus.

As parliamentarians, you are uniquely placed to offer leadership in all the matters I have mentioned. You can represent the thoughts, feelings and needs of your constituents to government; and you can explain to your electorate the need for international action. You can reach out to your colleagues in other countries, build partnerships and strengthen their efforts to solve the problems of population and development that in the end affect us all.”

## More Allocations Needed for Population Programmes - Prof. Steven W. Sinding

Prof.. Steven W. Sinding, Director - General of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), stated “Unfortunately, within overall development cooperation funding, population assistance is the poor relation. Despite our efforts to see four percent of ODA devoted to this sector, the current share in developed countries is 2.6%. Only six countries have reached the four percent. Interestingly, the US is one of these, thanks mainly to



Prof. Steven Sinding

Congress and a few committed leaders there, including Carolyn Maloney and Joe Crowley who are here with us today. Many donors are tempted to decrease their funding for reproductive health because they say their priority now is the alleviation of poverty, as called for by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). And to be

sure, eliminating poverty is and must remain the principal goal of development aid. Economic development is much more difficult to achieve in the absence of a sound and humane population policy, and individual poverty is impossible to alleviate if people are unable to realize the most fundamental freedom - the freedom to have children by choice and the number they want when they want them. The struggle to ensure universal access to reproductive health services by 2015 is an integral part of the struggle to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to alleviate poverty.”

“I call upon parliamentarians from all countries to safeguard the hard-won gains of Cairo. The ICPD Programme of Action is not, as the United States would like us to believe, a radical agenda. The Cairo Consensus is a major contribution to human dignity and human development. As such, it is our collective duty to safeguard it”

## Teen Programme Increasing in Canada - Hon. Jean Augustine

Hon. Jean Augustine from the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development and currently, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women in Canada, said “Every year, over half a million of the world's women die from pregnancy-related causes, many of which are preventable. Almost all of those deaths occur in developing countries. They need services to prevent further deaths. But even in Canada, we face challenges. Since 1987, teen pregnancy rates have been steadily increasing in Canada, and the rates for aboriginal teens are especially high. In Canada, there is no agreement on standards for sex education to assist our young people in making informed, responsible decisions about their sexuality and reproductive choices. Whether it's unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections or HIV/AIDS, these can be life and death issues as well as quality of life concerns for girls and young women.”



## Good Work by Parliamentarians - Mr. Stirling Scruggs

Mr. Stirling Scruggs, Director, Information Executive Board and Resource Mobilization Division, UNFPA/IERD stated that the purpose of the conference was to create an enabling environment for the speedy implementation of the ICPD programme of Action. He recognised that parliamentarians and their regional groups have conducted commendable



L. to R: Ms. Ann Mette Kjaerby, Policy Advisor, UK All Party Parliamentary Group - Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General AFPPD and Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Health, Thailand - Mr. Neil Datta, Executive Director, IEPFPD - Mr. Stirling Scruggs, Director, Information Executive Board and Resource Mobilisation Division, UNFPA/IERD

work and there is a need to build on this work to mobilize parliamentarians for ICPD Implementation as well as increase resources.

## Eight Years After Cairo

Session one started with a panel discussion on 'Creating an Enabling Environment - Eight Years After Cairo, Success and Constraints' was moderated by Ms. Imelda Henkin, Deputy Executive Director



L. to R: Mme. Peng Peiyun, MP China and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress - Dr. Baige Zhao, State Family Planning Commission of China (SFPC)

(Management), of UNFPA. Panelists included Mme. Peng Peiyun, Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China; Dr. Sima Samar, Commissioner of Human Rights, Afghanistan; Ms.

Maria Cristina Lopez Almeida Fontes Lima, Minister of Justice and International Administrator, Cape Verde; Dr. Javier Torres Goitia, former Minister of Health, Bolivia; and Dr. Nebiha Gueddana, Director General, National Board of Family and Population, Tunisia.

They talked about the progress made after Cairo stressing lack of financial support as a major obstacle and, in some instances, also quoted parliamentarians' movement in various regions. The second panel session on "Where are the Donors?" was moderated by Senator Raynell Andreychuk, Canada and high-profile personalities such as Ms. Sally Keeble, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development, the U.K; Ms. Marlene Jennings, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for International cooperation, Canada; Mr. Jan O. Karlsson, Minister for Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum, Sweden; Mr. Poul Neilson, Commissioner, Development and Humanitarian Aid, the European Commission.

Speaking with emotion, the panelists said financial support must be increased globally. They realized and understood the importance of population programmes as a priority and will do as much as possible to mobilize the same. The panelists also emphasized the need to educate and involve parliamentarians as political support is essential.

## The Threat of HIV/AIDS

The third session was devoted to group discussions on HIV/AIDS issues, and was addressed by Dr. Mabel Bianco, President, Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM), Argentina and Mr. Jagadish Upadhyay, Senior Technical Officer, Commodity Management Unit, Technical Support Division, UNFPA, who presented a paper on 'Reproductive Health Commodity Security,' Ms. Patricia Hindmarsh, Director, External Relations, Marie

Stopes International gave a presentation on 'Reproductive Health in Emergency Situations,' and Ms. Delia Barcelona, Senior Technical Officer, Reproductive Health Branch, Technical Support Division of UNFPA spoke on 'Adolescent Reproductive Health.' These groups deliberated on these issues and came back with their own views and recommendations.



L. to R: Dr. Lester Brown, President of the Earth Policy Institute - Ms. Safiye Cagar, Chief, European Liaison Officer

The second day also saw group discussions. Mr. Tom Merrick, Consultant, World Bank presented a paper on 'Poverty, Population and Development,' Mr. Lester Brown, President of the Earth Policy Institute spoke on 'Food, Water and Environment,' Ms. Esther Mayambala Kisaakye, Lecturer from the Human Rights Peace Centre focused on 'Violence Against Women,' and Ms. Louise Plouffe, Manager, Knowledge Development Division of Aging and Seniors' Health Canada spoke on ageing.

These group discussions engaged parliamentarians to encouraged them to discuss important issues and make their own contributions as to how ICPD Implementation could be ensured.

## Statement of Commitment

Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, Chairman of AFPPD, chaired the drafting committee of parliamentarians. The committee took into consideration the outcome of the group discussions and prepared a draft statement of commitment which was presented to a planning session chaired by Dr. Hernan

An extract from the Statement of Commitment can be found on page 12



Sanhueza, Executive Coordinator, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG). Mr. Yoshio Yatsu presented the final statement which was adopted after a lengthy discussion.

### AFPPD at Ottawa

The Ottawa Conference was very useful and was a continuation of a series of International Parliamentarians Initiatives taken by AFPPD. AFPPD organised a parliamentarians conference during the Mexico Parliamentarians' Conference; in Cairo, AFPPD with other Parliamentary Groups organised an International Parliamentarians' Conference on Population and Development, followed by the International Parliamentarians' Conference on ICPD review at The Hague. Ottawa was the fourth in a sense. AFPPD also organised and supported an International Conference of Parliamentarians to provide population input at the Copenhagen Social Summit, the World Food Security Summit in Geneva, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

### Collaboration

The Ottawa conference was the result of a collaborative effort on the part of AFPPD, the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG), the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD), the Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEFPPD), Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), UNFPA, and the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development. It was funded by UNFPA, CIDA Canada and the Hewlett Foundation. AFPPD organised the first steering committee meeting for the IPC in New York. Recognition should be given to Mr. Stirling Scruggs, Director of UNFPA/IERD and Ms. Harumi Kodama, Public Affairs Officer who together helped to organise a highly useful conference.

### IPC - Ottawa Extract from the Statement of Commitment

Strive to attain 5 to 10 per cent of national development budgets for population and reproductive health programmes.

Strive to fulfill the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for overall development assistance (ODA) and make every effort to mobilize the agreed estimated financial resources needed to implement the ICPD Programme of Action

Give high priority to achieving universal access to reproductive health services in national health and poverty reduction frameworks, both in terms of budget allocations and in terms of programme activities.

Enact, publicize and enforce laws and policies that promote and protect the human rights of the girl child and young women, ensure women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making at all levels, and eliminate all forms of violence, coercion and discrimination against women.

Remove all gender gaps and inequality in women's education, employment and livelihoods and adopt and enforce measures to educate girls, develop their technical and vocational skills and teach them to read and write.

Promote the reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity and of unsafe abortion as a public health priority and as a reproductive rights concern.

Support public health education to create awareness of the risks of pregnancy, labour and delivery and to increase understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities of family members, including men, in promoting and protecting maternal health.

Give high priority to water and sanitation in national development and poverty-reduction strategies.

Improve access to agricultural resources, including, land, for people living in poverty, especially women, and promote equitable and efficient distribution systems and sustainable development.

Generate the political will needed to develop and implement national HIV/AIDS policies and action plans; enact legislation to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of people living with HIV/AIDS; and provide education and services to prevent the transmission of all forms of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

Ensure that adolescents, both in and out of school, receive the necessary information and services to make responsible and informed choices and decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health needs.

Make every effort to achieve universal access to reproductive health services by the year 2015, encouraging governments, donors, and civil society to work together, under government leadership, to achieve this goal.

Promote and protect the full enjoyment of the economic, social cultural, civil and political rights of older people and eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination

### Political Advocacy for Health Promotion

The WHO Western Pacific Office, (WPRO), organised an Inter-Country Workshop on capacity-building for health promotion in Manila on the 5th - 8th of November 2002 . The workshop examined various aspects of political commitment for health promotion and touched upon all angles of health from good hygiene to reproductive health, from HIV/AIDS to TB and Malaria based on the paper presented by Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, AFPPD..



Participants at the WHO Workshop

The workshop was opened by Mr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director of WHO West Asia and the Pacific region. Following his presentation, he discussed future cooperation with Dr. Brian Doberstyn, Director of Communicable Diseases, WHO WPRO.

## Poverty Issues High on Kazakhstan's Social Agenda

**Senator Beksultan Tutkushev** is the Chairman of the Parliamentarian Committee on Family and Population in Kazakhstan and Vice-Chair of AFPPD. He recently spoke with our Editorial Associate, Ms. Mikaela Lock, on some of the problems Kazakhstan is facing in the context of population and development.

### Currently, what is at the top of your social agenda?

I would have to say primary health care and medical health. In fact, next year we will be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WHO's very first declaration, which was adopted in Almaty twenty years ago

Poverty issues are also high on our agenda as well as the development of rural areas. As you know, we are an independent country, still developing and relatively new, so as is the case of a country in a state of transition, we of course have many issues on the agenda.

### What do you think of population and reproductive Health programmes in Kazakhstan?

We have been dealing with reproductive health and population issues for a very long time. However, it has only been in the past three years that we have really focused our activities in these areas for it was only recently that our economic policy redirected its objectives and targets to the social sphere.

I would like to point out that we have set up a national fund with resources of 1.6 billion dollars (US) for the support of the country's population in cases of crisis.

### Concerning HIV/AIDS, do you or any other members of your committee have any involvement with HIV/AIDS programmes?

We have approved a national law on HIV/AIDS and we implement programmes in accordance with this law. However, as the law is a relatively new one, the programmes are still in the development stage.

The occurrence of HIV/AIDS in Kazakhstan is predominantly attributed to the presence of drug addicts. Approximately 70% of all persons living with HIV in country are drug users.

### What is your opinion on the level of awareness amongst parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS in Kazakhstan?

I think that not all parliamentarians are aware of the extent of the HIV/AIDS incidence within the country and they are not always aware on how quickly this disease can spread. More efforts need to be made to disseminate information on this issue so that each and every parliamentarian understands and is aware of the gravity of the situation and how they can help to prevent the epidemic from spreading even further.

### Which factors would you say a negative effect on population and development programmes?

Most certainly economic problems. For the first five years of our independence, domestic GNP decreased dramatically by 50%.

Secondly, political reasons. With the decay of the former

Soviet Union, we observed the process of labour migration and about 800,000 people actually fled the country. So far about one million Russian-speaking people have now returned to their homeland, Russia.

However, our country does currently enjoy absence of ethnic conflict and benefits from favourable economic conditions so this has made it possible for us to be more deeply involved in social programmes.

### What are your personal views on the type of programmes AFPPD could conduct in order to increase motivation among parliamentarians in the field of population and development?

I would like to mention here that water, and family planning programmes are very important in Kazakhstan. We have some very specific elements to consider in developing programmes as our country is very large and our population small. So while we are free from territorial problems, we are afflicted with food and water shortages and related problems.

AFPPD and UNFPA programmes are very close to our hearts. I think by implementing the types of programmes I have just mentioned, our parliamentarians will undoubtedly be motivated to contribute more actively and will be more willing to address issues pertaining to the population.

*Senator Tutkushev is currently a member of AFPPD's Executive Committee as one of the Vice-Chairpersons.*



Senator Beksultan Tutkushev

## Pacific Parliamentarians Committee Revived

The Parliament of Fiji in cooperation with UNFPA organised a Pacific Parliamentary Assembly for Population and Development (PPAPD) on the 14th and 15th of October 2002. The assembly was attended by forty-four members of parliament, senators and parliamentary officials from fourteen Pacific countries. Assembly participants not only reaffirmed the ICPD Programme of Action, but also decided to revive the Pacific Parliamentary Group, which had been initiated in 1999 with AFPPD's assistance. The programme for the next four years has been planned. Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP, and Honorable Speaker of Fiji Parliament, is Chairman of the Pacific Parliamentary Group on Population and Development as well as one of AFPPD's Vice-Chairs.



## IEFPPD Declaration at the UN Asia-Pacific Meeting

European parliamentarians from IEFPPD present at the UNESCAP Fifth APPC meeting and who also attended AFPPD's Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on ICPD Implementation, adopted a strong position expressing their dismay at the US Administrations position and tactics to undermine the ICPD review process. The Declaration "Urged respective Ministries and NGOs to work with parliamentarians in order to prepare for other regional meetings on ICPD implementation, including in the ECE region, so as to ensure that the ICPD is reaffirmed and strengthened" and "expressed (the parliamentarians) strong disapproval of the US positions in Bangkok regarding 'abstinence only' programmes, and their refusal to reaffirm ICPD and recognize sexual and reproductive rights and therefore pledge to make this known in our parliaments and to take this up in bilateral meetings with the US administration."

The declaration was signed by: **Nana Bischiashvili, MP** Republic of Georgia, Vice-Chair of the Women's Affairs Committee; **Danielle Bousquet, MP** France, French National Assembly Delegation on Equality; **Gaye Erbatur, MP** Turkey, Turkish Grand National Assembly Group on Population and Development; **Elguja Gvazava, MP** Republic of Georgia; **Martyn Jones, MP** United Kingdom, UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development; **Sergey Kolesnikov, MP** Russian Federation, Vice-Chair of the State Duma Committee on Health and Sports / Member of State Duma Commission on Population and Development; **Eoin Ryan, TD** Ireland, Irish Parliamentary Group on Population and Development; **Beatrice Vernaudon, MP** France (French Polynesia), French National Assembly Delegation on Equality.

## AFPPD 3 Year Report Available

In October 2002, AFPPD organised its 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Beijing where AFPPD's three-year report was presented. This report is now available. Please contact the AFPPD Secretariat if you would like to receive a copy.

## WHO Parliamentarians Conference



L. to R: Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn - Dr. Uton Muchtar Rafei - Hon. Sudarat Keyuraphan, Public Health Minister of Thailand - H. E. Uthai Pimchaichon

Bangkok - WHO organised a 'Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on the Report of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health,' which was held from the 15 - 17 of December 2002. The meeting was attended by many parliamentarians and representatives from various NGOs and UN agencies.

Dr. Prasop Ratanakorn, Secretary General of IMPO and Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Secretary General of AFPPD, spoke during the opening. The meeting was opened by Hon. Sudarat Keyuraphan.

## Chairman Visits AFPPD Secretariat

Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP Japan and Chairman of AFPPD was in Thailand in December to attend the Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference. During his time in Bangkok, Mr. Yatsu paid a visit to the AFPPD Secretariat where he was greeted by AFPPD Secretary General, Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, MP Thailand.



Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, MP Thailand greeting Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP Japan

## AFPPD Office Bearers: 2002 - 2004

### Chairman

Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP  
JAPAN

### Vice-Chairpersons

Mr. Zhang Huaixi, MP  
CHINA

Mr. Lakshman Singh, MP  
INDIA

Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, MP  
Speaker of the Parliament  
FIJI

Sen. Beksultan S. Tutkushev  
KAZAKHSTAN

Mme. Nguyen Thi Hoai Thu, MP  
VIETNAM

### Secretary General

Sen. Malinee Sukavejworakit  
THAILAND

### Deputy Secretary General

Rep. J. R. Nereus O. Acosta  
PHILIPPINES

### Treasurer

Hon. Dato' Napsiah Omar, MP  
MALAYSIA

### Member

Ms. Kelly Hoare, MP  
Chair, Standing Committee on Women  
AUSTRALIA

### Executive Director

Mr. Shiv Khare,  
THAILAND

## The AFPPD Newsletter

**Editor:** Shiv Khare  
**Assistant Editor & Layout Design:** Mikaella Lock

The AFPPD Newsletter is a sequential publication.  
Copies can be obtained by contacting:

AFPPD, Phayathai Plaza, Suite 9-C,  
Ratchathewi Road, Phayathai,  
Bangkok, 10400, Thailand  
Tel: (662) 219 2903 / 4  
Fax: (662) 219 2905  
E-mail: afppd@inet.co.th  
On the Web: www.afppd.org

