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FORUM NEWSLETTER

Publication of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development

Clean Water - Healthy Population CIS Parliamentarians Conference - Kazakhstan



CIS Regional Conference participants

The CIS regional conference on 'Clean Water Healthy Population,' organised by AFPPD, took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan on the 5th and 6th of May, 2002. Parliamentarians from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Moldova, and the Russian Federation gathered to discuss pressing issues related to water and health in the region. The conference focused on six main topics. Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP and AFPPD Chairman, also took part in the conference. In his welcome speech at the opening ceremony, Mr. Yatsu expressed his concern on environmental degradation in the region and stated, "We have been pursuing the fulfillment of our materialistic desires by exploiting the Earth's resources. However, we already know that such a life-style is unsustainable, we must change our point of view and start to think about how we can continue to coexist with our Earth."

All participants engaged in vigorous deliberations throughout the two-day conference, and the main focus of their debate encompassed how to divide water resources equally, the need to deal with the decline in water quality and water supply systems, the importance of water in terms of maintaining food security, and the possibility of regional cooperation in these areas.

In his presentation, Mr. Shukputov Andar Mauleshevich, Vice Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Preservation in Kyrgyzstan, brought to the participants' attention the current situation concerning pollution of rivers in southern Kazakhstan. He explained that the water has been polluted with various minerals such as salt, and therefore, water is becoming unsuitable for drinking.

Following his presentation, the Kyrgyz parliamentarians reiterated Mr. Mauleshevich's concerns that Kyrgyzstan is currently using only 20% of its water resources domestically whilst 80% is being used by neighbouring countries such as Kazakhstan. These water resources are practically there for the taking with no monetary costs. In comparison to other natural resources such as oil and natural gas, which have high market values, the unequal share of water resources is somewhat unjust.

The conference also touched upon the problems of decaying water supply systems in the region. During the Soviet era, 70% of the villagers had access to waterworks while the other 30% was using wells. However, water



Parliamentarians Engage in Vigorous Deliberations on Water Resource Problems Faced by the CIS Region



L. to R.: Mr. Alexandr Lazer, Senior Consultant, Moldova Parliament - Mr Yuri Yeregin, MP, Moldova Parliament - Mr. Alexandr Golovantchikov, MP, Russian Parliament - Mrs. Tatyana Muzhil, MP, Kazakstan Parliament - Mrs. Nina Kayupova, Senator, Kazakstan Parliament - Mr. Andar Shukpotov, Minister of Ecology

supply systems have systematically been deteriorating, and currently, only 30% of people in Almaty have access to waterworks. A half of the latter 70 % people have to buy water everyday, and the other half use insanitary water.



L. to R.: Mr. Tutkushev, Senator, Parliament of Kazakstan - Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP, Chairman of AFPPD

In the session on food security, Mr. Sharmanov Toregeldy Sharmanovich, MP, gave a speech on deteriorating water quality and the effects it has on food security. He pointed out that the consumption of unclean water greatly contributes to many illnesses and health problems.

He went on to say that 80% of potentially harmful substances enter the human body through dirty water consumption and it is, therefore, apparent that water quality must be improved in order to alleviate the current public health problems.

After the presentations and after much discussion, it became clearer where each country stands in terms of water and water-related issues. The participants thanked the AFPPD for providing a valuable opportunity to discuss pressing water issues in the region and to pursue enhanced regional cooperation in this field.

The conference highlighted common trends of the CIS countries in the field and the participants suggested that they would not only strengthen their cooperation and work towards the establishment of an international treaty where transnational rivers are concerned, but they would also deliberate the possibility of cost-sharing in order to maintain good-quality water and, therefore, ensuring better public health. Everyone was in agreement that it is necessary to emphasize the importance of water and health issues in the international context through the establishment of a collaborative body.

Progressing Modernization Destroying Our Natural Resources - Mr. Yoshio Yatsu



Mr. Yoshio Yatsu, MP and Chairman of AFPPD

Mr. Yatsu said "Population issues in the CIS region are truly diverse. For instance, countries such as Russia and the Baltic States are experiencing a decrease in the size of their populations with low birth rates and an increasing death rate; others are experiencing rapid population increases. With the exception of the CIS countries, no other region in the world is undergoing such divergent phenomena simultaneously,"

Mr. Yatsu went on to say, "Population can be analysed from various perspectives. It was once claimed that 'Number is Power,' and countries with smaller populations were considered as 'weaker' than their more populated counterparts. However, as it has been (cont. opposite page)



Wind Power Could Eliminate Energy-Dependency

Dr. Lester Brown speaks with Japanese parliamentarians

The Japanese Parliamentarians Forum on Population, (JPFP), along with GLOBE, invited Dr. Lester Brown to talk with Japanese parliamentarians and members of JPFP on his recent publication, 'Eco-Economy,' at a joint sub-committee meeting, held in Tokyo on the 12th of April.

Dr. Brown emphasised on the urgent need to change our way of thinking and to design a new economy that would be compatible with the environment. He promoted the use of clean and renewable resources and called for a policy change to discourage environmentally destructive activities.



Dr. Lester Brown, President of the Earth Policy Institute, sharing his ideas with Japanese parliamentarians

"Abundant, cheap, inexhaustible, and clean," Dr. Brown strongly advocated the use of wind power. He claimed that a future shift to renewable resources will lead to 'localisation of energy,' thus alleviating the existing problems of energy dependency in the era of globalisation. Dr. Brown hoped that with its advanced technologies, Japan will become an international leader in promotion of renewable resources. JPFP members were of the opinion that Dr. Brown's lecture was a most informative and interesting one, particularly his theories on the limitless potential of renewable resources.

After the lecture, Dr. Brown and JPFP members had a brief discussion on current environmental issues. Mr. Suichi Kato, MP Japan explained Japanese parliamentarians' efforts on environmental issues and told Dr. Brown that a new law concerning reusable energy was expected to be passed during the current Diet session. Ms. Kayoko Shimizu, MP Japan expressed Japan's sincere concerns over President Bush's policy towards the Kyoto Protocol. Dr. Brown and JPFP members all agreed that there is a need to build a sustainable economy.



Dr. Lester Brown

'Economic deficits are what we borrow from each other; ecological deficits are what we take from future generations.'

- Lester Brown

Q. Do wind turbines really save energy?

A. Wind turbines only use the energy from moving air to generate electricity. A modern 1,000 kW wind turbine in an average location will annually displace 2,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from other electricity sources, i.e. usually coal fired power stations. The energy produced by a wind turbine throughout its twenty year lifetime, (in an average location), is eighty times larger than the amount of energy used to build, maintain, operate, dismantle, and scrapping it again. In other words, on average it takes only two to three months for a wind turbine to recover all the energy required to build and operate it.

exemplified in many under- developed countries, a country's power does not increase with population increase. On the contrary, under-developed countries very often find themselves trapped in a poverty cycle, while countries with smaller populations obtain recognised positions within the international community.

With modernisation, we have been leading our individual lives and seeking wealth through the exploitation of the environment. The Earth's natural resources may seem inexhaustible and easily obtainable, but we have to realise that our current economic actions are so vast and drastic that our global environment can not sustain these activities for much longer.

It is imperative that we protect the environment, that we use water resources effectively, decrease excessive energy consumption, maintain traditional and sustainable agriculture in every region, and promote reproductive health in order to control population increases. ALL of these countermeasures will be necessary.

The CIS region is characterised by its vast land and relatively small population. However, since evapo-transpiration exceeds the amount of rainfall, and as the region is located at a high latitude, the area is affected by a biological condition in which productivity of plant resources – the basis for all productions – is limited.

Therefore, the region is afflicted with somewhat restrictive conditions and such a delicate environment can easily be damaged by human activity. The minimization of the Aral sea is a clear example of such influences.

It is highly appropriate and significant for us to consider population issues, water resource issues, and health and sanitation issues as deeply intertwined," Mr. Yatsu concluded.



Parliamentarians Speak in One Voice on HIV/AIDS

International Policy-Makers Conference on HIV/AIDS - New Delhi

Over a period of three-days, an International Policy-Makers Workshop on AIDS Vaccines, (see p.6), and an International Policy-Makers Conference were organised by the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, (IAVI), in collaboration with the National AIDS Control Organisation, (NACO), of India, the Indian Council of Medical Research, (ICMR), in New Delhi.

The conference, which was held on the 11th and 12th of May, brought together parliamentarians, senior policy-makers, and NGO representatives from China, Thailand, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Nigeria, Brazil, Nepal, and India. Focusing on key issues relating to the spread of the HIV/AIDS virus, particularly the growing need for access to new technologies, the conference aimed to enhance political understanding and support, to convey the message that the development of vaccines to combat the virus is of the highest priority, and to enable society to meet the challenge of the epidemic.



Mr. Sibal presents the Prime Minister of India with a memento
 L. to R.: Mr. Kapil Sibal, MP, India - Mr. Seth Berkley, MD, President of IAVI - Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Indian Prime Minister

The presence of the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Biharee Vajpayee, Leader of the Opposition, Ms. Sonia Gandhi, and the Chief Ministers from three of the six most HIV-affected states in India, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, (Andhra), Mr. S.M. Krishna, (Karnataka), and Mr. Vilasrao Deshmukh, (Maharashtra), gave a fillip to the conference and demonstrated a collective will to address the HIV/AIDS issue.



Galvanised by the gravity of the HIV/AIDS situation in their country, ministers from some of the most seriously affected states in India participated in the conference.

L. to R.: Mr. C. P. Thakur, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare - Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh

Prior to the Prime Minister's speech, Ms. Suniti Solomon, Director, YRG Care, Ms. Brenda McSweeney, U.N. Resident Coordinator, India, and Mr. Seth Berkeley, President of IAVI all spoke on the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS problem.

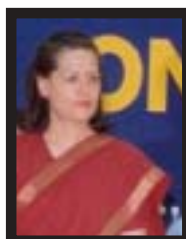
Sexuality Issues Need to be Discussed Openly

Mr. S. M. Krishna, Chief Minister of Karnataka, India

"In India, there is still a great hesitation to talk openly about sex and sexuality issues, even in the context of discussing the issues related to the HIV epidemic. We need to overcome this inhibition and introduce the topics on this subject in every field, whether it is educational institutions, or discussion through popular media channels. We MUST involve all sections of society."

Level of HIV/AIDS Funding Inadequate

Ms. Sonia Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition, India



India faces numerous public health challenges that call for greater government spending. National programmes that have been in existence for decades, such as those for the control and eradication of malaria, TB and leprosy themselves, are under-funded. Furthermore, the system must be able to absorb and effectively utilise increased resources, if those were to be made available. Even

so, it does appear that given the special nature and magnitude of the HIV/AIDS crisis confronting us, the level of funding of the AIDS control programme is substantially inadequate.

If we are to significantly increase the investments going into AIDS, then, in the short term, there may be no alternative but to depend on international sources of funding – multilateral, bilateral, and philanthropic. The prospects in this regard, however, do not seem to be bright. I recall that at the UN Special Session in New York I attended, there was a commitment to establish a 10 billion dollar global UN fund to fight AIDS. Unfortunately, the actual collection for this global UN fund so far is about 1.5 billion dollars, and the fund has been expanded to cover TB and malaria as well.

Anti-Retroviral Drugs Too Costly for Many HIV+ People

H.E. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India

"Just when mankind was getting ready to declare its triumph over infectious diseases, it is paradoxical that a new infectious disease should have surfaced in the last two decades. HIV/AIDS is a disease that has become an epidemic with catastrophic social and economic consequences.



Indeed, it has already become one in several countries and threatens to do so in many others, unless its spread is quickly arrested.

Early and correct diagnosis of HIV is critical for its subsequent control and management. I am happy that in India we have launched major initiatives, through our concerted focus on biotechnology research, to develop HIV diagnostic kits. Two of them are already in the market and are doing well both in India and in many other countries. We are willing to collaborate with other countries and to share these technologies with them.

However, much more needs to be done. We need to reach out to the illiterate and to those who are most vulnerable to AIDS infection. We should especially emphasise that AIDS control is not only about safe sex and use of condoms. It is also about making necessary changes in one's lifestyle so that one is responsible and caring to oneself, as well as to one's family and the community at large."

In Depth Discussion on Many HIV/AIDS Issues

The two-day conference offered the opportunity for discussion on HIV/AIDS and the many issues surrounding the virus based on country papers and presentations on the many elements pertaining to HIV/AIDS, Prevention, and treatment, right up to the second day when a Declaration was adopted.

The plenary session, chaired by Mr. Kapil Sibal, MP, India, was dedicated to the role of parliamentarians and policy-makers in the fight against HIV/AIDS and presented a global overview of the epidemic. Mr. Seth Berkley, MD and President of IAVI gave a presentation on the role of policy-makers in driving prevention and research, and the issue of stigma and discrimination was brought up by Ms. Purnima Mane, Vice-President of the Population Council's International Programmes Division.

Session one, entitled Knowledge and Behaviour Change, was chaired by Mr. Arun Jaitley, Union Minister for Law and Justice with Ms. Poonam Muttreja, MacArthur Foundation, India, as Vice-Chair. The subjects covered in this session were; the creation of an enabling environment for sustaining behaviour change: the need for legislation - representation of HIV/AIDS messages and behaviour change: an analysis - Susceptibility of youth and behaviour change strategies - Sustaining knowledge levels and behaviour change with a special focus on women, youth and the poor.

Session two, called Adoption of New Technologies in AIDS Prevention, was chaired by Dr. N.K. Ganguly, from ICMR. Topics pre-sented included: vaccines - women-initiated technologies, - capacity building for vaccine research - human rights issues and ethical dilemmas.

Future Directions

During the second day, the conference gave more attention to AIDS vaccines, care and treatment, and concluded with the adoption of a Declaration.

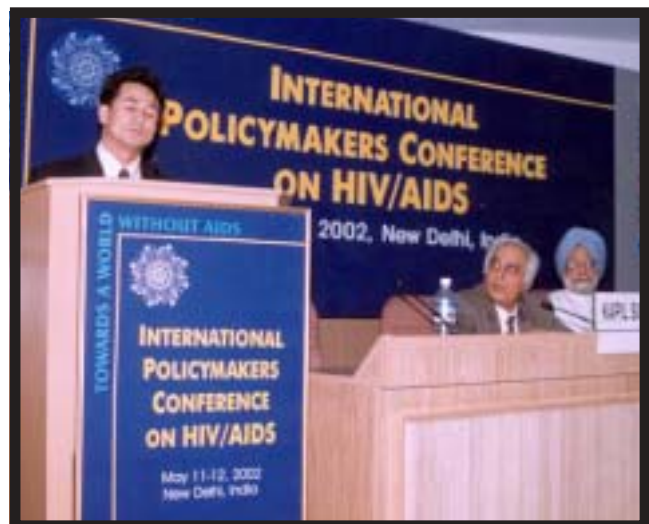
The first session of the day, AIDS Vaccine Policy: Towards an Agenda for Action in Developing Countries, was chaired by David Apuuli from Ugandan AIDS commission. The session commenced with a report on AIDS Vaccine Policy pre-

viously drawn up at the workshop, (10th of May), presented by Mr. Balla Musa Silla from IAVI. This was followed by the presentation of country reports from all participating countries. Speakers included Jon Ungphakorn, Senator from Thailand, Dr. Essop Jassat, MP, Health Committee, South Africa, Ms. Essien Udoh, MP, House of Representatives, Nigeria, and Mr. Bansidhar Mishra, MP, Nepal.



Mr. Jon Ungphakorn, Senator, speaking on Thailand's HIV/AIDS experiences

The second session, entitled Care and Treatment: An Overview and International Perspectives, was chaired by Mr. Jaipal Reddy, MP India, with Mr. S.P. Agarwal as Vice-Chair. Topics covered included: contextual framework of issues and the Indian experience - role of caregivers - access to care for marginalised groups - opportunistic infections - outlining future directions.



L. to R.: Mr. Cholnan Srikaew, MP Thailand - Mr. Kapil Sibal, MP India - Mr. Manmohan Singh, MP India

The third session, Global Resources to Meet the Socio-Economic Costs of HIV/AIDS, was chaired by Prof. Sam Onger, Minister for Health, Kenya, and co-chaired by Dr. Chrispus Kiyonga, Former Minister of Health, Uganda. The session focused on resources for the humane and effective governance of the HIV epidemic and its impact, and was followed by a panel discussion.

The fourth session, Key Issues and Future Directions, was chaired by Mr. Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Minister of State for Trade, Commerce and Industry with Ms. Saroj Pachauri, South and East Asia Regional Director, Population Council as vice-chair.

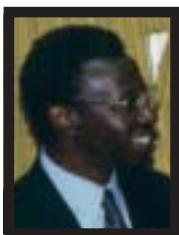
The final session was a roundtable on the parliamentary forum and adoption of the declaration. It was chaired by Mr. Manmohan Singh, Leader of the Opposition, Upper House India with Mr. Kapil Sibal, MP India as vice-chair. Mr. Cholnan Srikaew, MP Thailand, Mr. Kirit Somaiya, MP India, Mr. Essop Jassat, MP South Africa, Mr. Fernando Gabiera, Brazil spoke during this session.



Political Commitment for HIV Vaccine Essential - Mr. Balla Silla

A one-day workshop, held on the 10th of May, was convened as part of the New Delhi International Policy-Makers Conference allowing participants to explore, in depth, some of the pressing issues regarding AIDS vaccine trials and access to vaccines once they become available. The results and conclusions stemming from the workshop were then shared with the broader gathering of attendees during the conference. AFPPD was represented by Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, who gave a presentation on the 'Role of Parliamentarians in Meeting Challenges of HIV/AIDS: Lessons from the AFPPD Experience.'

The workshop was opened by N.K. Ganguly, Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research, (ICMR), along with Mr. J.V.R. Prasada Rao, Director of the National AIDS Control Organisation, (NACO), India, and Mr. Seth Berkley, President of International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, (IAVI). This was then followed by a presentation given by Vijay Mehra, Programme Director of IAVI entitled 'Science Update.' the goal of the presentation was to provide an overview of the basic issues and recent developments in vaccine R&D, highlighting some of the current policy challenges related to vaccine research.



Mr. Balla Silla

Mr. Balla Musa Silla, Vice-President, Vaccine Preparedness, IAVI, gave a presentation on 'Mobilising Political Leadership for AIDS Vaccines Trials. He said that political and social leaders must be taken into confidence and be provided with information on all aspects of vaccine development and trials. Any misinformation circulated by other sources, he explained, must be clarified.



Prof. Sam Onger, MP Kenya

Prof. Sam Onger, MP Kenya, said that unless cheaper anti-viral drugs become more accessible, it will be very difficult to stop HIV/AIDS taking its toll. He was optimistic that vaccine trials in Africa would be successful and millions of Africans' lives will be saved.



Ms. Victoria Sebagereka, MP, Nigeria

Ms. Victoria Sebagereka, MP Nigeria, agreed with Prof. Onger. She added that Africa not only needs a large supply of drugs, but also health care facilities where those infected with HIV/AIDS can be monitored and cared for. She voiced her opinion that HIV/AIDS is destroying the very fibre of Nigerian society and that the situation is critical and should be treated as such.

Ms. Mebel Rebello, MP India, chaired a session and pointed out that HIV/AIDS situations in some Indian states require urgent attention. She was optimistic that future treatment of HIV/AIDS and vaccines would be successful.



Ms. Mebel Rebello, MP, India

Ms. Anjali Nayyar, Programme Director, IAVI India, and Mr. Mark Chataway, Team Leader, IAVI India, presented IAVI activities in India, including vaccine trials. Ms. Meenakshi Datta Ghosh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India, Mr. Bansidhar Mishra, MP Nepal, Mr. David Gold, Vice President IAVI, and Mr. Alex Godwin Coutinho, Director of the AIDS Support Organisation, Uganda, also spoke at the workshop.



Ms. Kamla Punt, MP, Nepal

Ms. Kamla Punt, MP Nepal, said that the HIV/AIDS situation in Nepal is a reaching a stage where it may become difficult to handle. She was of the opinion that Nepalese girls taken over to India, forced into prostitution and then returning to Nepal is a major contributor to the source of HIV/AIDS in the country. She welcomed the vaccine initiative and hoped that whenever it becomes available, it will be reasonably priced so that governments and the people will be able to afford it.

Sessions covered topics such as communications and community education issues, the Global Fund, preparing now for future access in developing countries.

UNFPA Provides \$9 Million to Lao/PDR



Ms. Franceschinis with H.E. Bounyang Vorachit

His Excellency the Prime Minister of Lao/PDR, Mr. Bounyang Vorachit, received Ms. Patrizia Franceschinis, the Representative of the United Nations Population Fund in Lao/PDR.

The new UNFPA Country Programme of Assistance to Lao/PDR for the years 2002 - 2006, which Ms. Franceschinis announced to the Prime Minister has been approved by the UNFPA Executive Board in New York, and will be launched in Lao/PDR on the 11th of July, 2002 on the occasion of World Population Day 2002.

Under the new programme, UNFPA will provide \$9 million in assistance to the Committee for Planning and Cooperation.

Prime Minister Bounyang Vorachit praised UNFPA's contribution to the socio-economic development of Lao/PDR and expressed appreciation for UNFPA's efforts to increase national capacity, especially in the areas of health and education, and efforts to link population activities to poverty reduction interventions.

Reproductive Health - Stepchild of the World Community?

International Dialogue in Berlin

The German Technical Assistance, (GTZ), office was the venue for a special gathering of around one hundred German NGOs, GTZ officials, German parliamentarians, and a few international guests.



Participants at the International Dialogue, Berlin

The meeting, 'International Dialogue on Population and Sustainable Development,' was opened by Mr. Albrecht Graf Von Hardenberg, Executive Director, Center of Cooperation with the Private Sector, GTZ.



Mr. Albrecht Graf Von Hardenberg

During the first session, Ms. Ingar Brueggemann, Director General of IPPF made the link 'more people more poverty.' In her very effective presentation, she made it very clear that development, environment, and poverty issues can not be discussed without addressing population size and its continual increase.

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, AFPPD, presented the current status of ICPD implementation in Asia and pointed out that even though ICPD programmes have made good progress in the region, much more needs to be done as inadequate resources have become a major problem. He also pondered why countries make pledges when they can not fulfil them.

There seems to be an emerging trend at UN conferences: discussing food security and / or sustainable development without mentioning population growth as a fundamental element of sustainable development, and therefore, failing to make the tie between population and poverty. It is also interesting that the US President, George Bush, remains adamant that population programmes are synonymous with abortion.

Many speakers agreed that the social, economic, and health situation of the world can not possibly improve if we do not adopt an integrated approach to sustainable development, poverty, and food security, and push population growth to the forefront.

Mr. Jose Louis Corral Ruiz, Executive Director of CELSAM, Latin America, spoke on health programmes and explained the concept of CELSAM.



Prof. Rolf Korte

Prof. Rolf Korte, Head of the Department of Health, Education, Nutrition, Emergency, gave a presentation on successful approaches to RH. Ms. Lynette Injette Ochola from the German Foundation of World Population, (DSW), Kenya, Mr. Jose Louis Corral Ruiz, Executive Director of CELSAM, Latin America, and Ms. Gabriele Heuser from Inforadio, Berlin, chaired the session.

The second part of the Dialogue, consisted of a workshop, 'World Population and Financing of Development,' which was chaired by Mr. Holger Scholz from Global Cooperation, GmbH.

Dr. Hans Fleisch, Executive Director of DSW, discussed the need for more contraceptives for everyone worldwide, and Dr. Wolfgang Bichmann, Director of the Department of Social Infrastructure, KfW, spoke on social marketing and successful financial cooperation with developing countries in Africa and Asia.

Mr. Walter Bock, Global Cooperation, GmbH, chaired a workshop entitled 'World Population and Sustainability.' Mr. Siddhartha B. Bajracharya, Annapurna Conservation Project Nepal, (ACAP), spoke on more forests and less births, the concept behind an integrated development project in Nepal. Ms. Annette Gabriel, Coordinator Nationwide Sector-Project Reproductive Health, GTZ, gave a presentation on improved use of family services through better incentives with examples from Africa. Lastly, Mr. Alfonso Lopez Juarez, the Executive Director of the Mexican Family Planning Organisation, (MEXFAM), brought up the subject of "Pope versus pill and condom – the many ways to circumvent Rome.'

Dr. Hans-Peter Schipulle, Deputy Director General, Policy and Global Issues, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development concluded the meeting. Dr. Schipulle spoke out quite forcefully on RH and population programmes. He asked how we could hope to tackle poverty without first doing something about population and population increase.

UN Population Awards

Dr. Kwasi Odoi-Agyarko, the leader of an innovative, rural health programme in Ghana, and EngenderHealth, a non governmental organisation that trains and gives technical assistance to reproductive health service providers in developing countries, will share the 2002 United Nations Population Award. The Committee for the United Nations Population Award selected the winners on the 10th of April. Each winner will receive a diploma, a gold medal, and an equal share of a monetary prize during a ceremony at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, in June.



A New Initiative for Advocacy and Support Person - to - Person Advocacy with Parliamentarians



AFPPD, supported by the Hewlett Foundation, is implementing a two-year programme called Person - to - Person Advocacy with Parliamentarians that aims to conduct direct dialogue with parliamentarians and locally elected representatives on a one to one basis. The programme will concentrate on population and development issues, and in particular family planning and reproductive health. The four countries that have so far been selected for implementation of national projects are Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

As an important step of the programme, AFPPD organised a training workshop, which was held in Bangkok from April 22 – 27. This was with the aim to prepare and guide the newly appointed staff of the national committees of parliamentarians on population and development for the execution of national projects. The training workshop, which was attended by twenty-six participants, two of which were UNFPA officers, also offered generic skills which could be useful in and outside the scope of PPAP as well as skills specific to the programme.

Acquiring the Skills to Relate to Parliamentarians

With knowledge, concepts, tools, and techniques, it was hoped that the participants would be able to conduct one to one interviews and discussions with parliamentarians and / or locally elected representatives.

The training used a variety of training methodologies including lectures, group work, simulations, role-play, presentation, and question and answer sessions.

The workshop was opened by Dr. Prasop Rattanakorn, founding member and former Secretary General of AFPPD, and President of the Statesmen Foundation, who said that parliamentary advocacy should be planned and executed in a careful and proper manner. If parliamentarians can be edu-

cated and motivated on population and development related issues, he explained, the results could be very beneficial.

He finished by saying that while most parliamentarians understand the problem of population, they need to be informed and convinced of its linkages with social development and numerous aspects of life, including water, food, environment, and natural resources.

Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Senator, Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Public Health, Thailand, then gave a welcoming address to workshop participants. She said:

“This innovative idea allows us to meet members of parliament and assess the level of his/her knowledge on family planning, reproductive health, and related issues. After initial discussion, we can then provide them with additional information if need be as well as talk on their interest and perspective on these issues. Eventually we aim to motivate them to become advocates of population, family planning, etc. It is exciting that this project will soon be operational in four countries.

With your dedication and with excellent training, the success of this innovative programme begins today. The work that you will undertake will determine not only the future of this project, but the expansion of work in each country so that we can serve parliamentarians better and keep them involved in our mission.” Resource persons included: Ms. Katherine Ba-Thike and Mr. Francisco Roque, UNFPA/CST; Mr. K.S. Seetharam, ESCAP PRUDD, Ms. Hiroko Tanaka and Ms. Laura Skolnik, ESCAP HRD, Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, AFPPD, and Prof. Marimuthu, Senator, AFPPD Malaysia. Mr. Gerry de Kort, Consultant, Ms. Lilibelle Austriaco, Programme Associate, Ms. Romchalee Ngamwitroj, Management Associate, and Ms. Pariyaporn Techanaparak, Administrative Associate, AFPPD, facilitated the workshop.

Mr. Ghazi Farooq, Director, UNFPA/CST Bangkok, closed the workshop.

Inter-American Parliamentarians Meet on Emergency Contraception

The Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, (IAPG), in collaboration with the Asociación Chilena de Protección de la Familia, (APROFA), and with financial support provided by UNFPA and IPPF/WHR, organised a two-day meeting on emergency contraception, which took place in Santiago, Chile, on the 11th and 12th of April.



Parliamentarians, IPPF/WHR affiliates, and NGOs from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay were present at the meeting. The goal of the meeting was to educate parliamentarians on emergency contraception, (EC), and build partnerships between policy-makers, experts, international cooperation agencies, and IPPF/WHR affiliates.

Following numerous presentations, participants broke into working groups. The objectives of this activity were firstly to promote discussion and exchange ideas on different strategies to increase access to EC, secondly to exchange experiences and lessons learned between organisations and experts already working on EC in their countries, and thirdly to build partnerships between parliamentarians, IPPF affiliates, and international agencies to develop an action plan for each individual country.

As a follow-up, the IAPG along with the Latin American Consortium on Emergency Contraception will be organising a meeting with parliamentarians and Ministry of Health representatives in Quito, Ecuador, October 2002.

For more information please contact Giselle Carino at gcarino@ippfwhr.org

AFPPD Attended World Summit Prep Com in Bali

On the 27th of May in Bali, Indonesia, the fourth and final preparatory meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development opened on a 'note of urgency, with calls from Summit officials and citizens activists for bolder commitments that the people of the world would recognise as progress.' It should be noted that WSSD is shying away from the very basics i.e. the relationship between population and sustainable development. Ms. Mieko Tsumori, APDA, (Japan), represented AFPPD.



UK Parliamentarians Mobilised for WSSD

Opening a meeting at the UK House of Commons focusing on the forth-coming WSSD in September, Ms. Chris McCafferty, MP and Chair of the UK All-Party Group on Population, Development, and Reproductive Health, spoke of the need to redouble commitment to ensure the implementation of the Earth Summit and ICPD programmes of action. "We have to muster political will and financial resources to act now so that the Summit will spur renewed commitment to positive action on sustainable development."

AFPPD Executive Director Felicitated by APDA

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, received a silver plaque of appreciation from Dr. Taro Nakayama, MP, former Foreign Minister and President of APDA, commemorating his service to the parliamentary movement, and in particular for his support in the development of APDA.



AFPPD Goes Russian



AFPPD has recently started publishing its newsletter in Russian in order to better serve Russian speaking CIS countries. Parliamentarians, NGOs, and UN agencies in Russian speaking countries can send information for publication in the Russian edition of our newsletter. Anyone interested in receiving the Russian edition should contact AFPPD.



European Parliament Adopt Sexual and Reproductive Health Report

The European Parliament has voted in favour of the report on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Europe by Anne Van Lancker, MEP, (Socialist Belgium). Despite strong opposition fuelled by anti-choice activists, a clear majority of the European Parliament supported the report, (280 in favour, 280 against, and 28 abstentions), sending a firm international signal that it intends to fight for the right of all people to have healthy and satisfying sex lives.

The report requests Member States and Accession Countries to improve the exchange of information and best practices on the issues of unwanted pregnancies and abortion, adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights and sexuality education, and on the development of sexual and reproductive health policies in general.

The report calls for easier access to affordable emergency contraception; comprehensive sexuality education; improved access to affordable sexual and reproductive health services for young people, minorities and the poor; legal, safe and accessible abortion; and an end to the prosecution of women who have undergone illegal abortion.

Commissioner Byrne, (Health, Environment, and Consumer Protection), said that significant attention should be given to sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, without forgetting to involve men. He stressed that sexual and reproductive health was a health determinant, and was therefore part of the EU's Health Strategy, which had been adopted by the Parliament just before the Van Lacker report.

Significantly, the report also asks the Commission to take into account the devastating impact of the Mexico City Policy, especially with regard to Central and Eastern Europe, and calls upon the Commission to fill the budgetary gap provoked by the Bush Administration's action.

Anne Van Lancker welcomed the outcome saying "It's about time that the Member States and Candidate Countries acted upon what has been a long-standing issue in international forums, especially knowing the important disparities between the experiences of European countries. Europe can help reduce the inequalities in the areas of sexual and reproductive health. It's about time we learnt from each other."

Midwives Instrumental in RH Project - Vietnam

Ms. Chieko Nohno, MP Japan Visits Vietnam

Ms. Chieko Nohno, an MP from Japan, took part in a visit to Vietnam on a UNFPA/JOICFP-organised mission from the 28th of April to the 5th of May to see first-hand the reproductive health situation of the country. She met with representatives from UNFPA and the Vietnam Family Planning Association, and observed health facilities at commune, district, provincial, and central levels.

Ms. Nohno saw how the UNFPA Vietnam Office effectively carries out country level activities in partnership with central and local governments, and with local and international NGO, especially in the adolescent health programme.

The mission determined that midwives are in the best position to plan, manage, and carry out sex education in schools to prevent unwanted pregnancies and STIs / HIV/AIDS, and introduce contraception.

Multi-Cooperation Discussed at Mayors' Conference

UNESCAP, in cooperation with the Asian Institute of Technology, and the Urban Management Programme, as well as other agencies organised an Asian Mayors' Forum and workshop on good governance for poverty reduction and social development from the 8th to the 11th of July in Bangkok. Around fifty mayors including one from Kabul, Afghanistan, attended.

Mr. Yap Kioe Sheng, Chief, Human Development Sector, UNESCAP, pinpointed good governance as essential for the success of poverty reduction programmes. He informed participants that ESCAP is making a database of good practices which can be replicated.

The mayors were in agreement that growing population is a major factor in the lack of service provision available to the general public.

20th General Assembly and 20 Years Celebration of AFPPD
 17 - 18 October 2002
 Beijing Hotel - Beijing, China
 Hosted by the National People's Congress, China

Parliamentarians who are interested in attending should contact AFPPD



AFPPD at World Bank Parliamentary Meeting

The Third Annual Conference of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank, (PnoWB), was held in Bern, Switzerland from the 9th to the 11th of May, 2002. Over 120 parliamentarians from fifty countries around the world participated in the meeting, reaffirming international support for Millennium Development Goals. The meeting was addressed by the President of the World Bank, Mr. James D. Wolfensohn and H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal. Topics discussed included Regional Parliamentary Perspectives on International Development; Reaching the Millennium Development Goals; Critical Conditions for Success and the Role of Parliamentarians. Several parliamentarians involved in their respective population and development networks participated in the event, drawing attention to the need to provide universal reproductive health services by 2015.

During a special session devoted to HIV/AIDS, Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Vice Chairperson AFPPD and Senator, Thailand, and Ms. Ulla Sandbaek, MEP, and IEPFPD Vice Chairperson, emphasised the role of regional parliamentary networks on population and development, and referred to the Joint Parliamentary Declaration issues in 2001 for the UNGASS on HIV/AIDS. Tony Worthington, MP UK, (member of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population), alluding to the Mexico City Policy / Global Gag Rule, expressed concern in what appears to be a backtracking of the US Government in sexual and reproductive health and rights. Mr. Lakshman Singh, MP India and Vice Chairperson AFPPD, also attended the meeting.

Over the coming year, the PnoWB will undertake a series of field visits by parliamentarians to developing countries to assess their poverty reduction strategies. They have already conducted field visits to Uganda and Burundi, and plan to conduct a further eight to twelve study tours in 2002 to different parts of the world, (Latin America, Asia, Africa, Central Asia, etc.). Hon. Bert Koenders, MP the Netherlands, is the current chairperson of the Steering Committee.

Visitors to AFPPD

Mr. Wasim Zaman, Director of the Technical Support Team of UNFPA, South Asia, visited the AFPPD office in order to discuss collaboration activities with the AFPPD in South Asia. AFPPD will be organising a South Asian parliamentarians workshop on violence against women and an HIV/AIDS workshop with technical assistance from UNFPA/CST South Asia.

Ms. Farhana Haque Rahman from the International Fund for Agricultural Development, (IFAD), came to discuss parliamentarians' involvement in IFAD's activities in Asia. AFPPD sponsored two members of parliament, Mr. Zainal Abidin Zin, Minister in the Prime Minister's office and President of AFPPD Malaysia, and Mr. Surya Surapaty Chandra, Indonesian MP.

Ms. Trudy Davis, formerly with the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group, and currently working on street children and street youth, debated the possibility of organising an event on this issue in Bangkok.

Ms. Carole Livingston, Consultant with UNAIDS, came to AFPPD to Talk about advocacy issues on HIV/AIDS in UNAIDS.

Farewell to Mme Thi Than

Mme. Nguyen Thi Than, Chairperson of the Social Committee, Chair of the Vietnamese Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, (VAPPD), and Treasurer of AFPPD has retired from parliament. She did not contest the seat in the recent Vietnamese elections. Mme. Thi Than was a dynamic parliamentarian who worked relentlessly for the cause of population, reproductive health, and women empowerment. AFPPD will greatly feel her absence.



Nepalese Push for More Liberal Abortion Laws

The Nepalese Lower house Parliament has voted to legalise first trimester abortions and make abortion within eighteen weeks of pregnancy legal in cases of rape, incest or to protect the health of the woman. After four months, however, the National Assembly of Parliament has yet to approve the bill. Abortion rights supporters are now stepping up efforts to have the bill passed, but the struggle is an uphill one.

Asian Parliamentarians' Conference on ICPD Implementation

12 - 13 December - UNESCAP Building, Bangkok

An Asian parliamentarians' conference to review parliamentarians' role in ICPD implementation with a special focus on ageing

Parliamentarians active in the population field and parliamentary committees should contact their national committees for participation. For further information, please contact AFPPD

National Committee Staff Receives Training

Dr. Nguyen Van Tien, Executive Director of the Vietnamese Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, (VAPPD), and Mr. Bakit Baketaev, Head of the Department on International Affairs, Inter-parliamentary Relations and State Protocol, Kyrgyzstan, were sponsored by AFPPD to receive training in advocacy organised by the Asian Pacific Alliance, (APA), and the Population Action Initiative, (PAI), in Washington DC. The training, which took place from the 9th to the 12th of April, proved to be very beneficial to the staff of AFPPD's national committees.

Dr. Nguyen Van Tien was also selected for advanced training on population issues at the East West Center in Hawaii.

CAPPD Activities

Princess Sisovath, Mr. Pen Pannha, MP and Secretary General of CAPPD, and key staff participated in an advocacy seminar on 'Improving Reproductive Health of Cambodian Women,' organised by and held at the Ministry of Minister Council.

Mr. Pen Pannha participated in a workshop on Water, Public Impression and Sustainable Development, organised by the Ministry of Water Resource and Meteorology in cooperation with the Commission of the National Assembly for Economy, Planning, Investment, Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environment. Mr. Pannha spoke on 'Water is Life, and Water, Rights and Law.'

IEPFPD Releases Annual Report

The IEPFPD released its Annual Report 2001, incorporating the proceedings of its Annual Council meeting in Moscow, December 2001. This Annual Report reviews the activities and successes of the IEPFPD and its member, all-party parliamentary groups around Europe, in forging a European parliamentary community, tackling HIV/AIDS issues, resource mobilisation and women's empowerment.

New Internet Initiative

UN Population Fund and the Development Gateway Foundation have launched a new portal on population and reproductive health: <http://www.developmentgateway.org/pop>

IPU Parliamentary Forum on Children

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, in collaboration with UNICEF, held a Parliamentary Forum as a side event to the Children's Summit which took place in New York from the 8th to the 10th of May. This Forum was designed to provide legislators from around the world the chance to voice their hopes and concerns for legislative measures required for the protection of children according to international commitments, and on resource mobilisation to implement commitments on children as well as the role of parliament in assessing the impact of national budgets and legislation on children. The Forum was chaired by the Hon. Najma Heptullah, MP India, the IEPFPD was represented by two members of its Executive Committee, Ms. Christine McCafferty, MP UK, and Dr. Suat Caglayan, MP Turkey, as well as Mr. Carlos Aymerich, MP from the Spanish Group on Population.

Rape Prominent Issue in Kenya Elections

As Kenya gears up for presidential and legislative elections this year, women's rights activists being rape and violence against women to the forefront of political discussions.

In Kenya, cultural indifference towards rape, barriers to recognising domestic violence, and marital rape as illegal, and police involvement in sexual assaults have kept women from reporting these crimes. But may leaders see the election this year – which will be the second transfer of power since Kenya's independence in 1963 – as a crucial moment for stopping violence against women.

Erratum

In the March – April 2002 edition of the AFPPD newsletter, (page 6), Ms. Keiko Yamamoto was quoted as saying '63% of the Asian population does not have access to safe water and that around the world, one billion people are without water, 80% of the Asian population does not have access to improved sanitation.' This should have read 1.1 billion people can not have access to safe water globally. 63% of that 1.1 billion live in Asia. 2.4 billion of the world's population does not have access to improved sanitation. 80% of that 2.4 billion live in Asia.

We apologise for the mistake.

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