

6th ASIAN WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS' AND MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

*Financing the
Millennium Development Goals
with focus on
Health and Gender*

23-24 September, 2008

State Palace, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia



The 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference

Theme:

**Financing the Millennium Development Goals
with focus on Health and Gender**

23-24 September 2008

State Palace, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

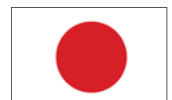
Hosted by the
Parliament of Mongolia

Organized by the
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on
Population and Development (AFPPD)

In collaboration with the
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Government of Japan

UN Country Team in Mongolia



ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFPPD	Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
APDA	Asian Population and Development Association
CAPPD	Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
DSW	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (German Foundation for World Population)
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HSSMPT	Health Sector Strategic Master Plan Team
IPPF-ESEAO	International Planned Parenthood Federation, Regional Office in East and South East Asia & Oceania
IAPPD	Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
IPCI/ICPD	International Parliamentarians' Conferences on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action
IERD	Information and External Relations Division, UNFPA
IRPPDC	Iranian Parliamentarian Population and Development Committee
JICWELS	Japan International Corporation of Welfare Services
LAPPD	Laotian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MMR	Maternal mortality rate
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MRTT	Ministry of Railways, Transportation and Tourism
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PPAPD	Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development
RH	Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund For Women
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
VAPPD	Vietnamese Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WHO	World Health Organization

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

- 1.A. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day
- 2.A. Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people
- 3.A. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger



GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

- 2.A. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling



GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

- 3.A. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015



GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

- 4.A. Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate



GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

- 5.A. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio



GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

- 6.A. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- 6.B. Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it
- 6.C. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases



GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 7.A. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
- 7.B. Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss
- 7.C. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation
- 7.D. By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers



GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

- 8.A. Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
- 8.B. Address the special needs of the least developed countries
- 8.C. Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)
- 8.D. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term
- 8.E. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- 8.F. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Main Outcome: Ulaanbaatar Statement of Commitment	5
III.	Highlights of the Conference	
	Opening Session	8
Session I.	Overview of MDGs - - Implications for Countries	11
Session II.	Focusing on Health MDGs - - Are Countries on Track?	13
Session III.	Gender MDG and Links to Other Goals and Targets	15
Session IV.	Costing and Financing Health MDGs	17
Session V.	Partnerships and Advocacy in Support of MDGs	19
Session VI.	Governance, Accountability and Sustainability of MDG-related Efforts	21
Session VII.	Role of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians in Achieving the MDGs	23
	Closing Session	25
Annexes		
Annex 1.	Agenda of the Conference	27
Annex 2.	List of Participants	30
Annex 3.	Opening Statements and Keynote Address	32

I. INTRODUCTION

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is pleased to have organized the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference held on 23-24 September, 2008 at the State Palace in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Over 80 women ministers and parliamentarians from Asia, Central Asia, and the Pacific, as well as experts and representatives from international organizations and agencies, attended the event. The conference was hosted by the Parliament of Mongolia, in collaboration with UNFPA, UN Country Team in Mongolia and the Government of Japan.

The last conference in Beijing, China, in 2007 discussed issues related to the educational empowerment of women and girls as a critical component of social and economic development. The theme of this conference is "Financing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a focus on Health and Gender." The 6th Women's Conference gave special attention to:

- MDG-3:** Promote gender equality and empower women: eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.
- MDG-4:** Reduce child mortality: reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five.
- MDG-5:** Improve maternal health: reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio; achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health.
- MDG-6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases: halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS; achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it; halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

The need for parliamentarians' commitment to MDG policies and budgets was highlighted by a recent 2007 UNFPA survey and cited as a primary factor for countries to realistically achieve their national development goals and targets.

The Conference aimed to improve participants' commitment to financial interventions at the country and regional level. Emphasis was placed on:

- Evidence-based costing requirements for financing MDGs
- Improved financial planning and management to ensure effective distribution and use of scarce resources for MDGs-based priorities
- Enhancing the capacity of national logistical systems to deliver timely and quality health commodity supplies
- Transitioning from a heavy reliance on external donor assistance to greater self sufficiency within national budgets
- Strengthening governance structures and highlighting the role of civil society organizations in enhancing transparency and accountability
- Considering avenues for strengthening inter-country and regional cooperation
- The role that women parliamentarians can play

Thus the expected outcomes of the Conference were:

- Increased understanding of financing strategies in support of MDGs and national policies
- Concrete policy actions and recommendations to ensure sustainable financing of health MDGs and targets
- Greater commitment on the part of parliamentarians to address financing gaps in meeting MDGs

II. MAIN OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE

Ulaanbaatar Commitment Statement

Arising from the
6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference
on
Financing the Millennium Development Goals
with focus on Health and Gender

We, the parliamentarians and ministers from twenty one countries of Asia and the Pacific, gathered in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on 23-24 September 2008 to participate in the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference, in pursuant of our commitment to the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those on health and gender. The MDGs, and the targets spelled out for each goal, constitute a common framework for poverty reduction. The outcomes of this regional forum will be an important contribution to global efforts towards meeting the MDGs in 2015 and particularly in promoting women's empowerment, gender equality and universal access to basic health services, including reproductive health services, in accordance with the Beijing and the Cairo Programmes of Action.

This commitment recognizes that:

- Ministers and Parliamentarians are key to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their commitment to support MDG related policies and budgets is a main factor for countries to realistically achieve their national development goals and targets. Particular emphasis is made on the role of women ministers and parliamentarians who are often natural champions for supporting social sector policies and programmes and national development efforts
- Goals related to health (MDGs 4, 5 and 6) and gender (MDG 3) remain most challenging in many countries, particularly in Asia, where it also requires massive infrastructure investments, systems strengthening, sustainable capacity development, and support to policy development and/or implementation to ensure that they have an impact on poverty alleviation
- Political instability, sheer population numbers, emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, increasing urbanization and migration, socio-economic disparities, and gender inequalities continue to undermine MDG progress. And while access to basic health, including reproductive health, and other social services have improved in many countries, their quality remains poor and inadequate
- Financing MDGs requires increased understanding of evidence based costing requirements, and improved financial planning and management to ensure effective distribution and utilization of often scarce resources for MDG based priorities. Most governments are still heavily reliant on external donor assistance, and sometimes, national budgets are not properly prioritized or utilized. National governance structures are also often lacking or weak, and many times ignores the potential role of civil society organizations in enhancing transparency and accountability

We further acknowledge that we are at midpoint toward the MDG target date of 2015 and therefore, immediate actions are needed to address the above mentioned concerns and challenges, in order to meet the following health and gender goals and targets set forth under each of them:

- MDG 3 - Gender Equality: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015

- MDG 4 - Reduce Child Mortality: Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five
- MDG 5 - Improve Maternal Health: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio and achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health
- MDG 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS; achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it; and halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Thus, as part of the global and regional community of Ministers and Parliamentarians, we commit ourselves to ensuring adequate attention and concrete policy actions and recommendations to ensure the following strategic actions to ensure MDG achievement by 2015 or sooner:

- Relevant and required support for MDG-consistent national development strategies, plans and budgets
- Evidence based costing requirements for financing MDGs
- Improved financial planning and management to ensure effective distribution and utilization of often scarce resources for MDG based priorities
- Enhancing the capacity of national logistical systems to deliver timely and quality health commodities, essential drugs and other supplies
- Transitioning from a heavy reliance on external donor assistance to greater self sufficiency within national budgets
- Strengthening governance structures and highlighting the role of civil society organizations in enhancing transparency and accountability
- Considering avenues for strengthening inter-country and regional cooperation, experience sharing and inter-country/regional partnerships.
-

Specifically, from our deliberations during this Conference, as participants to the Ulaanbaatar Conference, we commit ourselves to undertake the following immediate actions in our respective countries:

- MAINSTREAM gender equality in all MGDs!
- Ensure financial adequacy for MDG achievement, but also address better and more effective resource utilization according to MDG-consistent strategic national priorities plans and budgets
- Advocate towards legislation of at least 10 percent of development assistance and national development budgets to population and reproductive health programmes, including for family planning, maternal and newborn care, and to universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support for HIV/AIDS
- Establish necessary policies and institutional mechanisms that are conducive for MDGs implementation, in an integrated and coordinated manner
- Enhance budget reforms by introducing bottom-up approach, and ensuring sustainable financing through better aid coordination and more rational use of resources
- Ensure that enacted laws and policies are implemented and funded
- Enhance the capacity of Ministers and Parliamentarians to execute their legislative, oversight and budgetary functions in support of MDGs at national and sub-national levels
- Ensure policy and funding support to programmes that are targeted to the poorest and most vulnerable population groups
- Review country reports on MDGs implementation and arrange its debate in Parliament
- Monitor their country's funding commitments to MDGs, and MDG related expenditures in the national budget, particularly on health and gender
- Institute measures to make governments more accountable for positions or decisions taken at international meetings
- Emphasize linkages of reproductive health, and family planning, antenatal care, maternal and newborn health care, and HIV/AIDS to poverty reduction efforts
- Address fundamentals of gender inequities in health, particularly in reproductive health policies and programmes

- Examine the ratio of internal and external assistance for MDGs and monitor their utilization
- Refine country specific MDG targets and indicators

In conclusion, we renew our promise to intensify and strengthen our collective efforts to ensure that by 2015, there will be less poverty in the world, fewer people who are uneducated and hungry, and that through universal access to reproductive health services, no mothers will die giving life, and less people infected by HIV/AIDS. And we will act now.

Adopted by the Conference delegates on this 24th day of September, 2008, in Ulaanbataar, Mongolia.



Group photo at the opening ceremony of the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference held at the State Great Khural (Parliament) of Mongolia.

III. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

Opening Session

The opening session, chaired by the Hon. Chairman of the State Great Khural of Mongolia, Mr. Damdin Demberel, was well attended and properly organized. His Excellency, N. Enkhbayar, President of Mongolia delivered the opening remarks, together with Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director of Information and External Relations Division, UNFPA Headquarters, and H.E. Mr. Yasuyoshi Ichihashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Mongolia. The keynote address was given by the Secretary-General of the Asian Parliamentarians Forum on Population and Development (AFPPD), Hon. Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator of Thailand. The opening session was also attended by Hon. Ms. D. Oyunkhorol, MP and Chair of the Parliament Standing Committee on Social Policy, Ms. Debora Comini, UN Resident Coordinator, and other high level officials of the government, the United Nations, the international community and other national/local institutions.



President Nambaryn Enkhbayar

”

Mongolia has the potential to achieve the MDGs

In his opening remarks, the President of Mongolia stressed that Mongolia has the potential to achieve its national MDGs and that hosting this event in the country adds significance in accelerating the MDG implementation, increasing the participation of women parliamentarians and sharing experiences among parliaments and governments of Asia-Pacific and Central Asian countries. Given the significance of this event, the Parliament of Mongolia established the national organizing committee for the conference to ensure its success. Adhering to the Millennium Declaration adopted at the World Summit and the Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, the Parliament of Mongolia set its country specific Millennium Development Goals and in 2008 adopted and has been implementing the MDG-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy.

The President also stated that the implementation of the MDG-based National Development Strategy is undertaken based on the fundamental principles of democracy, human rights, freedom, equality, capacity and structure building for development policy and strategy implementation, political prioritization in budgeting, needs-based resource allocation, operation transparency and outcome-based evaluation, and expenditure monitoring and planning. Top priority of the development policy of Mongolia is to constantly improve “the quality of life for Mongolians” by creating favorable environment that ensures long, healthy and happy life for Mongolian citizens.

Through optimal allocation of financial resources for priority development areas, the state budget policy aims at raising real income of whole population and public access to social services and promoting sectoral development. As well, the budget policy will aim to ensure funding for MDG achievement, in which parliament members inevitably play an important role. The President concluded by saying that

the conference will play a significant role in effective allocation of necessary resources, improvement in financial planning and management, transition from reliance on internal and external donor assistance to self-sufficiency within national budgets and promotion of the cooperation among the countries. He added that this conference will contribute to ensuring financial sustainability for increase in women's participation in political and social lives, addressing the health issues faced not only in Asia Pacific region also in the whole world, and promoting the cooperation among parliaments of the countries in the region. (The full text of the President's speech is annexed to this report).



Ambassador Yasuyoshi Ichihashi



Parliamentarians play a significant role in development

In his opening remarks, His Excellency, Mr. Yasuyoshi Ichihashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Japan, Mongolia thanked all the organizers of the conference and welcomed the opportunity to take part in this important gathering. He acknowledged the long standing collaboration between the Government of Japan, AFPPD and UNFPA, stating that AFPPD was formed by UNFPA in cooperation with parliamentarians from Japan, India and China. Japanese parliamentarians have played a significant role in the development of parliamentary movements worldwide, providing support to the work that organizations like UNFPA do with parliamentarians and other policy makers.

He also noted that in the past, AFPPD has involved several Japanese Prime Ministers, including Mr. Takeo Fukuda, Mr. Nobusuke Kishi, Mr. Shinzo Abe and at present, Mr. Yasuo Fukuda, Prime Minister of Japan and the current chair of AFPPD. He then highlighted some of the development priorities supported by the Government of Japan (such as in health, education, and other sectors), and wished the delegations fruitful deliberations during the Conference. (See the full text of the Ambassador's remarks in the annex).



Ms. Safiye Cagar



Sufficient financing is needed for strengthening health systems to meet the demand for maternal and childcare and other reproductive health services

Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director for Information and External Relations of UNFPA Headquarters in New York focused her opening remarks on the important role of parliamentarians and ministers in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Without their vanguard contribution, it is unlikely that we can accomplish the daunting task set before us. For more than 35 years, she stressed that UNFPA has been working closely with national, regional and global parliamentary groups and individual parliamentarians in addressing and advocating for gender equality and women's reproductive rights. We are extremely privileged to have excellent partnerships with Parliamentarians the world over, including the Asia and the Pacific Region,

where our partnership with the parliamentarians first began.

Ms. Safiye also stressed that this conference is very timely as it focuses on strengthening resolve at the country and regional level to accelerate MDG implementation, especially health and gender MDGs. Financing MDGs has three major points: assessing the costs of achieving MDGs; mobilization of necessary resources; and allocation and efficient use of resources. Financing for MDGs also requires a broad partnership between developed and developing countries. Such a partnership demands mutual responsibility and accountability. Over the years, countries and leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to financing international development goals at various events such as in Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico and most recently in the G8 Summit in Japan. Despite these good intentions, commitments are not being met. For example, ODA for maternal, newborn and child health increased from \$2.1 billion to \$3.5 billion in 2005. This increase is not enough. In order to ensure sufficient financing for strengthening of health systems to meet the demand for maternal and childcare and other reproductive health services an additional \$10.2 billion per year is needed.

Achieving the MDGs requires strong political will. Thus, parliamentarians' commitment for supporting MDG related policies, budgets and legislations is crucial for countries to achieve their national development goals and targets. We need better MDG governance with systems of oversight, representation, accountability and appropriate budgets. These are critical issues to be discussed during this conference. I wish all participants to this event a productive, meaningful and enjoyable time in Mongolia. (The full text of Ms. Safiye's statement is in the annex of this report).



To realize MDGs, political will and commitment is truly essential



Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya

In his keynote address, Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator of Thailand and Secretary-General of AFPPD, Bangkok, emphasized that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will not be achieved unless population and reproductive health issues are given priority. This view has been expressed by world leaders and experts. It has been recognized that to realize the goals of MGDs, political will and commitment is truly essential. The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is a platform of parliamentarian committees on population and health in the region. It involves elected representatives, specifically parliamentarians, motivating them to support policies and legislation and encouraging them to oversee the proper implementation of MDG related programmes.

He concluded by saying that the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference on 'Financing Millennium Development Goals with a Focus on Health and Gender' is an effort in this direction and provides support to the special UN General Assembly Session on MDGs in New York which is taking place at the same time. It is in our interest to enhance the understanding of women parliamentarians on Health and Gender related issues within the MGDs framework. This conference seeks to highlight the interlink-ages between Health, Gender and other MDGs, specifically poverty and maternal health.

SESSION I: Overview of MDGs – Implications for Countries

- Chair: **Ms. Debora Comini**
UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Mongolia
- Speakers: **Hon. Ms. Dulamsuren Oyunkhorol, MP**
Chair, Parliament Standing Committee on Social Policy, Education, Culture and Science, Mongolia
- Hon. Mrs. Ngamau Mere Munokoa**
Minister of Internal Affairs and Agriculture and Works, Cook Islands
- Rapporteur: **Ms. S. Navchaa**
Assistant Representative, UNFPA Mongolia



From left: Ms. Arvin Dashjamts, MP, Mongolia, Ms. D. Oyunkhorol, Ms. Debora Comini, and Mrs. Ngamau Mere Munokoa

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

In her presentation, Hon. Ms. Oyunkhorol highlighted Mongolia's recent efforts and achievements related to the Millennium Development Goals. The Mongolian Parliament has passed a resolution on the National MDGs and approved MDG-based long term development strategy. The country is moving to MDGs consistent budgeting and planning approach and ensuring sustained budgetary allocation to social issues such as health education, education and social welfare. She also noted progress already made in achieving health MDGs, especially MDG 5 in the last two decades, but also acknowledged that there is much more work needed in terms of having a sustainable health financing strategy. She reported that the costing of the MDGs has been undertaken in 2006, and the results have been used for planning some policies and programmes. Some of the other key issues she also addressed included gender based violence, women's political participation, and budget issues related to policy implementation and coordination mechanisms.

The honorable representative of the Cook Islands, Ms. Munokoa, stated that the Government of Cook Islands is committed to achieving MDGs. A planning unit has been established at the Prime Minister's Office to oversee MDG work and partnerships. She mentioned that their challenges include better use of data for planning and decision making, and limited technical capacity and resources, and still limited efforts to localize the MDGs. Most recently, priority has been given to achieving MDG 3, ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and reporting, improving the legal environment such as those related to the family law, and increasing the low level of women's representation in parliament. In these efforts, she acknowledged the great support and assistance from the United Nations.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

During the discussions that followed, there were questions raised about priority setting mechanisms within the Cabinet or Parliament, relationships between these two important bodies of the State, and national capacity for gender sensitive budgeting.

It was also proposed that several countries with a law on domestic violence share their experiences in this regard, including those with good experiences in reducing infant and maternal mortality, especially in remote rural areas where lack of transportation is a major issue. There were also comments made about the role of NGOs in advocating for or lobbying for laws/policies on these issues. Some took interest in the experience of Mongolia not only in having drafted and approved (by Parliament) a law on Domestic Violence, but also in terms of their successful experience with maternity waiting homes to serve remote rural populations.

Most countries faced challenges in having high representation and participation of women in Parliament or in highest decision-making levels. In some countries, as in Malaysia, the Prime Minister chairs the MDGs monitoring committee. There was also a call for "women to support other women", considering that in most countries, women constitute at least 50% of the population and should thus be entitled to at least half the voice in decision making. There was also recognition of serious regional disparities in countries, even when the national statistics indicate good progress with MDGs. A suggestion was made to also strengthen the local committees of AFPPD to further support parliamentarians in their work on MDGs.

SESSION II: Focusing on Health MDGs—Are Countries on Track?

Chair: **Hon. Ms. Lijuan Pang**
Member of the Education, Science, Culture, Public Health Committee (ESCPH) of the National People's Congress, China

Speakers: **Dr. Lale Say**
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva

Dr. Raj Abdul Karim
Regional Director for East and Southeast Asia and Oceania, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Kuala Lumpur

Rapporteur: **Mr. Yameen Mazumder**
Deputy Representative, UNICEF-Mongolia



Dr. Lale Say

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Lale Say made a comprehensive presentation on some of the achievements as well as challenges in monitoring the MDGs, and also mentioned the work done on indicators for monitoring and evaluation. Her presentation also included many references to data and resources available on MDGs at global and regional levels, to keep track of progress, especially of MDGs 4, 5 and 6. She noted that East Asia seems to be doing well in terms of meeting its MDG targets, and pointed out the persistent challenges especially in the regions of Africa and South Asia.

She also talked about the proven strategies in reducing maternal and infant mortality, including skilled birth attendance, family planning and provision of emergency obstetric care facilities, to treat complications of pregnancy and childbirth. She then cited some statistics to show the differential progress in different regions of the world. She also mentioned the inclusion of a new target in MDG monitoring as a result of the World Summit, which now has 4 indicators for universal access to RH: contraceptive prevalence rate, ante-natal care, adolescent birth rate, and unmet need for family planning. In sub-Saharan Africa, it was noted that at least 10-15 % of the population want to delay pregnancy but do not have access to family planning. Although overall fertility has dropped, it is still very high in South Asia and parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

In terms of MDG 6, the number of people living with HIV is higher, and women's share of this disease has also increased, notably from 15% to 34% in South Asia. There are also 247 million new cases of Malaria every year, despite significant steps taken by some countries like Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Philippines to reduce its incidence. In summary, she said that there is uneven progress by region – citing that there are segments of the population who are worse off even in countries which are doing well. As demonstrated in many countries, it is the more targeted approaches that work.

Dr. Raj Karim’s presentation addressed a number of reasons why many countries do not seem to be on track, among them the continued lack of resources, weak institutional capacities, including those of NGOs, poor transportation and communication infrastructure, and insufficient gender empowerment.

She also presented some data to demonstrate the important linkages between maternal and child health and adolescent health, highlighting the need to address the rising rates of teenage pregnancy and abortion among young people. This implies the need to address unwanted pregnancies, and the root causes which are often associated with lack of access to information and services, and poverty.

Some actions points that she stressed were the need for a broad based multi-sectoral approach, the need to move away from vertical programming, more targeted interventions to reach out to the vulnerable groups, institutional frameworks that are rights based and able to address inequalities, better representation of youths and women in governance bodies, and greater investments in infrastructure and human resource development. Dr. Karim concluded her presentation by emphasizing the role of civil society organizations, including NGOs and the private sector, whose support is very much needed in complimenting the work of the public sector, and particularly in meeting the needs of vulnerable groups.



Dr. Raj Karim



Ms. D. OyunKhorol (middle), MP and Chair of Parliament Standing Committee on Social Policy, Culture, Science and Education, Mongolia, talking with her colleagues Mrs. Tsogzolmaa (left), Chair of the National Committee on Gender Equality, and Mrs. B. Dolgor (right), Minister of Government Cabinet of Mongolia

SESSION III: Gender MDG and Links to Other Goals and Targets

Chair: **Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur**
MP, India

Speakers: **Hon. Ms. Sabitra Bhusal Banskota**, MP, Nepal

Ms. Janet Wong
Programme Specialist, UNIFEM East and Southeast Asia Regional Office

Mr. Salman Asif
Gender Advisor, UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Pakistan

Rapporteurs: **Ms. Sandra Rotzinger**
Programme Officer, UNFPA Mongolia

Ms. Banzragch Oyun
Programme Officer, UNFPA Mongolia



From left: Ms. Sabitra Bhusal Banskota, Mrs. Viplove Thakur, Mr. Salman Asif and Ms. Janet Wong

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

The Hon. Ms. Sabitra Bhusal Banskota of Nepal started by describing the Parliament assembly in the country, its current priorities and the extent to which women are represented by 36% in this decision making body. Promotion of women's rights as a fundamental human right are enshrined in the Constitution, including reproductive rights, promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, and right to be free of violence. Current priorities include elimination of gender disparity, promotion of 100 percent literacy by 2010 and free basic health services for all.

Ms. Janet Wong recalled the Millennium Declaration and its emphasis on promoting gender equality and empowerment as an effective way to eradicate poverty, hunger and disease, and the number of countries that have adapted the global goals and targets to their countries specific needs. Gender equality should be taken across all goals, not just a single goal, and that the achievement of MDG 3 is essential for the achievement of all 8 MGDs. She also reported that in many gender reviews, gender perspectives are not mainstreamed into MDG reports and there is still a dearth of sex-disaggregated data. She also stressed

that a gender responsive rights-based approach needs to be ensured in all country efforts, in line with the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action. As MDGs rely heavily on realistic data, she stressed that the collection of gender disaggregated data needs to be improved. She mentioned several aspects of gender that should be reflected in specific MDGs such as domestic violence, unpaid domestic work of women and girls, women's access to paid work, trafficking and working conditions of women migrant workers, and women's rights to land titles and inheritance. She also called upon governments to ensure the implementation of gender responsive budgeting.

The UN's gender advisor in Pakistan, Mr. Salman Asif, made a revealing presentation on the situation of gender in the country, highlighting some stark discrepancies in terms of gender equity in various spheres of work. He discussed the many factors that influence this, including urban-rural differences, son-preference, child-marrriages, crimes of honour, and stressed that the gender equality goal should also include equal status and recognition.

He gave some incisive comments on aid coordination and effectiveness, the role of donors, the coherence of UN efforts, why many governments are under-performing, and the role of a gender advisor. He made a call for scaling up MDG investments and making the global targets more context sensitive and country specific, with specific targets for political accountability. He ended his presentation on the urgency of meeting the MDGs with the proverbial quote, "the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, the second best time is now!"

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Several questions from the delegates triggered discussions around the rights of migrant workers, particularly of women, the need to review labor laws and build capacity of those working with migrants, trafficked women, and victims of domestic violence. Issues of discrimination were also discussed, including those of ethnic and religious minorities. Socio cultural practices, misconceptions and other traditional roles, beliefs and value systems were also discussed in the context of addressing gender issues and reproductive health and rights.



At the press conference (from left): Ms. S. Navchaa, Assistant Representative, UNFPA-Mongolia; Mrs. Ts. Narantungalag, Head of Foreign Relations and Cooperation Department of the Parliament Secretariat; Mrs. B. Yanjinkham, Press Officer of Press and Information Department of the Parliament Secretariat

SESSION IV:

Costing and Financing Health MDGs

Chair: **Hon. Ms. Tashi Wangmo**, MP, Bhutan

Speakers: **Hon. Datuk Chua Soon Bui**, MP, Malaysia

Mr. Bill Bikales, Senior Economist and MDG Costing Expert, UNDP China and Mongolia

Rapporteur: **Ms. O. Enkh-Ariunaa**
Poverty Specialist, UNDP Mongolia



From left: Ms. Tashi Wangmo, Datuk Chua Soon Bui and Mr. Bill Bikales

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

Hon. Datuk Chua Soon Bui focused her presentation on essential elements of the Malaysian national plans which impact on the MDGs. She also provided relevant background information about the country, and data on its MDG related progress and challenges. It was stressed that the success of Malaysia in achieving its development goals and targets has been largely due to the strong commitment of the government. She also described the structure of the government which includes many high level committees, usually at the level of Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister, to address social development issues. She also recognized that sometimes the main obstacle is not always shortage of financial resources, but the lack of right policies and institutional setting conducive for MDGs.

Mr. Bill Bikales, a senior economist at UNDP, began his presentation by saying that this midway point in the MDG implementation is a very good point to look back and forward on progress and challenges made thus far. He emphasized that there have been many lessons in the past 15 years of development work that can guide effective MDG implementation and called on the need to ensure a more bottom-up approach in policy and programme planning. He recognized that sustainability of MDG financing is key to success of efforts to meet the MDG targets by 2015. National ownership also implies reducing dependency on foreign aid, better decentralized fiscal policies, and improved domestic budget allocation and utilization. Many countries have capacity to fund its MDGs, if the right policies are in place to meet clearly defined priorities. Good governance, improved public sector management and partnership with other sectors are equally important issues to address.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The discussions centered mainly on systems strengthening, costing and financing issues, and the differential impact of centralized vs decentralized planning and budgeting systems. Delegates also discussed problems related to wasteful and inefficient bureaucracies, poor business practices, lack of focus on preventive measures (vs curative, in the health context), lack of appropriate and effective coordination mechanisms to monitor progress, the need for policy reform, and the need to encourage community based financing.

Dinner Reception

Reception by the Speaker of the Parliament in honor of distinguished delegates of the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference was held on 23 September at the Ikh Tenger Government Complex. Hon. Mr. Demberel, Speaker of Parliament, welcomed the honourable guests.

A short cultural performance by the Moon Stone folklore ensemble introduced guests to the rich cultural heritage of Mongolian traditional folk art. Though the performance was short, it presented to the audience different types of folk art – unique Mongolian long song, throat singing, folk dances, folk music band performance and contortionism. The performance was followed by a fashion show by a leading Mongolian design agency, which presented two collections of traditional costumes of ancient Mongols. The cultural performance was very well-received by guests. Inspired by the wonderful performances, one of the guests, Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur, MP from India, sang a couple of Indian songs, which was a pleasant surprise for guests.



SESSION V:

Partnerships and Advocacy in Support of MDGs

Chair: **Hon. Ms. Shah Gul Rezaie**, MP, Afghanistan

Speakers: **Hon. Dr. La Ode Ida**, Deputy Speaker, House of Regional Representatives, and **Hon. Ms. Eka Komarian Kunchoro**, MP, Indonesia

Ms. Mascha Matthews

Senior Advocacy Officer, German Foundation for World Population (DSW), Brussels

Mr. Bill Ryerson

President, Population Institute and Population Media Center, USA

Rapporteur: **Ms. Lkhagvasuren Oyunaa**

Head of Health Promotion Department, National Center for Health Development, Mongolia



From left: Mr. Bill Ryerson, Ms. Mascha Matthews, Ms. Eka Komariah Kunchoro and Dr. La Ode Ida

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

The chair person opened the session with highlights of yesterday session, which was presented by Ms. Delia Barcelona, UNFPA Representative in Mongolia. Ten key points from the presentations and discussions included information that countries have shared on their MDG progress and challenges, the need to include gender as a mainstream issue in all MDGs, the need to change men's perceptions; examples of successful MDG efforts especially those that have support from the highest levels of government; need for more multi sectoral approach; financing is not just about getting more money but also about prioritization and better utilization.

The Indonesia presentation was made jointly by two MPs, one male, one female, to further stress the importance they put on equality. The presentations highlighted electoral and political reforms in the country that have a bearing on MDGs. To this day, they admit that the involvement of women in the political arena and in decision-making is still limited, and that Indonesia is still very centralistic in its government structure. Still some significant achievements were also cited especially at the level of

provincial and district levels. Many development issues are now decentralized to the local governments, based on local needs, agenda and budgets. Thus, Ms. Kunchoro stressed the importance of efforts to empower and build capacities of local governments.

Ms. Mascha Matthews explained the work and mission of DSW to help people free themselves from poverty by supporting family planning and sexual and reproductive rights. She described DSW's advocacy work and its efforts aimed at resource mobilization with the European Union for MDG related efforts. She also gave examples of the extensive work they do with civil society organizations. One key factor in MDG achievement is aid effectiveness, and she stressed the need for donors to clarify their roles, have an appropriate division of labor to ensure complementarities and results, and reduce duplication. One other recommendation she made is that parliamentarians should make MDGs part of their regular debates and discussions, to ensure that MDGs remain high in the national agendas. Every country should also determine what percentage of aid need to go to MDGs and stress it in their parliamentary decision. Parliamentarians need to be involved in budget allocation and ensure accountability of the government.

Mr. Bill Ryerson spoke about how communication is an important and integral part of any MDG related efforts. Communication is important in changing attitudes and behavior of the public. Among the reasons for the non-use of family planning methods, access barriers are the main ones, including fear of partner/husbands opposition, stigma and discrimination about HIV/AIDS, which all have communication implications. He then described the work of the Population Media Center and the researches they have undertaken to understand and reflect culture in development programmes. He also talked about some of the approaches to promote messages and the effective formats (such as tele-dramas) that help popularize and simplify medical information, help people make decisions, and promote the necessary attitudes and behaviours. He also cited examples of successful programmes in Mexico, Tanzania and other places where communication campaigns have worked well to promote health and other development agenda.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The questions and comments from the participants revolved around obstacles in obtaining sustainable financing for MDGs and also about ensuring effective partnerships between developing and developed countries. The point made during the presentations about a bottom-up approach was fully supported, though it was also recognized that this often depends on the kind of leadership that exists in the country. Aid coordination and accountability issues were also discussed. Monitoring of money for development programmes can also be interesting and challenging at the same time, because some donors promise but do not always fulfill their commitments. There is also a need to closely look at recipient countries on how they use funds that they receive from donors. There were also suggestions on how to make serious messages more entertaining. On this, new and entertainment formats are often considered to be a good combination. Some delegations commented on other issues confronting the world these days, such as climate change, food security, global warming, economic crisis and terrorism.

SESSION VI:

Governance, Accountability, and Sustainability of MDG-related Efforts

Chair: **Hon. Dr. Nguyen Van Tien**, MP, Vietnam

Speakers: **Hon. Mrs. Tuti Indarsih Loekman Soetrismo**, MP, Indonesia

Dr. Mohan Narula

Resident Representative, JICWELS, and Technical Advisor, HSSMPT Team, Ministry of Health, Mongolia

Hon. Ms. Rida Azimi, MP, Afghanistan

Rapporteur: **Ms. Sandra Rotzinger**
Programme Officer, UNFPA Mongolia



From left: Ms. Rida Azimi, Dr. Mohan Narula and Mrs. Tuti Indarsih Loekman Soetrismo

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

Hon. Mrs. Tuti Indarsih Loekman Soetrismo made a presentation on Indonesia's experience in addressing governance, accountability and sustainability issues, by using examples from its development agenda of 2004-2009. She then described progress made by the country already in terms of MDGs 2, 4, 5, 6. In terms of MDG3, gender mainstreaming has been done in all aspects of national development and she went on to give statistics on proportion of women in different sectors. Similarly, she highlighted Indonesia's progress in reducing infant and maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. She particularly acknowledged the important role of women parliamentarians in at least three areas: legislation, oversight and budgeting. There are, however, challenges in discharging these responsibilities, as there are often discrepancies between laws and policies and their implementation. She stressed the point about the need to ensure that policies and budgets are gender-sensitive.

Dr. Mohan Narula shared the experience of Mongolia in developing the national health sector strategic master plan. He spoke about the process of getting the plan in place and the importance of governance and national ownership, especially among both national and local leaders. He elaborated on governance as a "trusteeship", where the vulnerable and the poor are the trust of our societies that need to be served and developed. Trustworthiness emphasizes security of people and prosperity of the world, which includes

principle to learn from failures to improve. Governance is not all about more funds, but managing financial resources effectively. The quality of governance is determined by the quality of leadership, characteristics of the governed (their education and skills), and the nature of the principles and strategies (e.g. MDGs). He also talked about principles and standards of fairness and equity, issues of integrity and independence of spirit. Overcoming corruption is essential to good governance and requires commitment at the personal and moral levels. Good governance is also about looking for solutions and actions, not about blaming others. Governance in essence is a moral and spiritual practice whose compass is found within the human heart

Hon. Ms. Rida Azimi, MP, Afghanistan, shared her experiences as a woman leader and the challenges of women parliamentarians especially in a male dominated country. She gave some data on the number of women in influential positions, such as among judges, prosecutors, attorneys, family courts, police force, and in diplomatic service. They are currently advocating with the Ministry of Finance to include specific budget for women. She also described some programmes for women, especially on reproductive health, and the major challenges of reaching out to them in the rural areas with health and legal centers. In terms of gender, the Ministry of Education is also intensifying its recruitment of more female teachers and cited that recently, a gender unit has been established in the Ministry of Education. As most people know, most of the schools have been destroyed by the Taliban, so significant efforts are needed to rebuild the country's educational infrastructure. Several articles in the Constitution state that women and men are equal before the law and in all policies and programs, but fulfillment of these provisions still has a long way to go in the country. Currently, a law against domestic violence and on gender equality is being drafted. There are also efforts to improve women's access to legal justice especially in rural areas, and more programmes are being put in place to protect women, such as safe houses, counseling for women experiencing violence/war, courses on IT and loans/micro-financing projects.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The discussion raised several comments about the need for parliamentarians to intensify their efforts and to ensure that their policies are put into practice. Specific interventions from India and Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia highlighted the fact that parliamentarians can change the situation of the MDGs by changing the situation in our country. If women and men cannot even sit together due to culture, how can women in the Parliament work and reach other goals? In terms of sustainability of MDGs progress, it was stressed by many delegations that implementation needs to be monitored periodically, and this efforts should include a good national reporting system and data base. There was also an interesting discussion around the merits of having a quota for women representation in parliament, also implying that sometimes it is not only about the number of women in parliament but also about their quality and capacity. MDG progress should be properly monitored through a process of openness and transparency, and with clear indicators within a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework. Governance should be seen as service delivery, rather than to a means to accumulate power. Delegates recommended that AFPPD follow up with parliamentarians closely on what they do after attending conferences like this. This would help ensure that commitments made are followed up. AFPPD replied that this is already being done through national parliamentary committees who are members of AFPPD. A specific recommendation was to include good examples of successful legislations on the AFPPD website.

SESSION VII: **Role of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians in Achieving the MDGs**

Chair: **Hon. Dr. Porapan Punyaratabandhu**, Senator, Thailand

Speakers: **Hon. Dr. Donya Aziz**, MP, Pakistan

Hon. Dr. Zohreh Elahian, MP, Iran

Rapporteur: **Mr. Oyungerel Adiya**

Partnerships and Coordination Officer, UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Mongolia



From left: Dr. Zohreh Elahian and Dr. Donya Aziz

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PRESENTATIONS

Hon. Dr. Donya Aziz, MP of Pakistan, started off with encouraging examples from her country of how women MPs are involved and interested in all development issues to ensure that public social services are adequately provided to all. She also mentioned that the women parliamentarians in the country come from different backgrounds, which also helps to represent a wider range of social groups and issues.

In 2006, the women protection law was adopted to safeguard women from violence and the adoption process included discussions with various human rights groups. Thanks to the efforts of many active women parliamentarians, a number of important policy and legal decisions have been adopted by parliament, such as those that affect under-age marriage, inheritance rights of women, and overall environment for empowering women. Through this process, civil society groups have also been actively engaged. She cited particular success in terms of the legislation on HIV/AIDS, which also employed several effective advocacy tools for educating parliamentarians.

Hon. Dr. Zohreh Elahian, MP of Iran, talked about the role of women MPs in Iran and also highlighted the provisions in the Iranian Constitution that provides rights of women regardless of grounds. She also shared examples of how the gaps between men and women are evident in society. She cited some statistics in terms of women medical specialists that have been trained over the last 30 years, the gender ratio in

school admissions, and in various sectors. She also spoke about the 2005-2009 national development plan highlighting objectives to achieve MDG 4 and 5. It was stressed that the Parliament of Iran has a policy to support women and maternal health.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The discussions included comments on the role of religious bodies in mobilizing support for the social sector and the experience of women parliamentarians working in development where religious contexts are quite prominent. Examples were given of other conferences involving religious leaders that have focused on family planning and reproductive health, including contraceptives. In these efforts, the need to break the stereotypical mindset of men was considered to be very important. Delegates shared similar experiences in this regard, especially in terms of having quotas for women’s participation in parliament. Kyrgyzstan cited encouraging data from their country about having four women ministers and a female Chief Judge of Supreme Court. Some commented on the need for follow-ups to this conference, and other similar plans for regional MDG advocacy, including questions about mechanisms for seeking technical support from UN agencies to introduce comprehensive legal reforms in countries. UNFPA assured the delegates of its support to countries around the world technically or financially, especially in any efforts aimed at building the capacity of parliamentarians or parliamentary groups to support MDGs.



From left: Ms. Tugsjargal Gandhi, Minister for Social Welfare and Labour of Mongolia; Mrs. Pham Thi Thanh Huong, VAPPD Officer, Vietnam; Ms. Ma Li, MP, China; and Mrs. Ho Thi Thu Hang, MP, Vietnam

Closing Programme

Chair: **Ms. Delia Barcelona**
UNFPA Representative, Mongolia

Speakers: **Hon. Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold**
Vice Chairman of the Parliament, Mongolia

Hon. Dr. Tsolmon Jadambaa
Vice Minister of Health, Mongolia

Mr. Shiv Khare
Executive Director, AFPPD

Rapporteur: **Mr. Shiwei Ye**
Editorial Associate, AFPPD



Front row (from left): Dr. Tsolmon Jadamba, Mr. Shiv Khare, Ms. Delia Barcelona, Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, and Ms. Safiye Cagar

The Chair recognized the enthusiasm of participants in all the sessions and acknowledged the substantive discussions that have taken place so far. After a few administrative announcements (the distribution of the conference papers on a CD, and other logistical details), she went on to facilitate the discussion of the draft Ulaanbaatar Commitment Statement, which has been distributed earlier.

The Hon. Vice Minister of Health of Mongolia led the participants in reading the draft commitment. There was overwhelming support for the statement, and therefore, with very minor edits, it was unanimously adopted by the conference delegations, through a united applause. In his closing statement, Hon. Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, Vice Chairman of the Parliament, thanked everyone in attendance and expressed once again, the Government's pleasure in hosting this 6th conference. He briefly mentioned that the conference was taking place in quite challenging times in Mongolia, as the parliamentary election has just been completed and the new cabinet has just been established. Despite these challenges, he assured everyone that the Government was united in providing support to the organization of this conference and thanked all organizers and supporters. He acknowledged the participation of the Mongolian delegation in the conference, particularly the three women MPs, Ms. D. Oyunkhorol, Ms. D. Arvin, and Ms. S. Oyun. He concluded by saying that all efforts will be exerted in the country by the Parliament of Mongolia to achieve the MDGs on time, in the context of its national strategic development plans.

Ms. Safiye Cagar echoed the appreciation from the Deputy Prime Minister and also thanked the

Government of Mongolia and the organizers, on behalf of UNFPA. She reiterated that parliamentarians are lifelines to people in their countries and represent the voice of constituencies, and that they are crucial to improving the lives of the people they represent.

Mr. Shiv Khare, on behalf of AFPPD, expressed his gratitude to the Government of Mongolia, to UNFPA and the local organizers, including the UN Country Team. He appreciated the quality of the presentations and discussions, as well as the final outcome of the conference. He then awarded several plaques to several significant people from among the organizers. He said that the conference was highly successful and the fact that more than 80 parliamentarians from more than 20 countries came is a very good and encouraging sign of support for MDG implementation among parliamentarians in the region.

He particularly acknowledged UNFPA Mongolia, its Representative Ms. Barcelona and her staff for their hardwork and dedication in making the conference efficient and smooth. Ms. Barcelona on her part added her thank you to the national conference steering committee and working group, under the leadership of Ms. T. Gandhi, as instrumental in the success of the conference. Mr. Khare also acknowledged the long and on-going collaboration with the Parliament of Mongolia, especially those who have attended many international and regional conferences organized by AFPPD and UNFPA. He thanked Ms. Safiye Cagar from UNFPA HQ for the institutional and personal support to AFPPD programmes and activities. He thanked all the resource persons, rapporteurs, the secretariat, the translators and interpreters and his own AFPPD staff who have also been working extremely hard to prepare for this conference in close collaboration with UNFPA. He looked forward to the parliamentarians following up on the conference commitment, and he concluded by thanking Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Secretary-General AFPPD, in his first conference in this capacity. After presentation of participation certificates to all participants by Mr. N. Enkhbold and Ms. Cagar presented certificates to all participants, Mr. N. Enkhbold declared the conference closed.



Conference hall at the State Great Khural of Mongolia

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Agenda

Day 1 22 September 2008, Monday ~ ARRIVALS

2:00 ~ 6:00 pm Registration (this will continue the next day) takes place at the Kempinski Hotel, where international participants will stay.

Day 2 23 September 2008, Tuesday

9:00 ~ 10:00 am

Opening Programme

Chair:

Hon. Mr. Damdin Demberel,
Chairman of the State
Great Khural of Mongolia
(Parliament)

Opening Remarks

H.E. Mr. Nambar Enkhbayar, President of Mongolia

H.E. Mr. Yasuyoshi Ichihashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Japan, Mongolia

Ms. Safiye Çağar, Director, Information and External Relations Division,
UNFPA Headquarters, New York

Keynote Speaker

Hon. Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator, Thailand and Secretary-General,
Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
(AFPPD), Bangkok

Group photo with the President and high officials of the Parliament and
the Cabinet

10:00 ~ 10:30 am

Coffee and tea break

10:30 ~ 12:00 pm

Session I: Overview of MDGs-- Implications for Countries

Chair:

Ms. Debora Comini,
UN Resident Coordinator
and UNDP Resident
Representative, Mongolia

Speakers:

Hon. Ms. Dulamsuren Oyunkhorol, MP and Chair, Parliament Standing
Committee on Social Policy, Culture, Science and Education, Mongolia

Hon. Mrs. Ngamau Mere Munokoa, Minister of Internal Affairs and
Agriculture and Works, Cook Islands

Rapporteur:

Ms. Suren Navchaa, Assistant
Representative, UNFPA-
Mongolia

12:00 ~ 1:00 pm

Session II: Focusing on Health MDGs-- Are Countries on Track?

Chair:

Hon. Ms. Pang Lijuan, MP,
China

Speakers

Dr. Raj Karim, Regional Director for East and Southeast Asia and
Oceania, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Kuala
Lumpur

Dr. Lale Say, Medical Officer for Monitoring and Evaluation,
Department of Reproductive Health and Research, World Health
Organization (WHO), Geneva

Rapporteur:
Mr. Yameen Mazumder,
Deputy Representative,
UNICEF-Mongolia

1:00 ~ 2:00 pm

Lunch hosted by UNFPA-Mongolia at the State Palace

2:00 ~ 3:30 pm

**Session III: Gender MDG, and Links to
Other Goals and Targets**

Chair:
Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur,
MP, India

Speakers

Hon. Ms. Sabitra Bhusal Banskota, MP, Nepal

Ms. Janet Wong, Programme Specialist, UNIFEM East and South-East
Asia Regional Office

Rapporteur:
Ms. Banzragch Oyun,
National Programme Officer,
UNFPA-Mongolia

Mr. Salman Asif, Gender Advisor, UN Resident Coordinator's Office,
Pakistan

3:30 ~ 4:00 pm

Coffee and tea break

4:00 ~ 5:30 pm

**Session IV: Costing and Financing
Health MDGs**

Chair:
Hon. Ms. Tashi Wangmo, MP,
Bhutan

Speakers

Hon. Ms. Datuk Chua Soon Bui, MP, Malaysia

Mr. Bill Bikales, Senior Economist and MDG Costing Expert, UNDP
China and Mongolia

Rapporteur:
Ms. Oidovdanzan Enkh-
Ariunaa, Poverty Specialist,
UNDP-Mongolia

6:00 ~ 8:00 pm

Reception hosted by the Parliament on behalf of the Conference Organizers
Remarks from the Chairman of the Parliament
Cultural show

Venue: Ikh Tenger, Presidential Palace

Day 3 24 September 2008, Wednesday

9:00 ~ 10:30 am

**Session V: Partnerships and Advocacy in
Support of MDGs**

Chair:
Hon. Ms. Shah Gul Rezaie,
MP, Afghanistan

Brief highlights of Day 2 presented by Ms. Delia Barcelona, UNFPA
Representative in Mongolia

Speakers

Hon. Dr. La Ode Ida, MP and Deputy Speaker, House of Regional
Representatives, Indonesia

Ms. Mascha Matthews, Senior Advocacy Officer, German Foundation
for World Population (DSW), Brussels

Rapporteur:
Ms. Lkhagvasuren Oyun,
Head of Health Promotion
Department, National Center
for Health Development,
Mongolia

Mr. Bill Ryerson, President, Population Institute and Population Media
Center, USA

10:30 ~ 11:10 am

Coffee and tea break

11:10 ~ 1:00 pm

Session VI: Governance, Accountability and Sustainability of MDG related Efforts

Chair:

Hon. Dr. Nguyen Van Tien,
MP, Vietnam

Speakers

Hon. Mrs. Tuti Indarsih Loekman Soetrisno, MP, Indonesia

Dr. Mohan Narula, Representative and Technical Adviser, Japan
International Corporation of Welfare Services in Mongolia

Rapporteur:

Ms. Sandra Rotzinger,
Programme Officer for HIV/
AIDS, UNFPA-Mongolia

Hon. Ms. Rida Azimi, MP, Afghanistan

12:00 ~ 1:00 pm

Press conference with selected representatives

1:00 ~ 2:00 pm

Lunch hosted by the Ministry of Health & Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour. Venue: State Palace

2:00 ~ 3:00 pm

**Session VII (Panel Discussion):
Role of Women Ministers and
Parliamentarians in Achieving the MDGs**

Chair:

Hon. Dr. Porapan
Punyaratabandhu, MP,
Thailand

Speakers

Hon. Dr. Donya Aziz, MP, Pakistan

Rapporteur:

Mr. Oyungerel Adiya,
Partnerships and
Coordination Officer, UN
Resident Coordinator's
Office, Mongolia

Hon. Dr. Zohreh Elahian, MP, Iran

3:00 ~ 3:30 pm

Coffee and tea break

3:30 ~ 4:30 pm

Closing Programme

Chair:

Ms. Delia Barcelona,
UNFPA Representative,
Mongolia

Review and discussion on next steps

Reaffirmation of commitments

Closing Remarks

Presentation and Discussion of Ulaanbaatar Statement of Commitment
by Hon. Dr. Tsolmon Jadambaa, Vice Minister of Health, Mongolia

Hon. Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, Vice Chairman of the State Great Khural
of Mongolia (Parliament)

Vote of Thanks

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, AFPPD

Rapporteur:

Mr. Shiwei Ye, Editorial
Associate, AFPPD

Awarding of Certificates

5:00 ~ 7:30 pm

Side programmes: options include a short city tour around Ulaanbaatar
and shopping (State Dept Store, Gobi Cashmere outlet, etc.)

Day 4 25 September 2008, Thursday
DEPARTURE

Annex 2. List of Participants

Afghanistan

Ms. Roshan Alikozai, *MP*
Ms. Rida Azimi, *MP*
Ms. Shah Gul Razayee, *MP*
Ms. Sharifa Zurmati, *MP*

Bhutan

Ms. Choeki Wangmo, *MP*
Ms. Norbu Wangzom, *MP*
Ms. Tashi Wangmo, *MP*
Ms. Sonam Yangchen, *MP*

Cambodia

Mr. Hap Omaly, *Deputy Director of International Relations of the Cambodia Parliament and Officer for CAPPD*

Cook Islands

Mrs. Ngamau Mere Munokoa, *Minister of Internal Affairs and Agriculture and Works*

China

Ms. Xin Fang, *MP*
Ms. Ma Li, *MP*
Ms. Lijuan Pang, *MP*
Ms. Sen Song, *MP*
Mr. Naikang Chen, *Staff*
Ms. Yucui Li, *Staff*

India

Ms. Mabel Rebello, *MP*
Ms. Pratibha Singh, *MP*
Ms. Jayaben Thakkar, *MP*
Mrs. Viplove Thakur, *MP*
Mr. Manmohan Sharma, *Executive Secretary, IAPPD*
Mrs. Sandhya Bajaj, *Staff*

Indonesia

Hj. Aisyah Hamid Baidlowi, *MP*
Dr. La Ode Ida, *Deputy Speaker of House of Regional Representatives*
Ms. Sri Kadarwati, *MP*
Ms. Eni Khairani, *MP*
Mrs. Eka Komariah Kunchoro, *MP*
Mrs. Renny Pudjiati, *MP*
Mr. Awang Sofian Rozali, *MP*
Mrs. Hariyanti Syafrin, *MP*
Ms. Tuti Indarsih Loekman Soetrisno, *MP*
Mrs. Sri Utari Setyawati, *Executive Director, IFPPD*
Mrs. Tutty Surty Natawidjaja, *Secretariat*

Mrs. Riswanti, *Secretariat*
Dr. Genius Umar, *Secretariat*

Iran

Dr. Anoushiravan Mohseni Bandpy, *MP*
Dr. Zohreh Elahian, *MP*
Dr. Ahmad Khas Ahmadi, *Secretary of IRPPDC*

Japan

Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, *Executive Director, APDA*

Korea

Ms. Kim Eul Dong, *MP*
Ms. Choi Young Hee, *MP*
Ms. Lee Hye Hoon, *MP*
Ms. Chung Mi Kyung, *MP*
Ms. Kim You Jeong, *Interpreter*
Mr. Shin Se Min, *Staff*

Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Gulnara Derbisheva, *MP*
Ms. Turdukan Zhumabekova, *MP*

Laos

Dr. Thongphanh Chanthalanone, *Chairwoman, Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee*
Mrs. Singkham Khongsavanh, *MP*
Mrs. Chanthoum Latmany, *MP, LAPPD Member, and Vice President of Lao PDR Women Union*
Mrs. Chanhom Mahaxay, *MP and Vice President of Lao PDR Women Union*

Malaysia

Datuk Chua Soon Bui, *MP*
Datuk Rohani Bte Abdul Karim, *Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry and Member of AFPPD Malaysia*

Mongolia

Mr. Nambar Enkhbayar, *President*
Mr. Damdin Damberel, *Chairman of Parliament*
Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, *Vice Chairman of Parliament*
Ms. Gandhi Tugsjargal, *Minister for Social Welfare and Labour*
Mr. Lambaa Sambuu, *Minister of Health*
Dr. Tsolmon Jadambaa, *Vice Minister of Health*
Ms. Oyunkhorol Dulamsuren, *MP and Chair of Parliament Standing Committee on Social Policy, Culture, Science and Education*

Ms. Arvin Dashjamts, *MP*
Ms. Oyun Sanjaasuren, *MP*
Ms. Narantungalag Tserendorj, *Head of Foreign Relations Division of Parliament Secretariat*
Ms. Gerelmaa Davaasuren, *Third Secretary of Multilateral Cooperation Division, MOFA*
Ms. Narangerel Giinaa, *Officer of the State Administration Department, MRTT*
Mr. Nergui Jamiyandorj, *Head of the Parliament Media Unit*
Ms. Otgon Majaa, *Officer of Parliament Secretariat*

Nepal

Ms. Sabitra Bhusal Banskota, *MP*
Ms. Mohammadi Siddiqui, *MP*
Ms. Amrita Thapa, *MP*

New Caledonia

Mr. Tangata Vainerere, *Coordinator, PPAPD*

Pakistan

Dr. Donya Aziz, *MP*

Tajikistan

Ms. Oyniso Bahronova, *MP*
Ms. Muhiba Yoqubova, *MP*

Thailand

Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, *Senator and Secretary General, AFPPD*
Ms. Kobkul Phancharoenworakul, *Senator*
Dr. Porapan Punyaratabandhu, *Senator*
Mrs. Achara Techaritpitak, *Senator*

Vietnam

Mr. Dao Van Chinh, *MP*
Mrs. Ho Thi Thu Hang, *MP*
Dr. Nguyen Van Tien, *MP*
Mrs. Pham Thi Hoa, *MP*
Dr. Nguyen Duc Thu, *VAPPD Officer*
Mrs. Pham Thi Thanh Huong, *VAPPD Officer*

Resource Persons

Mr. Salman Asif, *UN Gender Advisor, Pakistan*
Ms. Safiye Cagar, *Director, IERD, UNFPA*
Dr. Raj Karim, *Regional Director, IPPF-ESEAO*
Ms. Mascha Matthews, *Senior Advocacy Officer, DSW, Brussels*
Dr. Mohan Narula, *Resident Representative, JICWELS, Mongolia*
Bill Ryerson, *President, Population Institute and Population Media Center, Vermont, USA*

Dr. Lale Say, *Medical Officer for Monitoring and Evaluation, WHO, Geneva*
Ms. Janet Wong, *Programme Specialist, UNIFEM East and Southeast Asia Regional Office*

AFPPD

Mr. Shiv Khare, *Executive Director*
Mrs. Sappapan Pariyaporn, *Administrative Associate*
Mr. Oleg Shovkovyy, *Programme Associate*
Ms. Leslie S. Yanson, *Secretary*
Mr. Shiwei Ye, *Editorial Associate*

UN Country Team

Ms. Debora Comini, *UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Representative*
Mr. Bill Bikales, *Senior Economist, UNDP China and Mongolia*
Ms. Oidovdanzan Enkh-Ariunaa, *Poverty Specialist, UNDP-Mongolia*
Mr. Yameen Mazumder, *Deputy Representative, UNICEF-Mongolia*

UNFPA-Mongolia

Ms. Delia Barcelona, *Country Representative*
Ms. Suren Navchaa, *Assistant Representative*
Dr. Enkhjargal Khorloo, *National Programme Officer*
Dr. Uranchimeg Gelegjamts, *National Programme Officer*
Ms. Sandra Rotzinger, *Junior Professional Officer*
Mr. Bayaraa Ayurzana, *Operations Manager*
Ms. Enkhjargal Ganbold, *Administrative Associate*
Mr. Amarbayasgalan Nyamdorj, *Operations Assistant*
Mr. Jargalsaikhan Buzmaa, *IT specialist*
Dr. Shinetugs Bayanbileg, *RH Advisor*
Mr. Bat-Erdene Zorigtbaatar, *Documentation specialist*
Ms. Otgontsetseg Zundui, *Assistant to Representative*
Ms. Odgerel Myagmar, *Programme Assistant*
Ms. Enkhchimeg Dashzeveg, *Programme Translator*
Ms. Jargalsaikhan Purevdorj, *Programme Associate*
Dr. Oyuntsetseg Chuluundorj, *Project Manager*
Ms. Enkhmaa Tsedevsuren, *Project Assistant*
Dr. Tsedmaa Baatar, *Project Coordinator*
Dr. Tsevelmaa Baldan, *LMIS Specialist*
Dr. Davaadamdin Dejid, *Project Personnel*
Mr. Bayartsogt Shagdarsuren, *Driver*
Mr. Jugdersuren Norovsambuu, *Driver*
Mr. Davaa-Ochir Avirmed, *Driver*

Annex 3. Opening Statements and Keynote Speech

3.1. Speech of H.E. President N. Enkhbayar, Mongolia

OPENING REMARKS BY N. ENKHBAYAR, PRESIDENT OF MONGOLIA, AT THE 6th ASIAN WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND MINISTERS CONFERENCE ON “FINANCING MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITH A FOCUS ON HEALTH AND GENDER”

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

May I extend, first of all, my warm welcome to you.

It is my honor to address the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians and Ministers Conference on “Financing Millennium Development Goals with a focus on Health and Gender”. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the United Nations Population Fund, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, the Government of Japan and State Great Khural of Mongolia for organizing this Conference in Ulaanbaatar.

A number of years have passed since the world leaders of 189 countries had adopted the historical Millennium Declaration at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations General Assembly in 2000. Member countries have taken numerous important initiatives and achieved tangible results to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Mongolia, like many other countries who signed up to the Millennium Development Declaration, developed its country-specific Millennium Development Goals for the period up to 2015. The national MDG document was approved by the Parliament in 2005, and its revised version – in 2008. Earlier this year, the MDG-based Long Term National Development Strategy, initiated by the President and developed by the Government, was adopted by the Parliament of Mongolia. Mongolia has already started to implement this Comprehensive Strategy. Mongolia implemented over 60 percent of Mongolia’s Millennium Development Goals according to the Second National Report which was prepared in 2007.

I hope you will agree with me that, in addition to the efforts of each country, regional cooperation plays an important role for achievements of MDGs. The varying levels of MDGs implementation among the Asian countries are, probably, due to the state of development level and policy coordination.

There are many projects and programs on health and gender being implementing in Asia. However, they struggle through difficulties to produce expected results. I consider that there is urgent need to pay priority attention to further improvement of policy coordination and cooperation on maternal and child health, reducing maternity death, and combating and preventing HIV and AIDS. It is very important to promote gender equality and empower women in increasing their participation in decision-making. Unfortunately, the proportion of women in decision-making is still low. The role of Women Parliamentarians and Ministers is of great importance to find best solution and implement appropriate policy in this regard.

I am personally confident that you at this gathering will contribute to the improvement of the health and promotion of gender equality both in your own country and in this region as a whole. We all agree that financing is very important to the achievements of the MDGs, especially on Health and Gender Goals. Hoping that your Conference will help find the right solution to financing need, I would like to wish every success to the Conference.

Thank you for your attention.

3.2. Speech of H.E. Mr. Yasuyoshi Ichihashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Japan, Mongolia

Opening Remarks by HE Mr. Yasuyoshi Ichihashi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan at the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference

Government House, September 23, 2008

H.E. Mr. Nambarin Enkhbayar, the President of Mongolia,

H.E. Mr. Demberel, Chairman of the Parliament,

Dr. Pinit Kullavniyaya, Secretary-General, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD),

Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director, Information and External Relations Division, UNFPA,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honor and pleasure for me to be here today to make an opening remark at this important conference of Asian Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, together with high representatives from UNFPA and other international organizations and NGOs.

As you all are aware, this year marks a mid-term cornerstone in the process of achieving MDGs. A High-level meeting on the MDGs is scheduled to be held at the UN Headquarters in New York the day after tomorrow (September 25), where world leaders will be reviewing progress and commitment to achieve MDGs in the context of its mid-term review. I'm pleased to see that UNFPA's Japan Trust Fund for Inter-country NGOs Activities supported the launch of today's conference, which is being organized in a very timely manner, just preceding the above mentioned meeting in New York.

Human Security

While the Government of Japan has been actively addressing the MDGs achievement issues in cooperation with the international community, the basis of such effort has been the concept of "human security". Particularly this year, Japan hosts the G8 summit meeting, and through the G8 process, Japan has made significant efforts in strengthening the global approach for the MDGs achievements, focusing on health and education sectors, from the basic viewpoint of human security. The activities of UNFPA, IPPF and Parliamentary Groups from various countries are focused on wide-ranging social and cultural issues such as family planning, mother and child health, sexually transmitted diseases, gender based discrimination and violence. These activities are exactly in line with the concept of human security, to which Japan attaches great importance.

Health and Education

In November 2007, Foreign Minister of Japan Mr. Koumura in his policy speech announced the necessity to attach importance to comprehensive efforts such as enhancement of the entire health sector, including development of human resources towards the MDGs achievement in health sector. From this perspective, follow-up actions were adopted during the Hokkaido Toyako Summit in July this year, as "Toyako

Framework for Action on Global Health”.

In the education sector, the Government of Japan has been focusing on (1) increasing access to education, (2) quality improvement and (3) enhancement of management, and extends assistance combining both hardwares and softwares aspects. In April 2008, Minister Koumura announced in his policy speech that Japan attaches great importance to basic education programs along with secondary and higher education, technical education and professional training. Japan, as a co-chair of the FTI (Fast Track Initiative), is determined to follow up the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders Declaration. At the same time, it is essential to have cross-sectoral viewpoint throughout these efforts.

Linking bilateral and multilateral efforts

On the other hand, it goes without saying that financial support is extremely important in achieving the MDGs and promoting human security. During the Gleneagles Summit held in 2005, the Government of Japan committed to increase the ODA by 10 billion dollars in 5 years. We are firmly implementing this commitment and we have achieved 5.3 billion dollars so far. In order to make the most effective use of the limited budget of the ODA, coordination of the bilateral assistance programs with the activities of international organizations, NGOs and business community is very much necessary to increase synergy effect between the bilateral and multilateral aid.

As for Mongolia, the Government of Japan established Country Assistance Program for Mongolia in 2004. Since then, Japan has been actively supporting infrastructure and education sectors. In addition, Japan extends assistance through international organizations. For instance, since February 2008, the Japan Trust Fund has been supporting the provision of consulting services on VCT (Voluntary Counseling and Testing) and STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) issues in the framework of the IPPF's HIV/AIDS activities. We have so far provided more than 10 billion yen for more than 100 projects, which are implemented by the international organizations. Japan is also willing to continue our assistance to Mongolia addressing poverty reduction and social development issues.

Finally, it is very significant that the MPs from various countries, together with specialists from international organizations and NGOs who are here today, are engaged in the discussion of issues targeted towards achieving MDGs, such as health, gender, education, as well as improvement of women's social status. Japan has been recommending international cooperation “participated by all members”, and in this context international network will certainly become important development partners. I hope that we will continue our integrated collaboration in solving various new development issues in the 21st century, and I do hope that this conference will come up with constructive recommendations.

I thank you very much for your attention.

3.3. Speech of Ms. Safiye Cagar, Director, Information and External Relations Division, UNFPA Headquarters

Excellencies,

Distinguished Members of Parliament,

Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you today in Ulaanbaatar for the 6th Asian Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference. Let me first thank our hosts, the Government of Mongolia and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Policy, and the National Committee on Gender Equality, for bringing us all together. UNFPA is honoured to take part in the organization of this important conference, together with the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). I would also like to thank the Government of Japan and the UN Country Team in Mongolia for supporting this important event.

Let me also thank and congratulate you, the parliamentarians and ministers gathered here today. Without your vanguard contribution, advocating for a stronger commitment to, and investment in, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is unlikely that we could accomplish the daunting task set before us. For the last 35 years, UNFPA has been working closely with national, regional and global parliamentary groups, as well individual parliamentarians, to advocate for gender equality and women's reproductive health and rights. We are extremely privileged by the partnership we enjoy with parliamentarians the world over, including this Asia and Pacific region.

Population growth rates in the Asia and the Pacific region as a whole reached a peak of 2.4 per cent over 30 years ago, and have been declining ever since. The composition of Asia's population is changing. This has allowed some countries in the region - though by no means all- to take advantage of the demographic transition, reaching fertility levels below 2.1 per cent. Poverty levels also have declined in most Asian countries since the 1960s, most notably during the past two decades.

These trends are in no small part related to strong levels of government commitment, and significant investments in primary healthcare, family planning and reproductive health programmes, as well as—importantly through investments in women's education.

Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament, nearly 14 years ago, world governments, meeting at the ICPD in Cairo, recognized the right to sexual and reproductive health, together with the empowerment of women and gender equality, as decisive factors in reducing poverty and smoothing the path to development. Those governments agreed that investing in comprehensive sexual and reproductive health is a proven poverty reduction strategy. As such, it deserved to feature prominently in all development plans.

The Millennium Declaration, together with the goals spelled out to realize its vision constitutes our common framework for poverty reduction. They are – equally and in consequence – the driving force for international development. In those goals, population and reproductive health are a crucial measure of success. As former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said during a regional meeting in Bangkok in December 2002, “The MDGs, particularly the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, cannot be achieved if issues of population and reproductive health are not squarely addressed. And that means stronger efforts to promote women's rights and greater investment in education and health, including reproductive health and family planning.”

As we all know, much work remains to be done in this area. In the Asia-Pacific region, for example, over

a quarter of a million women still die every year from complications in pregnancy and child birth. At this rate, the region will not reach the 2015 MDG target on maternal mortality. Furthermore, while child mortality has diminished globally, in this region, four million children still die before the age of five. Compared to sub-Saharan Africa, HIV infection rates in Asia remain low. Nonetheless, with 6 million people infected across the region, the virus remains a cause for grave concern.¹

Distinguished guests,

This year marks the mid-point toward the MDG target date of 2015. In two days, on 25 September, the UN Secretary-General will convene a High-level event on the MDGs in New York where world leaders, representatives of the civil society and the private sector will review progress, identify gaps and commit to concrete efforts, resources and mechanisms aimed at ensuring the achievement of these goals. It is timely, therefore, that our meeting today focuses on strengthening resolve at the country and regional level to accelerate ICPD and MDG implementation, especially through the drive towards a universal access to reproductive health by 2015 and the health and gender MDGs.

Financing the ICPD and the MDGs requires partnership between developed and developing countries - a partnership, moreover, of mutual responsibility and accountability. Over the years, at various events such as the Financing for Development conference in Monterrey, Mexico and most recently at the G8 Summit in Japan, countries and leaders have reaffirmed their commitment to financing international development goals. Despite these good intentions, however, commitments are not being met.

The 2005 UN Millennium Project Report estimated that financing gaps for achieving the MDGs in the least developed countries will rise from \$12 billion in 2006 to \$26 billion in 2015. It is further estimated that financing gaps for the Asia-Pacific region as a whole will be much, much larger.²

Globally, funding for international family planning has dropped from more than half of all spending on population assistance to less than 10 per cent. This has real implications for women and their ability to exercise their human rights and to plan their families. It is a problem that needs to be addressed urgently, because there are today 200 million women in the developing world who still lack access to family planning services.

Honourable Minister and Members of Parliament,

As women, we must take it upon ourselves to address inequalities in health care, in education, and in the work place. We cannot begin to solve these problems without first addressing their source: the institutions, traditions, laws or lack thereof that permit these conditions to persist. Women must unite their voices to demand change - from the most destitute and disenfranchised to the most senior parliamentarians. Indeed, the role of women parliamentarians is particularly important as they are the champions for supporting social and population issues in the national development efforts.

Regrettably, women in the Asia-Pacific region are still disproportionately under-represented in the political arena. Figures range from 32.2% in New Zealand to 0.9% in Papua New Guinea. Progress needs to be made on all levels, from the grass roots to the top in changing prevailing social norms and attitudes. We rely on your continuing efforts to promote the advancement of women parliamentarians as well as for the successful implementation and achievement of national development goals and targets.

Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament,

The challenges for both developed and developing countries is to mobilize and channel necessary resources,

1 *Source: A Future Within Reach, 2008 Report. UNDP, UNESCAP and ADB*

2 *Source. UN Millennium Project, 2005 Report. Investing In Development: Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, New York*

and to ensure efficient use of those resources. Developed countries must adhere to their commitment to increase aid flows, while developing countries need to ensure their national budgets to accommodate ICPD-and MDG priorities.

Achieving this vision and these goals requires strong political will. For this reason, and to achieve national development goals and targets, the commitment of such parliamentarians as yourselves to support ICPD and MDG related policies, budgets and legislations is crucial. Better MDG governance - through systems of oversight, representation, accountability, and appropriate budgets – is required.

Now is the time to press for the allocation of at least 10 per cent of development assistance and national development budgets to population and reproductive health programmes. You and your colleagues have agreed on this at the past three International Parliamentarians’ Conferences on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD). Next year, IPCI/ICPD will be held in Cairo and will mark the 15th anniversary of the ICPD, with only five years until the end of the Programme of Action. It is time, ladies and gentlemen, for the international community to follow through on these commitments, as well as others made at previous UN conferences.

Distinguished guests,

I would like to take this occasion to highlight the successes of one country that has taken positive steps towards achieving global MDGs: our host, the Mongolian Government. Mongolia has established national MDGs and a development strategy. It has implemented evidence-based costing of MDGs, and moved to MDGs-consistent planning and budgeting approach. Hopefully, over the next few days we can learn more about these cases and about other efforts. Surely, this is the venue for sharing such news and experiences.

Finally, let us renew our promise that by 2015, there will be less poverty in the world, fewer people who are uneducated or hungry, and that through universal access to reproductive health services no mothers will die during pregnancy or childbirth and less people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. But we must act now. You have the power to make a real difference in your country and collectively in the Asia-Pacific region, and I pledge UNFPA’s steadfast support.

Thank you.

3.4. Keynote Speech of Dr. Pinit Kullavanijaya, Senator, Thailand and Secretary General, AFPPD, Bangkok

Your Excellency, President H.E. Nambar Enkhabayar, Excellencies, Honorable Members of the Parliaments, Distinguished participants and guests, on behalf of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, I would like to welcome you to the 6th Asian Women Parliamentarians' And Ministers' Conference. The theme is Financing MDGs, with a focus on health and gender.

For the last five years, this gathering has been an annual event where we get together to present, discuss, and share our valuable experience and expertise in dealing with some of the major challenges of the 21st century. It is therefore my honor and pleasure to have this opportunity to address you on such important occasion. Today we are discussing an issue very vital not only for the development of our nation but the very survival of our women and family, i.e. the financial side of the MDG.

As you may know this conference is being organized at the same time as the UN General Assembly is devoting 2 days to review the achievement of MDGs globally. On the 11th of September the UN Secretary General released a global report and the UN ESCAP Executive Secretary also released the same for Asia Pacific. The 8 MDGs were adopted by 189 nations in September 2000 which are to be achieved by 2015. These goals are 1) To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger 2) to achieve universal primary education 3) to promote gender equality and empower women 4) to reduce child mortality 5) to improve maternal health 6) to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases 7) to ensure environmental sustainability and 8) to develop a global partnership for development. Well known economist, Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, has been emphasizing the need for population stabilization to achieve MDGs but this unfortunately is not part of MDG.

The UN report says that many of the MDGs are in danger of going unmet by the deadline year of 2015 without redouble efforts in developing countries, a sustained favorable international environment, and increased donor support. However, we can still achieve these goals but require greater financial commitment by the developed countries.

The goal of cutting in half the proportion of the people in the developing world living on less than \$1 a day by 2015 remains within reach. In western Asia, poverty rates were relatively low but increasing. In South Asia, poverty situation needs attention. There have been increased prices of commodities including oil which affect these countries, many of which are among the poorest in the world.

The World Bank lately estimates that 1.4 billion people in developing countries are living in extreme poverty. The number of people living below poverty line has increased in America, Europe, and developed countries in Asia, partly due to the rising fuel prices and unemployment. Thus we are behind in achieving MDG goal number one.

To achieve universal primary education is Goal 2. Globally 570 million children are enrolled in school. The number of children of primary school age who were out of school fell from 103 million in 1999 to 73 million in 2006. In that year, primary school enrolment in developing countries reached 88%, up from 83% in 2000. In South Asia, the enrolment has reached 90%, but still more than 18 million children are not enrolled. Unfortunately, projections suggest that without further acceleration, 58 out of the 68 countries will not achieve the goal by 2015. This is due to inequalities in access to education. The Children most likely to drop out of school are often girls and those from poorer household or living in rural areas.

Achieving universal primary education means full enrollment, quality education, and the completion of primary school on time. For children to reach their full potential, secondary education must be the goal as well. Presently, less than 55% of children of the appropriate age in developing countries attend secondary school. In Oceania, for instance, almost two thirds of children of secondary school are out of school. In

sub-Saharan Africa, only a quarter of children of secondary school age are in secondary school. Although aid directed to basic education for low income countries increased from \$1.6 billion in 1999 to \$5 billion in 2006, it is still well below the estimated \$11 billion in aid required.

Gender Quality and Empowerment of Women

Girls' primary enrolment increased more than boys' in all developing regions between 2000 and 2006. As a result, two-thirds of the countries have achieved gender parity at primary level. While there is evidence of some success, gender disparities in education are clearly evident in some regions. Oceania and Western Asia have the largest gaps in primary enrolment. It looks as if goal number 3 target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015 will not be achieved. Women have more income earning opportunities than ever before. Overall, women occupy almost 40% of all paid jobs outside agriculture, compared to 35% in 1990.

Goal 4: To Reduce Child Mortality

Worldwide, deaths of children under-5 years of age declined from 93 to 72 deaths per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2006. A child born in developing countries is over 13 times more likely to die within the first five years of life than a child born in a developed country. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for about half the deaths of children under-5 in developing world. Between 1990 and 2006, about 27 countries, mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa made no progress in reducing childhood health.

To Improve Maternal Health is the Most Important Goal

According to UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and WHO, up to 15% of pregnant women experience potential fatal complications during birth. More than 80% of maternal deaths are due to 5 causes-bleeding, sepsis, unsafe abortion, obstructed labour, bleeding, and hypertensive disease of pregnancy. About 21% of 500,000 maternal deaths each year die because of severe bleeding.

In 2006, nearly 61% of births in the developing world were attended by skilled health personnel, up from less than half in 1990. Coverage, however, remains low in Southern Asia (40%) and sub Saharan Africa (47%). The risk of maternal mortality increases with each pregnancy. Yet, 200 million women who would like to delay childbearing are without access to safe and effective contraceptives. Each year, and estimated 19 million unsafe abortions take place in the developing world, resulting in some 60,000 deaths. Meeting unmet needs for contraception alone would reduce up to a third of maternal deaths. Having fewer pregnancies and spacing birth increases the survival rate of both women and their children. However, achieving the goal number 5 of universal access to reproductive health remains a dream in many countries, but who and how it will be financed.

To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases is a important goal to achieve. Most countries are struggling to meet the target of achieving universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS by 2010 and of halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015. Estimates of the number of people newly infected with HIV declined from 3 million in 2001 to 2.7 million in 2007. Access to antiretroviral therapy rose by 43% in 2007-an unprecedented scaling up- largely financed by the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB, and malaria. By 2007, the number of people receiving AIDS treatment in developing countries reached 3 million, out of 9.74 millions needing the treatment.

Goal 7: to ensure environmental sustainability. Climate change intensifies disasters, extreme weather events, storm surges, flood, and droughts. The Arctic small islands, mega-deltas in Asia and Africa are especially prone to the effects of climate changes.

In order to achieve the MDGs, global partnership for development is essential. There is a large delivery gap in meeting commitments towards the MDGs' target of addressing the special needs of the latest

developed countries, and to provide more generous official development assistance (ODA) for countries committed to poverty reduction. Efforts to set up ODA have been set back. In 2007, the only countries to reach or exceed the target of 0, 7% of gross national income were Denmark, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. At various world summit meeting, donor countries have pledged to increase aid from \$80 billion in 2004 to \$140 billion in 2010 (at 2004 prices). The present rate of increase of aid for core development programmes (excluding debt relief) will have to more than double over next 3 years if the level of aid committed for 2010 is to be met.

Accountability and governance

Normally in all major UN conferences, the cry is to give more dollars all the time. If you critically look at the funds already allocated, you will find out that they are not properly used. Lack of good governance, corruptions and not giving attention to increasing population is the prime issues to be discussed.

I would like to ask a question which many agencies such as the World Bank, UNFPA etc. have also started asking "Can we really achieve MDG without looking into the issue of population and family planning?" We, the parliamentarians, must take responsibility in that we are not very proactive in these issues. We get involved in local political issues as soon as we get back to our countries, and local political issues overshadow some time real issue affective people. We need to give more time and attention to monitor our government and also the work of UN agencies. Parliamentarians must have opportunities to review UN and ODA projects, their actions, and do not leave the same to our bureaucrats.

In my opinion, financing is not that a big issue, but implementation is.

We parliamentarians must help our countries by ourselves. Developed countries have done a lot already for us. I am sure more aid will be forth coming to support MDG but we also try to raise funds nationally by raising awareness in society and government. We must implement the MDGs with accountability. I like the motto of one of UK's public schools, "God helps those who help themselves". We hope to follow the same.

Thank you for your kind attention. I hope you all will enjoy the conference, exchange experiences, ideas, meet old and make new friends, all of you will return home safely, and refreshed to redouble the efforts to achieve the MDGs. As the Secretary General of AFPPD, I wish to thank UNFPA Mongolia and the Parliament of Mongolia for organizing the conference.



The State Great Khural (Parliament) of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar



Staff members of AFPPD, UNFPA and the Mongolian parliament

For more information, or copies of this report, please contact:

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians
on Population and Development (AFPPD)
Phyathai Plaza Building, Suite 9-C,
Phyathai Road, Ratchathewi
Bangkok 10400, Thailand
Tel: +66-2-219-2903/4/5
Fax: +66-2-219-2905
Email: afppd@afppd.org
Website: www.afppd.org

UNFPA - Mongolia
UN House, United Nations Street - 12
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Tel: +976-11-353501/3/4/5
Fax: 976-11-353502
Website: www.unfpa.org.mn

**Photographs supplied by local photographer and AFPPD*



Parliament of Mongolia



**Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on
Population and Development (AFPPD)**



UNFPA - Mongolia



Government of Japan



UN Country Team, Mongolia