

**ENHANCING
POLITICAL COMMITMENT
FOR THE
PREVENTION, CARE
AND
TREATMENT
OF
HIV/AIDS**



AFPPD ACTION



August 2007

ENHANCING POLITICAL COMMITMENT FOR HIV/AIDS AFPPD ACTION

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is a coordinating body working to generate support and perpetuate cooperation among Asian parliamentarians in the area of population and development and related issues such as HIV/AIDS. Since 1981, AFPPD has grown to establish twenty-four national committees and parliamentary commissions on Health and Population in Asia and the Pacific, fourteen of which have full time office support. AFPPD conducts regional seminars, conferences, person-to-person parliamentarian meetings, and study visits to help parliamentarians increase their level of knowledge, involvement and motivation on issues such as poverty, unemployment, environment, water, food security, the status of women, violence against women and HIV/AIDS as well as aims to highlight their linkages with population growth. The UNFPA, the Government of Japan, the Hewlett Foundation and other organisations provide support. Additional support is provided by National Parliaments, UNAIDS, the Rockefeller Foundation, among others for specific programmes.

AFPPD was formed in 1981 to further political commitment for population and development related issues. It was mandated to assist the speedy and proper implementation and support resource mobilisation for the ICPD Programme of Action through political support. HIV/AIDS forms part of the ICPD Agenda as does poverty, unemployment, water, food security, environment, status of women, violence against women and other related issues. Most of these issues are inextricably linked to population, which is increasing at an unsustainable rate resulting in widespread underdevelopment.

In 1993, AFPPD's permanent secretariat was established in Bangkok, Thailand at the invitation of its member organization, the Senate Committee on Public Health, Thailand. AFPPD, in the last 24 years, has devoted considerable efforts to educate, motivate, and involve elected representatives, from National Parliaments to village-level self-governments, about HIV/AIDS and its impact on them, their constituencies, and nations. Emphasis has been

UNFPA Declaration of Commitment

AFPPD recognises the need for developing strong partnerships in order to effectively develop political commitments toward preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. AFPPD has worked especially close with UNFPA to create such an enabling environment, drawing on more than 30 years experience of addressing sensitive issues in diverse social, cultural and religious settings. UNFPA's mandate for HIV prevention is to prevent sexually transmitted infections of all kinds and to promote reproductive rights. UNFPA's strategy for implementing such a mandate revolves around three core areas: young people, condom programming and pregnant women.

"We can make our biggest impact through prevention - helping young people avoid infection and ensuring that HIV-negative women stay that way, especially when pregnant."

-- Thoraya A. Obaid, Executive Director, UNFPA

placed on prevention, treatment, and care. Parliamentarians are made aware of the need to monitor the programme and to help remove stigma and discrimination. Several countries have now enacted laws related to HIV/AIDS.

II. HIV/AIDS & PARLIAMENTARIANS

“...Welcoming the progress made in some countries to contain the epidemic, particularly through: strong political commitment and leadership at the highest levels, including community leadership; effective use of available resources and traditional medicines; successful prevention, care, support and treatment strategies; education and information initiatives; working in partnership with communities, civil society, people living with HIV/AIDS and vulnerable groups; and the active promotion and protection of human rights; and recognizing the importance of sharing and building on our collective and diverse experiences, through regional and international cooperation including North/South, South/South cooperation and triangular cooperation;”

-- Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS: ‘Global Crisis - Global Action’

Parliamentarians’ Statement at the UN Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS)

On June 25-27 2001, the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS was held in New York. Regional parliamentarian groups on population and development such as AFPPD, FAAPPD, IAPG and IEPFPD issued a joint parliamentarians statement, urging to include the role of parliamentarians in the ‘Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.’

The statement expressed the shared view that parliamentarians can play an important role not only in advocacy and monitoring, but also in mobilization at the national and global levels.

According to UNAIDS’ 2003 report that details the progress achieved towards implementing the *Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS in 1993*, the Asian region currently has more people living with HIV/AIDS (6.6 million) than any other region in the world apart from sub-Saharan Africa. Rising rates of sexually transmitted diseases as well as an increase in intravenous drug use could lead to an even wider incidence of HIV/AIDS in the near future. In a region with millions of people living with HIV/AIDS, only about 30,000 currently receive antiretroviral drugs. Efforts to expand access to care and treatment in Asia are inhibited by obstacles such as insufficient resources, limited health care capacity, weak political support, and widespread stigma and discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS. It is because of these obstacles that AFPPD has been very proactive in trying to create the political will necessary to combat the

AIDS epidemic.

AFPPD's first effort was to mobilise parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS with the International Medical Parliamentarians Organisation (IMPO) and it was as early as in 1994 that the First International Meeting of Medical Parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS at the French Parliament in Paris was convened. This was not only addressed by the Honorable Speaker of the French Parliament, Mr. Philippe Seguine, but by Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, Director-General of WHO and by Dr. Mike Merson, then Director of the WHO Global Programme on AIDS. Seventy-five parliamentarians with a medical background from around the world attended the meeting. This meeting provided the first opportunity for medical parliamentarians to come together and discuss HIV/AIDS. The event also served to heighten AFPPD's awareness of the need to educate and involve parliamentarians and other elected representatives right down to the grass roots level if the challenges HIV/AIDS presents to us are to be defeated.

This conference also highlighted the gravity of the situation and mandated IMPO and AFPPD to increase their programmes for mobilisation of elected representatives for HIV/AIDS, as parliamentarians from many countries were not familiar with these issues.

AFPPD, in 1994, included HIV/AIDS as an important component of its agenda for parliamentarians' seminars, workshops and conferences. UNAIDS and other national and international agencies assured their support in this area.

III. STUDY VISITS

Australia and New Zealand Parliamentarian Initiative

The Rockefeller Foundation, with "Partners in Development" a South-South Initiative based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, supported a study visit of parliamentarians from Australia and New Zealand to Thailand and Vietnam to visit RH and AIDS-related institutions and interact with both Thai and Vietnamese officials and parliamentarians. This enabled them to obtain first hand knowledge of the situation on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and related programmes in both of these countries. This visit from 17 – 25 July 1997 created a very conducive environment and increased recognition amongst Australian and New Zealand Parliamentarians of the need to support HIV/AIDS preventive programmes. It generated debate in both houses of parliament in Australia and New Zealand on the HIV/AIDS situation in Thailand and Vietnam. It is believed that increased Australian support for HIV/AIDS programmes resulted from this visit of parliamentarians.

The study trip participants included the following members of parliament: Trish Worth – Delegation Leader, Colin Hollis – Deputy Delegation Leader, Annette Ellis, Sharman Stone, and Teresa Gambaro as well as Senators Chris Schacht, Rosemary Crowley, Meg Lees, Lyn Allison, and Marise Payne. Dianne Proctor from the ARHA also participated in the visit.

EU Parliamentarians' Study Visit to Vietnam

UNFPA sponsored a group visit of parliamentarians from EU countries to Vietnam for fifteen days. This extensive village-focused visit to RH and HIV/AIDS-related institutions resulted in an Asian Reproductive Health Initiative with UNFPA, which was implemented by European NGOs in Asia and is still continuing today.

Study Visit of Canadian Parliamentarians

Based on the success of the Australian and New Zealand parliamentarians study visit, another one was arranged for Canadian parliamentarians to visit Vietnam and Japan on 5 – 15 July 1998, which was sponsored by UNFPA and CIDA Canada. Six Canadian parliamentarians took part to study health programmes in both Vietnam and Japan. Participating members of parliament included: Ms. Jean Augustine - Chair of CAPPD (Currently Minister), Ms. Beth Phinney, Ms. Raymonde Folco, Ms. Monique Guay, Sen. Raynell Andrychuk and Mr. Chris Axworthy.

The visit stimulated a deeper interest in HIV/AIDS, population and reproductive health issues among Canadian parliamentarians. Upon returning to Canada, the parliamentarians briefed the Prime Minister and sought to assure that support for these issues would not be curtailed. Ms. Jean Augustine is now the Minister of Women Affairs in Canada.

Euro Parliamentarians in Thailand

The Inter-European Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IEFPPD), based in Brussels, arranged for a five member European delegation to visit Thailand on 5 – 14 January 2002 in order to observe RH and HIV/AIDS-related programmes. Participating members of parliament Mrs. Doris Stump – Switzerland, Mrs. Carina Hagg – Sweden, Mrs. Maria Mertjarvi – Finland, Mrs. Christina Husmark – Sweden, and Senator David Norris –Ireland. Out of the ten days, five and a half days were devoted to HIV/AIDS issues. The MPs visited treatment centers and the Department of Communicable Disease and Control in order to receive a first hand account of the HIV/AIDS situation in Thailand.

The five parliamentarians also engaged in policy dialogue with Dr. Ladawan Wongsriwong, the Thai Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, and attended a roundtable meeting on the South East Asian regional situation on HIV/AIDS and Trafficking of Women for Prostitution with UNFPA/CST, UNAIDS, ILO-IPEC, UNICEF and other related agencies at the UNCC Bangkok. They paid a visit to the Northern Office of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT) where they saw a presentation on the HIV/AIDS situation in Thailand's northern provinces and what services PPAT' provides for the northern population. This was followed by a visit to a hill tribe community (Mong) to observe HIV prevention and health care services for AIDS patients. They then saw another presentation on the prevention of trafficking, and finally, learned about the HIV programme PPAT is running in cooperation with ILO-IPECT in Chiang Mai. Finally, AFPPD arranged discussions between the Euro

parliamentarians and Thai parliamentarians on the efforts made by Thai parliamentarians to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

These visits, presentations and briefings provided the Euro parliamentarians with valuable, inside information on the HIV/AIDS situation in Thailand. On their return to the EU, the majority of the Euro parliamentarians spoke in their parliaments about the study visit to Thailand and shared what they had learned.

Japanese Parliamentarians in Africa

Japanese parliamentarians have always played an important role in mobilising support and resources for development issues such as population and HIV/AIDS. Indeed, advocacy efforts by APDA and JOICFP contributed to the Government of Japan's establishment of two trust funds of one million USD each for UNFPA on Population and IPPF on HIV/AIDS.

The Japanese Parliamentarians Federation on Population (JPPF), the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), and the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD), organised a study visit of six Japanese parliamentarians to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda on 12 – 19 January 2002 to observe UNFPA, JICA and other Japanese funded-projects in those countries and to gain first hand knowledge of the RH and HIV/AIDS situation in the region. Members of Parliament participating were the following: Mr. Hiroyuki Nagahama, Ms. Yoko Tajima, Mr. Shin Sakurai, Mr. Kiichi Inoue, Ms. Yoriko Madoka, and P.P.Kimiti – UNFPA Official. They submitted their observations to the Prime Minister of Japan.

AFPPD in cooperation with JPPF and APDA sent another group of Japanese parliamentarians to Southern Africa in 2003. This was to familiarise them with the local development and HIV/AIDS situation, make them aware of the need for official development assistance (ODA), and to motivate them to continue it. Japanese parliamentarians also went on a study visit to Laos/PDR and Cambodia in the 1990s.

South – South Exchange

On 27 September 1998, eleven parliamentarians from Sri Lanka participated in a six-day study tour of RH, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention projects in Bangkok and

*Declaration of
Commitment on
HIV/AIDS, UNGASS on
HIV/AIDS, 2001*

"...The global HIV/AIDS epidemic, through its devastating scale and impact, constitutes a global emergency and one of the most formidable challenges to human life and dignity, as well as to the effective enjoyment of human rights, which undermines social and economic development throughout the world and affects all levels of society—national, community, family and individual."

Chiang Mai. The participants significantly increased their knowledge on the HIV/AIDS situation in Thailand and Asia, and learned of the benefits of working in cooperation with NGOs and other prominent HIV/AIDS-related institutions. Participating members of parliament were the following: SB Nawinne - Deputy Minister of Health and Indigenous Medicine, Tissa Karaliyadda, Mahindu Amaraweera, Noel Padmasiri Kariyawasam, Mahiepala Herath, Upali Gunaratne, ULM Mohideen, M Sivalingam, Chandradasa Galappaththi, Ariya B Rekawa, and Mahinda Samrasinghe.

Similarly, parliamentarians from India and Iran also visited Thailand and received a briefing on the country's HIV/AIDS situation. In December 2002, UNAIDS India sponsored a visit for Delhi State legislators so that they could visit HIV institutions in Thailand. Parliamentarians' groups from Bangladesh and Indonesia were sponsored by UNFPA in 2004 to obtain first-hand knowledge about HIV/AIDS programme in Thailand. An evaluation later conducted confirmed that parliamentary study visits are one of the most effective tools for improving knowledge base and motivating parliamentarians to be more proactive.

IV. SPECIFIC HIV/AIDS EVENTS

International Meeting of Medical Parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS - Paris

As indicated earlier, parliamentarians with a medical background were also involved with an organisation known as the International Medical Parliamentarians Organisation (IMPO), which had its first HIV/AIDS conference in Paris, France in collaboration with AFPPD. Since then, IMPO has collaborated with WHO-Geneva and its regional offices in order to mobilise medical parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS-related issues.

The Second International Conference of Medical Parliamentarians

The Second International Conference of Medical Parliamentarians with WHO was organised in Bangkok on 6 – 8 February 1994 and was attended by one hundred parliamentarians with a medical and nursing background. Dr. Eric Van Praag, Chief, HCS/GPA, WHO Geneva spoke on HIV/AIDS. Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, Director General, WHO also addressed the conference and stressed the need for political commitment on HIV/AIDS. The Third IMPO Conference was held in Cairo during UNFPA's Population Conference and HIV/AIDS was a much discussed topic there.

SAARC Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS - Kathmandu

Forty parliamentarians from seven countries attended this conference from 13 – 15 May 1998 in Kathmandu, Nepal to discuss HIV/AIDS prevention strategies. The conference was organised by IMPO and AFPPD in collaboration with WHO-SEARO and the Population and Social Committee of the National Assembly of Nepal. The event was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Nepal, H.E. Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala.

Mr. D.P. Sharma gave an overview of the HIV/AIDS scenario in South Asia and warned that the region requires immediate attention as HIV/AIDS is rapidly increasing. He also made a case for establishing a SAARC Forum of Parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS. The workshop concluded with SAARC parliamentarians adopting a declaration.

Inter-Country Meeting of Parliamentarians and Specialists on HIV/AIDS and STDs - Bangkok

AFPPD and UNAIDS-Thailand organised an Inter-Country Parliamentarians' Workshop for South East Asia on HIV/AIDS with technical assistance provided by UNFPA/CST Thailand on 12 - 14 November 1999. Mr. Steven J. Kraus, Programme and External Relations Advisor of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), educated parliamentarians on the impact that HIV/AIDS is having on population issues and provided a video presentation. This event, which was attended by parliamentarians from 11 countries, was the major turning point in AFPPD's role in combating HIV/AIDS. It was the first South East Asian parliamentarians meeting on HIV/AIDS and resulted in follow-ups in ten countries in the region. UNAIDS Geneva provided US\$40,000 to UNAIDS Thailand for the follow-ups. A major outcome of this follow-up was the development of new HIV/AIDS legislation in Cambodia and the Philippines. UNAIDS Thailand assisted in this process.

HIV/AIDS Workshop on Networking and Partnership - Bangkok

AFPPD organised an Inter-country Workshop on Networking and Partnership between Young People and Governments on HIV/AIDS Prevention for East and South East Asian Countries with UNAIDS and UNFPA/CST from 18 – 22 March 2002. The Japan International Corporation on Welfare Services (JICWELS), Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, (MHLW), and the Government of Japan supported this event with the aim of mobilising agencies to network and share their experiences on young people and HIV/AIDS.

Thai Senators' Meeting with HIV/AIDS Activists - Bangkok

The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT) asked AFPPD and the Thai Standing Committee on Public Health to organise a meeting with FPA HIV/AIDS activists from Asia and Africa. On 22 August 2002 this event was held in the Thai Parliament with a special session focusing on participation of parliamentarians in HIV/AIDS prevention. Thai Senators Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Sen. Jon Ungphakorn and others spoke with over forty officers about the HIV/AIDS programme in Thailand. This was followed by a lively discussion. AFPPD has been a member of the panel for quite some time and has, in the past, provided information to the panel on AFPPD's HIV/AIDS programmes.

Thailand Tambon Leaders' Education on HIV/AIDS

AFPPD supported the Senate Committee on Public Health of Thailand, chaired by Dr.

Malinee Sukavejworakit MP, to conduct a two-year Tambon (district) level elected leaders education programme on HIV/AIDS. The programme was implemented in ten provinces and included a two-day training exercise for locally elected representatives. The first province to implement the programme was Nakhon Phanom. Their workshop began on 27 January 2002 and was continued in other provinces. An evaluation found the programme to be useful and it was decided that the programme should be extended for another year (2003) to cover more districts (tambons). It is expected that this education of tambon leaders will result in the elimination of HIV/AIDS –related stigma and discrimination in villages.

World AIDS Day: Parliamentarians' Participation

Very few AFPPD member committees actually organised an event for “*World AIDS Day*,” but their members did participate in activities sponsored by governments and UNAIDS. On 1 - 5 December 2002, the World Bank in Paris organised international video-conferences with parliamentarians to observe World AIDS Day. AFPPD’s Executive Director in Bangkok, parliamentarians from India along with parliamentarians from Africa and Europe took part in the video-conference.

International Parliamentarians Conference on HIV/AIDS in South Asia - New Delhi

This two-day conference was held on 1 – 2 August 2003 in New Delhi, India. More than fifty leaders from fifteen countries participated in this major initiative to facilitate an effective response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic through multi-sectoral partnerships, strong leadership and political commitment. The conference was inaugurated by Shri Manohar Joshi, Speaker, Lower House of Parliament in India, who noted the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a global emergency with developing countries being hit the hardest. He also said that parliamentarians should fight against the stigma, discrimination and exclusion that is often associated with HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Yoshio Yatsu MP, Chairman of Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, delivered the keynote address. He emphasized that political will is the crucial ingredient for fighting against stigma and discrimination.

Prominent dignitaries and speakers at the conference included Ms. Sonam Yangehan Rana, UNDP; Ms. Emelia Timpo, Regional Representative, UNAIDS; Mr. Peter Heywood, World Bank; and Ms. Meenakshi Datta Ghosh, Project Director, National AIDS Control Organisation, among others.

The conference was organised by the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD), AFPPD, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, UNFPA and UNAIDS/ICT – South Asia, and attracted wide media coverage including CNN.

Political Support for Youth HIV/AIDS Programmes

UNFPA, with funds from UNAIDS, is supporting a 15-month project in Asia for three countries: Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea. This, in order to;

- ❖ Effectively mobilise regional political and public support, including top-level leaders, in response to HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Strengthen evidence-based advocacy of programmes and policies to assist governments addressing HIV prevention, particularly in the RH context focusing on young people and pregnant women with an emphasis on gender concerns and reduction of stigma related to HIV/AIDS in three countries, i.e. Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka.

AFPPD is one of the three partners; the others are the Malaysian-based Asian Institute of Development Communication (AIDCOM) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF/ESEAOR). AFPPD will help promote political support for this initiative by organising a consultation of parliamentarians in Bali in September 2004. The level of political support demonstrated will also be monitored.

Regional Consultative Workshop for Youth

The Regional Consultative Workshop of parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS Prevention among Young People in Asia and the Pacific was one component of a two-year project conducted by UNFPA-UNAIDS-IPPF-AIDCOM and AFPPD. The long-term goal of this project is to contribute to the reduction of HIV/AIDS transmission, vulnerability, and impact with objectives that include:

- ❖ effective mobilization of regional, political and public support including that of top level leaders, in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic; and
- ❖ strengthening of evidence-based advocacy of programmes and policies to assist governments to address HIV prevention, particularly in the RH context focusing on young people and pregnant women, with an emphasis on gender concerns and reduction of stigma related to HIV/AIDS.

An advocacy intervention package for HIV prevention among young people was developed in the last two years and was introduced at this workshop to parliamentarians. Consultation with parliamentarians was an integral part of the project, which was to have taken place in Bali from 22-24 September 2004, but was later moved to Bangkok due to the bombing in Jakarta. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 parliamentarians from 8 countries. Prominent among the parliamentarians was Dr. Sumaryati Arjoso, SKM, Chair of BKKBN, Indonesia, Dr. Abeykoon, Director of Population Division, Government of Sri Lanka, Programme Officers from UNFPA Country offices for Sri Lanka, Indonesia and PNG and other parliamentarians from India, Sri Lanka, Cambodia,

Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and PNG. UNFPA/CST Bangkok helped conduct the consultation.

Pacific Parliamentarians Address Issue of HIV/AIDS in the Region

AFPPD Executive Committee Meeting in Kuala Lumpur last July 2004 agreed to fund a joint AFPPD and UNFPA Pacific Parliamentarians Conference on HIV/AIDS, which was held in Suva, Fiji from 11-13 October. This conference was the first for the Pacific Parliamentarians on “The Role of Pacific Parliamentarians in the fight Against HIV/AIDS”. It was hosted by the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development (PPAD) and AFPPD in conjunction with UNFPA, the secretariat of the committee and AFPPD. It was the first initiative by PPAD, after the monumental Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting which was held in Samoa in August 2004, where heads of government from the region approved the “Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV/AIDS” for the period 2004-2008. The conference was opened by Hon. Laisenia Qarase, Prime Minister of Fiji and the keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General and Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS for the Asia-Pacific. Welcome remarks were given by Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Fiji and Vice-Chairperson of AFPPD. Also addressing the participants were Senator Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit of Thailand, Secretary General of AFPPD and Mr. Peter Witham, UN Resident Coordinator.

Support for Vaccine Development

The Asian Forum, in cooperation with the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), organised an Inter-country Parliamentarians Workshop on HIV/AIDS with a focus on vaccines in Bangkok on 30 – 31 October 2003. It was attended by 40 parliamentarians from 12 countries that took part in briefings by institutions working on vaccine development and trials. The workshop concluded with a formal *Call to Action* and parliamentarians pledging to work for the support of vaccine development and trials. Dr. Jean Louis Excler, Scientific Director of IAVI India, also presented vaccine information at the 5th International Medical Parliamentarians Conference, which took place in Bangkok in December 2003.

Central Asian Parliamentarians’ Meeting on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

AFPPD, in collaboration with the Kyrgyz Parliament’s National Committee on Population and Development, UNFPA, and the Government of Japan, organized the Central Asian Parliamentarians’ Meeting on Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, from June 27-28, 2006. The conference was aimed at highlighting youth-related health issues such as reproductive health, sexual health, HIV/AIDS, gender equality, and violence against women.

The meeting tackled issues related to HIV/AIDS and their impacts on the young population. Hon. Felix Kulov, Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, speaking at the opening

ceremony noted that the well-being of any nation depended on how well population and development issues were dealt with in the country. Mr. Khaled Philby, Regional Director of UNFPA for Central Asia, noted that the meeting was a landmark event as it represented the results of a dedicated and effective partnership between parliamentarians and UNFPA in giving a voice to the younger generation.

The resulting Bishkek Declaration recognized the need to prioritize reproductive and sexual health problems, the importance of these issues to youth, and the need for these issues to be addressed through unified efforts. It also obliged the participating parliamentarians to further promote actions for reform and to adopt legislative measures that address health and HIV/AIDS issues of the younger generation.

The Asian Parliamentarians' Workshop on HIV/AIDS with Focus on Accountability and Transparency

Over thirty parliamentarians and ministers of fourteen Asian nations attended “The Asian Parliamentarians’ Workshop on HIV/AIDS with Focus on Accountability and Transparency”, held in Bangkok on January 24-25, 2006. Organized by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the workshop discussed issues arisen from HIV/AIDS with the focus on accountability and transparency.

During the workshop, experts from the government sector, UNFPA, UNAIDS, FHI, as well as other NGOs were invited to speak on topics concerning the subject, including why the epidemic is not under control, the relationship of accountability and transparency in controlling HIV/AIDS, and the roles of parliamentarians in such advocacy.

The workshop consisted of 7 sessions:

- ❖ Over viewing the HIV/AIDS situation in Asia Pacific
- ❖ Why epidemics of HIV/AIDS are not under control?
- ❖ HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health
- ❖ Advocacy for Accountability and Transparency from Central to Local Level
- ❖ Funding, Accountability and Transparency
- ❖ Accountability and Transparency: What is Their Relationship in Controlling HIV/AIDS
- ❖ What Parliamentarians Can Do

The workshop proposed new ideas for discussion, with parliamentarians making personal commitments, some of which include reporting back to their national committees on the issues raised at the conference; efforts to be made for more involvement from all level of society, particularly NGOs and private sector, and HIV positive people; promoting the implementation of the HIV/AIDS law and regulations in their home countries; and maximize the effective function of the government and related state departments.

V. HIV/AIDS COMPONENT IN AFPPD EVENTS

HIV/AIDS at AFPPD's 6th General Assembly – Niigata

The 6th General Assembly of AFPPD was held on 4 – 6 October 1999. Ninety-six parliamentarians from twenty-eight countries pledged their commitment to solve population problems at this conference. Dr. Lester Brown, President of the World Watch Institute, identified the most pressing problems that need to be addressed in the 21st century, with HIV/AIDS as a top priority. Dr. Brown also highlighted the ever-increasing challenges that many developing countries face with regards to providing basic needs for their populations while, at the same time, trying to muster the energy and financial resources needed to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. The General Assembly mandated AFPPD to enhance its advocacy work with elected representatives on HIV/AIDS. As a result of this three-day event, the Niigata Declaration pledged to limit the spread of HIV/AIDS by doing the following:

- ❖ Reaffirm the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Cairo Declaration on Population and Development.
- ❖ Urge all governments to address those factors contributing to high abortion rates, the spread of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and high infant and maternal mortality rates.
- ❖ Advocate parliamentarians to put these issues on their national agendas, take concerted action on them, and monitor progress on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.
- ❖ Reaffirm commitment to the parliamentarian movement as an important vehicle to change the mindset and behaviours of citizens and governments, and to translate people's concerns into legislative and government action.

16th Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on Population and Development - Bangkok

The Asian Population and Development Association of Japan (APDA), AFPPD, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and UNFPA, collaborated to organise the Asian Parliamentarian's Meeting on Population and Development in Bangkok, Thailand on 18 – 20 March 2000. The event was attended by more than seventy parliamentarians from twenty-three countries, parliament staff, and representatives for the United Nations.

In an effort to further educate parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS-related issues, a special session was held on the "Impact of HIV/AIDS." Mr. Steve J. Kraus, Programme and External Relations Advisor of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) gave a video presentation and reported the current, global HIV/AIDS situation. Mr Kraus also made suggestions as to how parliamentarians could get involved in combating the

HIV/AIDS epidemic. These suggestions included influencing public opinion and mobilising the government, private sector and civil society as advocates, as well as allocating financial resources as resource mobilisers.

Afro-Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting – Tokyo

AFPPD has been the focal point of international parliamentarians' activities and has organised a number of international conferences for parliamentarians on a similar level to those in Cairo, Copenhagen, Geneva and Tokyo. The outcome of each of these conferences was the recognition that HIV/AIDS needs urgent attention. In order to increase cooperation between Asia and Africa for development specifically in the field of HIV/AIDS, the Government of Japan supported the organisation of the 'Afro-Asian Parliamentarians' Conference on Development Cooperation and Partnership,' which was held in Tokyo on 29 – 30 November 2001. Major focus was on Mr. Michel Sidibe, Director, Country and Regional Support Department UNAIDS-Geneva and Dr. Suman Mehta, Coordinator, HIV/AIDS, UNFPA NY who presented the HIV/AIDS situation in both regions and highlighted the role parliamentarians can play in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The plan of action that came out of the conference states as follows:

Basis for action: Population, Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS

The incidence of STIs is high and increasing in many parts of the world. Of major concern is the elevated and rising prevalence of HIV/AIDS particularly in some countries in sub-Saharan Africa and certain Asian countries. It is estimated that as of the end of 2001 there will be 40 million persons living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, 90 percent of this number found in developing countries -- 70 percent or 28.1 million in sub-Saharan Africa, and over 17 percent or 7.1 million in Asia. Over half of those infected with HIV each year are under the age of 25. Because of the magnitude of the problem and lack of access to testing, treatment, care and support for millions of people living with HIV/AIDS, the socio-economic impact will be further exacerbated, and will undermine prevention efforts.

Young people are particularly vulnerable and ill-served by most reproductive health programmes. They are usually poorly informed about prevention of pregnancy and the transmission of STIs, including HIV/AIDS.

Actions

- ❖ Redouble efforts to mobilise fellow parliamentarians and other leaders in our own countries and within the region to advocate for better reproductive health and prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Recognise the existence of HIV/AIDS and the stigmas attached to it and proactively work towards de-stigmatisation at all levels.

- ❖ Make a concerted effort to involve Presidents, Prime Ministers and other high-profile personalities to mobilise political commitment for programs to improve reproductive health and reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Work not only at the level of review of legislation and monitor programmes, but also work as agents of change at the constituency level in order to promote education, behaviour change at the grassroots level and mobilise participation at the community level.
- ❖ Special attention be given to provide proper care and treatment and availability of affordable drugs, including promotion of production and facilitate the trade of generic drugs.
- ❖ Recognising that young people, both in and out of school, are vulnerable and that they require considerable support, activities for HIV/AIDS prevention and adolescent reproductive health (ARH) promotion undertaken by youth for youth will be supported, and youth organisations will be encouraged to be active in programme formulation and implementation.
- ❖ Support the full implementation of the UNGASS Declaration on HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS at AFPPD's 7th General Assembly – Beijing

The 7th General Assembly of AFPPD in Beijing on 17 – 18 October 2002 was hosted by NPC China and brought together 150 parliamentarians from the Asia-Pacific and Central Asian regions. Mr. Tony Bates of UNAIDS was the main speaker along with Ms. Siri Tellier of UNFPA-China and Senator Juan Flavio Varilla (Philippines) on HIV/AIDS. Mr. Jean-Christophe Bas, Development Policy Manager of the World Bank, also addressed this assembly. The Beijing Declaration emphasized the need for multi-sectoral collaboration in order to win the fight against AIDS.

The declaration states the following:

- ◆ *'Recognise that HIV/AIDS is an extremely serious issue that requires an urgent, coordinated response in many of our countries, and urge our fellow parliamentarians to increase their efforts to ensure effective HIV/AIDS legislation, preventive measures as well as treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS.'*
- ◆ *'Realise that young people are especially prone to risk behaviour, including unprotected sex and drug use, making them vulnerable to acquire HIV/AIDS and other STDs. About 50% of the new HIV infections in Asia occur in the age group of 15 – 24 years. We urge our fellow parliamentarians to place special emphasis on adolescent reproductive health, and to ensure that young people are paid full attention and provided with convenient services.'*

International Parliamentarians' Conferences and HIV/AIDS – Ottawa and Strasbourg

On 21 - 22 November 2002, AFPPD and other regional parliamentary groups collaborated with UNFPA to organise the International Parliamentarians Conference on ICPD in Ottawa, Canada. Over 100 parliamentarians from seventy countries met at the Canadian Parliament to discuss strategies for preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS among other issues. Dr. Mabel Bianco, President of Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM), and Mr Jagadish Upadhyay, Senior Technical Officer of UNFPA, provided presentations during a special session specifically devoted to group discussions on HIV/AIDS-related issues. The group discussion also highlighted the urgency with which HIV must be addressed. The conference resulted in a statement of commitment, which contained the following vis-à-vis HIV/AIDS:

- ❖ Generate the political will needed to develop and implement national HIV/AIDS policies and action plans.
- ❖ Enact legislation to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of people living with HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Provide education and services to prevent the transmission of all forms of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Ensure that adolescents, both in and out of school, receive the necessary information and services to make responsible and informed choices and decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health needs.
- ❖ Similar conference was organized in Strasbourg, France, on 17-19 October 2004. This conference also discussed HIV/AIDS extensively and included HIV/AIDS on its declaration.

Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on ICPD Implementation - Bangkok

The UN Conference Center in Bangkok was the venue for the Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting on ICPD Implementation, which was held in conjunction with the Fifth Asian Pacific Population Conference.

The Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on ICPD Implementation was organized on 12 – 13 December 2002 in cooperation with UNFPA and UNESCAP, and was presided over by H.E. Mr. Chaturon Chaisaeng, the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand. One hundred and twenty parliamentarians from thirty countries attended to debate ICPD issues. The issue of HIV/AIDS was presented by Tony Bates from UNAIDS Bangkok.

The conference recognized not only the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS situation, but also the need for improved legislation and preventive strategies. The special needs of young people were also highlighted. The declaration that resulted from this meeting states:

- ❖ *'Recognising the gravity of the HIV/AIDS situation, efforts to ensure effective national policies and action plans, HIV/AIDS legislation, preventative strategies as well as treatment and care for people living with HIV must be increased. It is time to scale up pilot programmes, which have proven their worth into the implementation of comprehensive national action strategies. Special emphasis must be given to programmes for young people on HIV/AIDS prevention.'*

Participants worked with government delegations at the main population conference to ensure that the rights of young people and women are accepted and will receive information and services in reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. In a joint effort to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, parliamentarians in attendance supported provisions such as sexuality-related information or condom services for young people. All governments in the Asia-Pacific voted in favour of women's reproductive rights and information services to young people to combat AIDS.

Three months of lobbying and campaigning by parliamentarians and others yielded positive results and all Asia-Pacific and Central Asian governments, their counterparts, and members from Europe, affirmed the rights of women and young people to have access to information and services, including condoms, to protect them against HIV/AIDS.

Asian Women Parliamentarians and Ministers Conferences

On 2 – 3 October 2003, Manila, The Philippines, on 29-30 June 2004, Canberra, Australia, and, on 2-3 August 2005, Colombo, Sri Lanka, were the venues for the Asian Women Parliamentarians and Ministers' Conference on Empowerment of Women. The conferences brought together 100 participants, which included parliamentarians and ministers from 17 countries. Women parliamentarians assembled to discuss issues related to women empowerment that included gender inequality, family planning, and HIV/AIDS. The opening was addressed by Ms. Imelda Henkin, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA, and Senator Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit (Thailand), Secretary General AFPPD. These conferences discussed the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and gave recommendation.

5th International Medical Parliamentarians Conference on Family Health - Bangkok

In Bangkok, on 6 – 7 December 2003, the Asian Forum collaborated with the International Medical Parliamentarians Organisation (IMPO) in organising the 5th International Medical Parliamentarians Conference on Family Health, which was attended by 118 medical parliamentarians and others from over 50 countries.

The issue of communicable diseases was presented by Dr. Hiroyoshi Endo, Director, Department of Communicable Diseases Control, Prevention and Eradication, WHO-Geneva. Additionally, Dr. Jean-Louis Excler, Medical Director of IAVI India, also addressed issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS and provided an update on the development of

an AIDS vaccine. Mr. Jean-Christophe Bas, Development Policy Manager of the World Bank, also addressed the conference.

6th International Medical Parliamentarians Conference – Kuala Lumpur

The AFPPD and IMPO collaborated with the Malaysian Parliament and AFPPD Malaysia to organize the 6th International Medical Parliamentarians Conference on MDGs, poverty, and health, which also had presentations on HIV/AIDS and MDGs. Parliamentarians with medical and nursing background from 27 countries attended.

4th Asian-Pacific Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference

More than 70 parliamentarians and ministers from Asia and the Pacific assembled at the Parliament of New Zealand from June 11-12, to discuss “*Gender-Responsive Governance: The Key to the Population and Development Agenda*” and endorsed a Plan of Action that outlined the policy-advocacy tasks for parliamentarians and parliamentary groups. The Conference was organized by AFPPD and the New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Government of Japan.

During the discussion on population and development agenda, Ms. Isabel Rocha Pimenta, Health & AIDS Program of World Bank Institute discussed ‘Gender Governance in ensuring a gender sensitive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS. The main points of discussion among parliamentarians following the presentation emphasized that ‘we must balance “spending more” with “spending better,” indicating that governments should set priorities or spending in the areas of SRH, HIV and AIDS.

3rd International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action

Three hundred parliamentarians and representatives from over 100 countries gathered in Bangkok, Thailand from November 21-22, 2006, for the ‘3rd International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action’ (IPCI/ICPD). The Bangkok conference focused on taking stock of the progress made so far by parliamentarians in advancing the ICPD agenda and coming up with a common strategy to take their collective efforts to the next level. At this Conference, Parliamentarians pledged to attain at least 10% of development budgets for population and reproductive health programmes.

Several side events were organized at the IPCI. One of them was the Parliamentarians/NGO Dialogue on HIV/AIDS and RH where selected group of Asian parliamentarians interacted with Asian NGOs. Ms. Thoraya Obaid, the executive director of UNFPA appealed for greater efforts to be made to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. The dialogue, organized by the Asia Pacific Alliance for the Implementation of ICPD in collaboration with AFPPD, has brought about appeals for more cooperation between

parliamentarians and NGOs in fighting the pandemic by working together to improve the public health budgets and development plans.

VI. AFPPD AT HIV/AIDS RELATED EVENTS

Parliamentarians at 5th Asian AIDS Workshop - Bangkok

In January 2001, UNAIDS and the Japanese Government organised the Fifth Asian AIDS workshop in Bangkok entitled 'Going to Scale: From Pilot Projects to National Responses' with a special session devoted to political support and advocacy for HIV/AIDS. AFPPD sponsored two members of parliament, Senator Jon Ungphakorn from Thailand and Mr. J. R. Nereus Acosta from the Philippines to participate and provide a parliamentarian's perspective on the issue. Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, also attended and presented an overview of the Asian Forum and its fight against HIV/AIDS.

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

On 11 – 12 May 2002 the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) India organised an International Policy-Makers Workshop on AIDS Vaccines as well as an International Policy-Makers Conference that was held in New Dehli, India in an effort to mobilise parliamentarian support and political commitment for an HIV Vaccine. The Indian Prime Minister Hon. Mr. Atal Biharee Vajpayee, the Leader of the Opposition Ms. Sonia Gandhi, Ms. Suniti Solomon, Director of YRG Care, Ms. Brenda McSweeney, UN Resident Coordinator India, and Mr Seth Berkely, President of IAVI, all spoke on the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS problem. The Prime Minister of India and leaders of the opposition jointly declared HIV/AIDS as a national crisis and agreed to work together. AFPPD cooperated to send members of parliament from Asia as participants. Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, also made a presentation on AFPPD's efforts to fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS.

WHO-WPRO Workshop on Health Promotion - Manila

On 5 – 8 November 2002 an Inter-Country Workshop on Capacity Building for Health Promotion was organised by the WHO Western Pacific Office (WPRO) to examine various aspects of health promotion including HIV/AIDS.

AFPPD presented a paper on political commitment for health promotion. The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director of WHO West Asian and the Pacific Region, followed by a discussion on future cooperation with Dr. Brian Doberstyn, Director of Communicable Diseases, WHO/WPRO. The event resulted in regional framework for identifying and promoting health issues as well as an action plan for capacity-building and resource mobilisation covering 2003-2005.

59th Session of UNESCAP – Bangkok

UNESCAP organised a Ministerial Round Table on HIV/AIDS as part of the 59th Session of UNESCAP for 1 – 4 September 2003 in Bangkok. AFPPD also participated in this meeting. The regional action plan adopted to follow-up the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS states the following:

‘Bearing in mind the need for stronger political commitment to secure an expanded and comprehensive response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the ESCAP region, which is home to three of the most populous countries, 62% of the world’s population and over 600 million young people who are vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, we call upon all members and associated members to implement the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its 26th Special Session and to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic with political commitment at the highest decision making levels, including action to develop a more comprehensive and strategic national programme and to strengthen their implementation.’

ESCAP also affirmed it will promote the awareness and political commitment of chief ministries and provincial governors in populous countries by convening and collaborating with relevant entities and forums combined with field visits for observing examples of good practice in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

High Level Policy Symposium on HIV/AIDS - Tokyo

AFPPD has been collaborating with Population 2050 on the High Level Policy Makers Symposium on HIV/AIDS by sponsoring the participation of members of parliament. This year’s event was recently held at the UN Center in Tokyo on 3 – 5 September 2003. The symposium was opened by Ms. Chieko Nohno, Member of the House of Councillors Japan. Keynote addresses were delivered by Dr. Nafis Sadik, UN Under-Secretary General and Special Envoy of the Secretary General for HIV/AIDS in Asia, and by Mr. Kazuo Kodama, Deputy Director General, Economic Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.

Presentations were also given by Amb. A. Chowdhury, UN Under-Secretary General and High Representative of the Secretary-General for LDCs; Ms. Aster Zaoude, Sr. Advisor, Gender and Development, Social Development Group, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP; Mr. Samuel Koo, UNICEF Representative, Japan; Dr. Giri Giridhar, Director, CST Asia, UNFPA; Mr. T. Kawakami, President, JICA; Mr. Yoshiko Kono, Senior Executive Director, Japan Bank for International Cooperation; Dr. Yoshiko Saito, Director for East & Southeast Asia and Pacific, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Geneva; Mr. Charles Aanenson, Counselor, USAID; Mr. Jyoti Singh, President of Population 2005; and Dr. Timothee Gandaho, Executive Director of Partners in Population and Development.

AFPPD was represented by the Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, Speaker of the Fiji Parliament and Vice Chair of AFPPD, Dr. Prasan Mongkonsiri and Mr. Sanan Suthakun, MPs from Thailand, Hon. Abdolreza Heidarizadi, MP from Iran, Hon. Senator Datuk Dr. Haji Haris Bin Haji Salleh, Senator from Malaysia and Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD. High level officials from Uganda, Zimbabwe, China and several others participated in this important symposium.

South Asian Parlaimentarians' Seminar on HIV/AIDS

The Parlaimentarians for global Action (PGA) organized a Sub-Regional Parliamentary Seminar on HIV/AIDS for South Asia in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Parlaimentarians and experts from 13 countries attended the seminar, including Sen. Chachvan Bunmee and Sen. Chao Maneewong from Thailand, representing AFPPD. The seminar reviewed the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Asia, specially India and Nepal. Parlaimentarians suggested enhancing education and awareness programmes.

1st APPCED Workshop on the MDGs and International development Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region

The 1st APPCED Workshop in Seoul, Korea, was attended by 65 parliamentarians and others from 23 countries. The opening ceremony was addressed by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade and now UN Secretary General. The workshop discussed among other development and environmental issues impact of HIV/AIDS on development and examined the impact of HIV/AIDS on development and its relationship with environmental health. Participants were of the view that poverty and degrading environment is also affecting the increasing number of infections. Two former Prime Ministers of Korea who were chair of Korea Committee on Population and Development (CPE) in Korean parliament and alumni of AFPPD also addressed. Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD and several AFPPD parliamentarians attended.

Young Decision-Makers Conference

The meeting of young parliamentarians and political leaders below 35 years of age was organized in Helsinki, Finland, on September 7-8, 2007. The meeting was aimed at urging the Head of States and government officials to invest on programmes which addressed the critical challenges faced by the adolescents in the area of sexual and reproductive health. The participants discussed specific topics such as the HIV/AIDS and young people, problems faced by young girls, as well as the availability of sexual and reproductive health services. This was organized by the European Forum of parliamentarians on population and development. AFPPD sponsored your parliamentarians from Bangladesh, Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand to attend the meeting.

G8 Parliamentarians' Conference: Investing on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Health

The two-day conference of parliamentarians from the G8 countries focused on the economic rewards of investing in HIV/AIDS, prevention and health, influence of the epidemic in Africa, prevention and treatment, and reproductive health issues, best practices and lessons learned in the fight against HIV/AIDS. At the conference, AFPPD was represented by parliamentarians from Korea, and Japan.

European All-Party Parliamentary Group Meeting

The European Parliamentary forum organized a meeting of secretariats of all All-Party Parliamentary Group, NGOs working with parliamentarians and partners in parliamentary advocacy in Istanbul, Turkey. Around 30 senior staff of European NGOs discussed ways to enhance Reproductive and Sexual Health Advocacy with European Parliamentarians. Regional parliamentary groups, including AFPPD Executive Director, presented their efforts in Asia, especially on population, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

VII. NATIONAL LEVEL ACTION

Person-to-Person Advocacy on HIV/AIDS

The Asian Forum for the past two years with support from Hewlett Foundation has been conducting a unique programme known as the Person-to-Person Advocacy Programme (PPAP) on population and development issues. The objective of the programme is to meet the majority of members of parliament, state assembly members and village level elected leaders on a one to one basis. The aim of the PPAP meeting is to discuss the population situation and its relationship with other development issues such as food, employment, water, poverty, environment, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS.

This PPAP programme records their views in a survey format, provides additional information and ascertains the knowledge level of the parliamentarians on these issues and how motivated they are. Their discussions are also recorded. In 2004 this programme was conducted in Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia with effective results and it is also being extended to Laos and India.

This programme is evaluated as one of the most effective method of educating parliamentarians and other elected representatives. This is creating a wider parliamentary constituency for population, RH, and HIV/AIDS issues. AFPPD has been able to reach 90% of the parliamentarians in these selected countries.

Cambodia

- ❖ In February 2000, as a follow-up to the commitments made by parliamentarians at the Inter-Country Meeting on HIV/AIDS and STDs in East and Southeast Asia held in Bangkok on November 1999, the Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD) held a National

Seminar on HIV/AIDS and STDs for Parliamentarians in Phnom Penh. It was organised in collaboration with the Commission on Public Health, Social Work, Labour and Women's Affairs of the National Assembly of Cambodia and attended by one hundred and thirty-two parliamentarians, locally elected representatives and NGOs. The event was inaugurated by H.R.H. Prince Norodom Ranariddh, President of Cambodia's House of Representatives, who asked for special attention to be given to the impact the HIV/AIDS epidemic is having on Cambodia's process of national rehabilitation. Cambodian parliamentarians from both the Senate and House of Representatives agreed to work together to initiate legislative action against HIV/AIDS as well as increase the awareness level of their respective constituencies.

- ❖ On 7 – 8 December 2000 CAPPD organized the 'Indo-China Parliamentarians Seminar on Reproductive Health and Sustainable Development' in cooperation with AFPPD and UNFPA. Over forty parliamentarians from the Indo-China region along with twenty specialists and experts attended the seminar. Mr. Geoff Manthey, Country Programme Adviser of UNAIDS Cambodia, gave a presentation on 'HIV/AIDS and the STD's Situation and Programme in the Region.'
- ❖ Recently, Cambodia has been prioritising the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS. Pilot projects began at two sites in Cambodia in 2001, and a grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria permitted a doubling in project capacity in 2002, according to UNAIDS.
- ❖ CAPPD has also contributed toward achieving political commitments on HIV/AIDS. *The Law on Prevention and Combating the Epidemic of HIV/AIDS* was recently adopted. Moreover, Cambodia has achieved a sustained decrease in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country, one of only three countries in the world to achieve this. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate among Cambodians aged 15-49 has decreased from 3.3% in 1998 to 2.6% in 2002.
- ❖ As part of the PPAP project described above, CAPPD staff met and interviewed one hundred and thirty-one MPs from the Cambodian Parliament on a person-to-person basis in 2002-2003 in order to determine their level of knowledge on HIV/AIDS related issues, provide more information when required, and motivate them for further involvement. It was learned that parliamentarians in Cambodia have a very high level of awareness regarding HIV/AIDS transmission routes and strategies for limiting the spread of HIV/AIDS. Cambodian parliamentarians also indicated that HIV/AIDS is the issue of most concern. Over 98% of parliamentarians interviewed indicated a willingness to advocate for population and reproductive health issues in Cambodia. This PPAP project has recently been extended to the local level where CAPPD has interviewed an additional two hundred and twenty-seven Commune Council Members.

China

The National People's Congress Committee on Health and Population has been aware of the growing number of HIV/AIDS cases and has worked with the Government of China to prevent further spreading of the virus. One of their objectives is to educate their fellow parliamentarians on the seriousness of the HIV/AIDS issue. UNDP recently signed an agreement to provide US\$200,000 to educate, mobilise, and involve NPC members in the fight against HIV/AIDS. AFPPD is working closely with the National Peoples Congress Committee on Health and Population to assist them in their efforts.

India

Since 18 July 2000, the Indian Association on Parliamentarians for Population and Development (IAPPD) has conducted a national project, *Involvement of Elected Representatives for Advocacy on Population, Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Rights and Empowerment of Women* in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttarpradesh, which was supported by UNFPA India. It was attended by more than six hundred elected representatives including MPs, MLAs, academics and NGO representatives. In Madhya Pradesh, the project was inaugurated by Mr. Shrinivas Tiwari, Hon. Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly and Dr. SS Sisodia, Chairman on IAPPD. Ms Shaban Azmi, MP (India) and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, was the guest speaker. Similar efforts were conducted in Rajasthan. After an evaluation, UNFPA extended the project for 2004 to cover more districts (panchyats) in Indian states.

Under the Project "National Advocacy and Communication Involvement of Elected Representatives for Advocacy on Population, Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, Women Empowerment" assigned by MOH&FW and UNFPA. IAPPD had undertaken the following activities in 2004:

- ❖ An analysis of Parliament questions: As a part of baseline activity, IAPPD undertook an "Analysis of questions raised in the Parliament and addressed to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare during the period of 2000-2003", which reflects the level of interest and knowledge of the Members of Parliament/ Legislators regarding Health and RCH related issues. A report giving the analysis of these questions is complete and is being submitted to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOH&FW) and United Nations Population Fund UNFPA for framing the policies and programme in the future.
- ❖ Briefing kit: Keeping in view the Plan of Action of ICPD, an Advocacy Briefing Kit, in Hindi and English, was prepared in 2004 for the use of People's Elected Representatives which contained information on Population and Development related issues. It is very useful for elected representatives to quickly go through it to understand the issues and its latest position.

Indonesia

- ❖ The Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD) initiated a public campaign for HIV/AIDS-related concerns. The opening ceremony was held on 17 February 2003 and organised by IFPPD and Action Stop AIDS. Also in 2003, IFPPD held roundtable discussions regarding the HIV/AIDS epidemic in both Papua New Guinea and Indonesia.
- ❖ USAID-funded agencies such as FHI and J. Snow USA provided support to the Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development to conduct HIV/AIDS advocacy with parliamentarians for national, state and local levels through Family Health International (FHI). This is to be a long-term advocacy effort between Indonesian parliamentarians and state legislators.
- ❖ In 2004, IFPPD contributed to building awareness on HIV/AIDS issues in Parliament in various forms:
 - ◆ Conducting two-roundtable discussion
 - ◆ Conducting four-regional meeting (Pekanbaru, Tanjung Pinang, Tanjung Balai Karimun, and Batam)
 - ◆ Publishing Four-Fact sheet series
 - ◆ Conducting policy analysis on discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS.
 - ◆ Conducting two-core group meeting
 - ◆ Conducting two-national seminar
 - ◆ Conducting seven national strategic seminars (Banten, West Java, East Java, Central Java, NTB, South Sulawesi, NTT, Jayapura, and Maluku)
 - ◆ Conducting meeting evaluation on HIV/AIDS
 - ◆ Conducting wrap up meeting
 - ◆ Conducting plan of action meeting
 - ◆ Conducting legal review on HIV/AIDS policy and laws through three-core group meetings and two-workshop.
- ❖ An HIV/AIDS exhibition was organised in the Parliament House.

Kyrgyzstan

Group of MPs of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, according to the initiative of the Chairman of the National Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, Mr. Artykbaev O., worked out the new Law on HIV/AIDS in the Kyrgyz Republic. Experts in International and Nongovernmental organizations including NGO working on AIDS have reviewed the draft of the law. The law draft was discussed at the Workshop (Round Table) and at the Parliamentary committee with the participation of the Kyrgyz Republic Parliament's MPs, officials from the Prime Minister's office, interested ministers, representative of NGOs and international organizations. Further, the project was discussed at the meeting of the Committee on social questions and sent to the

Parliament for discussion. It will be considered as soon as possible. The new Law brings legislation to the international standards, where the protection of the persons living with HIV/AIDS and the victims of discrimination and stigma is guaranteed. It also will establish additional provision on protection of their rights on confidentiality and voluntary testing and taking measures on complex treatment and supply. Regarding activities made on HIV/AIDS, they are made on the basis of Strategic Plan and State Program to prevent HIV/AIDS, infections transmitted by sex and injections.

Malaysia

- ❖ On 21 July 2000 AFPPD Malaysia in cooperation with AFPPD Headquarters, UNFPA and UNDP (Malaysia) organised the National HIV/AIDS Seminar for Parliamentarians in Kuala Lumpur. Dato Muhamad Bin Abdullah, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Malaysia, opened the seminar.
- ❖ On 5 – 6 October 2000, AFPPD Malaysia held a two-day seminar on HIV/AIDS and Its Implication on the Socio-Economy of Malaysia. It was held in Sabah (West Coast of Malaysia). More than one hundred and fifty-seven parliamentarians, state assemblymen, teachers, counsellors, students, government officers and NGO representatives attended. The Chief Minister of Malaysia called on all state assemblymen, parliamentarians and local community leaders to play a role in creating awareness on the impact of HIV/AIDS in Sabah, and the negative impact HIV/AIDS has on the nation's economic growth in general. Mr. Steve J. Kraus, Programme and External Relations Advisor of UNAIDS Bangkok, also addressed the participants and gave them an insight to the various aspects of HIV/AIDS, including infections and treatments.
- ❖ The National Parliamentarians' Seminar on HIV/AIDS was organised by AFPPD Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 21 July 2002.
- ❖ AFPPD Malaysia organised a one-day seminar on 'The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Socio-Economic Development' in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 12 January 2003.
- ❖ In 2002-2003, one hundred and forty-eight Senators and MPs in Malaysia were interviewed to assess their views and perceptions on family planning and reproductive health issues as part of the Hewlett-funded PPAP project identified above. In regards to sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS, it was learned that Elected Representatives in Malaysia prefer a holistic approach that includes not only treatment but prevention as well. A strong majority of MPs interviewed stated that religious and moral education was the best strategy for implementing such a holistic approach. Over 60% indicated a willingness to vote for legislation that addresses the HIV/AIDS problem in Malaysia and 72% stated they would be willing to advocate on behalf of such issues to their constituencies. However, such respondents clearly indicated that the promotion of condom use to prevent sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS should only be confined to legally married adults.

Mongolia

- ❖ In February 2000, as a follow-up to the commitments made by parliamentarians at the Inter-Country Meeting on HIV/AIDS and STDs in East and Southeast Asia held in Bangkok in November 1999, the Mongolia Committee and AFPPD organised a two-day seminar on HIV/AIDS Legislation Review. Parliamentarians as well as prominent legal experts, attended the event in a joint effort to produce a comprehensive review of STD and HIV/AIDS legislation.
- ❖ In June 2002, the Government of Mongolia approved the National Programme on Combating Communicable Diseases. This programme was initiated to create favourable conditions for implementing the Mongolian Government's plan of action and state policies on social health such as the *Mongolian Law on the Prevention of HIV/AIDS*, and the *Mongolian Law on Vaccination*.

Nepal

- ❖ On 27 February 2002, over one hundred MPs attended the Workshop on the Role of Parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Population and Social Welfare Committee of the Parliament of Nepal organised the seminar. UNFPA, UNAIDS and AFPPD provided financial and technical support. Mr. Taranath Ranabhat, Speaker of the Nepal House of Representatives, inaugurated the meeting.
- ❖ Dr. Bhabsidhar Mishra MP, member of the Population and Social Committee, summarised the commitment made in 2001 during the UNGASS meeting in New York, and emphasized the effective role that parliamentarians can play in the fight against AIDS. This was followed up by two more national parliamentary events.
- ❖ Speakers and deputy speakers of Nepalese Parliament participated in several parliamentary events, where HIV/AIDS was discussed.

New Zealand

In April 2004, three NZPPD members participated in an FPAID study tour to Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam (14-22 April 2004), focusing on HIV/AIDS. This was an Asia Pacific Alliance (APA)-funded initiative. The programme was organised in partnership with the Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, Viet Nam Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, and AFPPD which coordinated these activities. Also participating in the tour were three Pacific MPs, representatives of New Zealand's APA partners (FPAID and the Development Resource Centre). Photographs taken during the tour resulted in an exhibition called "Hope and Dignity – Images of Life". This was opened at a Wellington gallery in July to mark World Population Day, and parts of the exhibition subsequently showed at NZFPA's 2004 "Sex Matters" conference, the 2004 State of World Population report launch, and in the Wellington Public Library in December to mark World AIDS Day. Photos from the

tour were also displayed at the East & South East Asia and Oceania Region (ESEAOR) Roundtable of ICPD+10 in Kuala Lumpur in July, and a flier about the initiative was distributed to delegates at this meeting and the IPCI/ICPD in Strasbourg.

The Philippines

- ❖ The Philippines Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation, Inc. (PLCPD) provided support for a special bill on HIV/AIDS, piloted by Senator Juan Flavio Velasco, which has since been approved.
- ❖ The PLCPD has also been active in increasing the knowledge and awareness of parliamentarians on issues related to HIV/AIDS by way of direct information dissemination. The PLCPD publishes a bi-monthly Human Development Legislator magazine that regularly includes HIV/AIDS fact sheets as well as articles such as '*Overtake Before It Hits Hard: The Fight Against HIV/AIDS in the Philippines*' and '*Time for Action.*'
- ❖ Additionally, the PLCPD publishes '*TALKPOINT – PLCPD Fact Sheets on Reproductive Health.*' This publication has increased the knowledge base of parliamentarians by including HIV/AIDS fact sheets that focus on specific aspects of the HIV/AIDS crisis such as '*Transmission and Prevention*' (Issue No. 64), '*The Social and Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS*' (Issue No. 65) and '*The Philippine Governments Response to the Epidemic.*'

Sri Lanka

- ❖ The Sri Lankan Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development, with assistance from UNFPA and AFPPD, has organised several meetings to mobilise parliamentary support and improve awareness on vital population and reproductive health issues, including HIV/AIDS. As a result of such efforts, a special Government programme was established to provide health services for the prevention and treatment of STDs and HIV/AIDS. Sixty-five condom vending machines were distributed for the first time in Sri Lanka as a result of this programme. Special brochures have also been printed and distributed to local health organisations and NGOs.

Vietnam

As one of AFPPD's National Committees, the Vietnam Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (VAPPD) has been quite active in promoting political advocacy for HIV/AIDS. Some of its activities include:

- ❖ UNDP and Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) provided supports for the political advocacy on HIV/AIDS

- ❖ *Parliamentarians' Discussion on an HIV/AIDS Prevention Policy*, Hanoi, 23 November 2002.
- ❖ *Regional Southern Workshop – Elected Officials Combating HIV/AIDS*, Ho Chi Minh City, 29-30 December 2002.
- ❖ *The National Workshop for Elected Representatives on HIV/AIDS Prevention Policy*, Hanoi, 25 December 2002.
- ❖ *The Regional Workshop on HIV/AIDS Prevention for the Elected Officials of Central Coastal and Highland Provinces*, Danang City, 27-29 March 2003.
- ❖ *Dialogue Among Parliamentarians on Harm Reduction Policy*, 5 June 2003.
- ❖ In February 2003, the Parliamentarians' Committee for Social Affairs (PCSA) and VAPPD organised an HIV/AIDS monitoring mission to provinces such as Ho Chi Minh City, Quang Ninh and An Giang.
- ❖ In cooperation with UNDP, a project on integration of leadership activities in HIV/AIDS prevention for parliamentarians, Social-Cultural Party Commissions, and three provinces was organized.
- ❖ In 2004, two sub-regional workshops for policy on care for HIV/AIDS people
- ❖ As a result of these workshops and the monitoring mission, PCSA presented a special report on HIV/AIDS to the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, March and May 2003.

The outcome of such activities on HIV/AIDS has been very positive, including the following:

- ❖ The Prime Minister has given specific directions to concerned ministries and provinces to promote HIV/AIDS prevention activities and to prepare a National Strategy to combat HIV/AIDS.
- ❖ Modifications to the HIV/AIDS prevention ordinance are to be made.
- ❖ Key national agencies have made a commitment to increase budget allocations for HIV/AIDS.

VIII. COLLABORATION FOR POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and AFPPD have developed a very special working relationship, having collaborated on mobilizing parliamentary support for population and development initiatives together for over twenty

years. Once a year for the past sixteen years under the sponsorship of APDA, AFPPD has been able to hold an annual Asian Parliamentarians' Meeting to discuss Asian issues as they relate to population and development. APDA has played a very important and significant role in the promotion and continuation of AFPPD's population, family planning and HIV/AIDS-related activities.

Asia Pacific Leadership Forum (APLF) – UNAIDS

AFPPD works closely with the Asia Pacific Leadership Forum (APLF), a joint initiative of the Government of Australia and UNAIDS. APLF was established in response to the commitment agreed upon at the International AIDS Conference in Australia in 2002. APLF aims to increase political support for effective national and regional action against HIV/AIDS. The current priority is to mobilise the high level bureaucrats in the region. AFPPD has been a member of the working group of APLF.

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

AFPPD and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) have had a special working relationship since the formation of AFPPD. IPPF, as an ex officio member of AFPPD's Executive Committee, has been providing on-going support and AFPPD collaborates closely with IPPF's Headquarters as well as their regional office in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Japan Trust Fund has a provision for IPPF on HIV/AIDS. This fund supports Family Planning Associations (FPAs) efforts in the area of HIV/AIDS and AFPPD collaborates with them very closely.

The Asian Forum has also been cooperating with the Planned Parenthood Federation of Thailand (PPAT) on their annual training course for Family Planning Associations' offices in Bangkok. AFPPD provides input on the role of parliamentarians in combating HIV/AIDS.

Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP)

As Japan's leading NGO active in the field of population and family planning, the Japanese Organisation for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP) is committed to implementing the ICPD Programme of Action. With its major focus and expertise on improving the health and status of women in developing countries, AFPPD has developed a very successful and productive partnership with JOICFP for collaborating on reproductive health initiatives, including those pertaining to HIV/AIDS.

Parliamentary Network of the World Bank (PNoWB)

AFPPD collaborates with the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank (PNoWB) as well as the Committee on HIV/AIDS. In December 2002, on World AIDS Day the World Bank organised a global video linkup on HIV/AIDS with members of parliament from all over the world. From 8 - 10 March 2003, the World Bank organized the Third Annual Conference of the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank in Athens with one hundred

parliamentarians from more than fifty countries in attendance. A special session on HIV/AIDS was chaired by Ms. Charity Ngilu, Health Minister of Kenya. Strategies for eliminating stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS as well as suitable means for monitoring treatment were discussed.

Mr. Yoshio Yatsu MP (Japan), Chairman of AFPPD, Senator Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit (Thailand), Secretary General, and AFPPD's Executive Director, Mr. Shiv Khare, and many parliamentarians from Asia and other regions attended. Representatives from regional parliamentarians' forums on population and development were also present. Dr. Malinee and Mr. Yoshio Yatsu from AFPPD were both elected as PNOWB board members. Mr. Jean-Christophe Bas, Development Policy Manager of the World Bank, has been a special guest speaker at several past AFPPD events in Beijing and Bangkok. AFPPD also sponsored parliamentarians to the World Bank-sponsored study visits in Ethiopia, Vietnam, and other countries.

UNAIDS Stakeholders' Meeting – Shanghai

UNAIDS included AFPPD in a select group of NGOs from Asia to be part of their Stakeholders meeting held in Shanghai, China on 26 May 2004. The meeting of 15 NGOs was attended by Mr. Peter Piot, Executive Director UNAIDS, Dr. Nafis Sadik, Special UN Envoy on HIV/AIDS for Asia, Dr. Suman Mehta Director of UNAIDS for Asia and Middle East and representatives from UNAIDS-APLF Bangkok Office. In yet another recognition of AFPPD's work in HIV/AIDS, the Global Health Fund invited AFPPD to attend their stakeholder meeting in Bangkok for AIDS 2004 from 7 to 8 July 2004.

- ❖ Both these meetings indicate the enhanced role of AFPPD in political advocacy for HIV/AIDS.

RH and AIDS Services' Parliamentary Hearings in the UK

The All Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (APPG) held Parliamentary Hearings on the "Integration of RH and HIV/AIDS Services from 19-20 April 2004 in London. Two of AFPPD's contacts attended the Parliamentary hearings: Dr. Baige Zhao from the National Population and Family Planning Commission of China, and Dr. Siriporn Kanshana from the Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. Dr. Kanshana spoke on the Thai situation with regards to HIV/AIDS and reproductive health and she cited some examples of progress made.

International AIDS Conference – Bangkok

The Asian Forum and its member parliamentarians were quite active at the International AIDS Conference in Bangkok from 11 to 18 July 2004, which was attended by around 15 thousand participants. Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General and Heads of major UN agencies addressed the opening, including Dr. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA. Dr. Steven Sinding, Director General of IPPF, Population Council, PAI, IAVI and several other population-related NGOs organized events at the conference. UNFPA

and CST Bangkok organized World Population Day on 11 July 2004 with a panel discussion on “ICPD at 10: Progress and Issues”, which was addressed by Dr. Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director, UNFPA, Dr. Nafis Sadik, UN Secretary General Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, and Dr. Steven Sinding, Director General of IPPF. The session was moderated by Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director, AFPPD.

AFPPD at the UNGASS

Rep. Gilbert Cesar C. Remulla, MP (The Philippines), represented AFPPD at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS in New York from May 31 to June 2, 2006.

IX. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Reports of all HIV/AIDS-related AFPPD events have been published and widely distributed. Some of them are also on CD-ROM.

Every two months, the AFPPD newsletter, with reports of all parliamentarian-related events including HIV/AIDS and others is published. A Russian newsletter is also issued quarterly to cover the Central Asian region. AFPPD maintains a website, www.afppd.org, and issues a monthly email information service, which includes news about parliamentarian advocacy on HIV/AIDS reaching over 1,500 subscribers.

X. FOLLOW-UP & IMPACT

HIV/AIDS is a major component of the ICPD PoA. Therefore, AFPPD’s General Assembly and Executive Committee was mandated to work for the education, motivation and involvement of parliamentarians and other elected representatives on HIV programmes with a special focus on the removal of stigma and discrimination. AFPPD also places an emphasis on national level action.

Most events organised by AFPPD have an HIV/AIDS component. However we have had programmes that specifically focused on HIV/AIDS.

The Inter-Country Meeting of Parliamentarians and Specialists on HIV/AIDS has a follow-up from ten countries with Mr. Steven J. Kraus, then of UNAIDS Bangkok, participating in most of them and funding a few of them.

- ❖ *Legislation on HIV/AIDS in Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, The Philippines, and PNG were initiated and approved; similar laws are being discussed in India, Laos/PDR, and Vietnam.*
- ❖ Budget allocation of state resources for combating HIV/AIDS has increased.

- ❖ The institutional capacity of AFPPD'S national committees to implement political advocacy for HIV/AIDS and build strong alliances has been strengthened. Yearly staff training course contributed to the capacity enhancement.
- ❖ Strategic partnerships and networking for collaborating on political advocacy for combating HIV/AIDS have been enhanced and strengthened, as reflected in the case of the UNAIDS-UNFPA Joint project, Hewlett Foundation's PPAP Programme, the APLF, and the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank.
- ❖ Awareness levels of parliamentarians have improved as exemplified at the 5th Asian Population Conference where they approved to provide sexual education and information to young people as well as services.

In order for parliamentarians' advocacy on HIV/AIDS to have a positive impact, there is a need for closer and better cooperation at the national level with all concerned agencies.

Bangkok
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