
2002 INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS' CONFERENCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Ottawa, Canada ● November 21 - 22, 2002

CONFERENCE OUTLINE

BACKGROUND

At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the international community set a global resource target for population and reproductive health programmes, including family planning, for the year 2000 of \$17 billion—\$11.3 billion to come from domestic funding and \$5.7 billion from external donor funding. While many countries, both developed and developing, have increased their contributions to population and reproductive health activities since the ICPD, the target of \$17 billion is far from being met—about 34 % shortfall in total, 24% in domestic and around 55% in external funding. This is one of the biggest challenges for the effective implementation of the recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA).

Another important challenge for advancing the ICPD agenda is the creation and nurturing of an enabling environment in the domestic context, which can be realized through making positive changes in the national population and development policies, programmes and/or legislation. It has been reported that about 54 countries, as of last year, have taken action since the ICPD in this regard. They have formulated new national population policies or integrated population into their long-term development plans which include issues relating to quality health care, gender equality, sustainable development and environment, education, poverty, demographic data and information systems improvements. In order to fully implement the ICPD PoA, however, it is necessary to promote and reinforce such positive changes at the global level. It is also necessary to establish and/or improve information databases at the national, regional and global levels to monitor and evaluate the progress made.

Needless to say, the parliamentarians can play a significant role in mobilizing resources, in bringing about policy and legislative changes, and in raising awareness for population and development at the national level. Since the ICPD, parliamentarians have been making both individual and collective efforts toward this end, and have already made tremendous progress. They have also been sharing information and experiences with their colleagues and counter-parts through networking at the national, regional and global levels. The International Forum of Parliamentarians on ICPD Review (February 1999, The Hague), the creation of a new regional parliamentary group in Europe (December 2000) and the various regional and inter-regional parliamentarians meetings which are being held several times a year to discuss the key issues contained in the ICPD PoA are some of the recent examples of international collaboration of parliamentarians.

It cannot be said, however, that the recommendations adopted at these international events have been implemented, monitored and evaluated systematically to allow for an objective assessment of the role that the parliamentarians have been playing or could play in mobilizing resources and creating enabling environment for population and development. It is therefore necessary to set up a mechanism by which the parliamentarians from all regions can meet on a yearly basis to monitor the progress made at the global level toward fulfilling the ICPD commitments. In order to facilitate this process, it is also necessary to establish a system whereby parliamentarians are provided, on a regular basis, with updated information on new developments taking place in all regions regarding

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budgetary measures, policy changes and legislation pertaining to population and development.

It is against this background that the regional and global parliamentary groups listed below have decided to host the International Parliamentarians Conference (IPC) on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in 2002. It is hoped that the IPC would be the first in a series of conferences to be held around the same themes every year or every two years, with the location of the conference rotating between five regions, i.e. the Asia and the Pacific, the Africa, the Arab, the Inter-European and the Inter-American regions. It is also hoped that UNFPA would serve as the IPC secretariat responsible for monitoring progress and disseminating information on a regular basis.

If the goals and objectives of the ICPD are to be achieved in the early decades of this century, further cooperation and partnership among parliamentarians is essential. The proposed new framework for dialogue among parliamentarians is a step toward this end.

PURPOSE

To promote dialogue among the parliamentarians from all regions on the implementation of the ICPD PoA, with a view to achieving further commitment to collective action in the areas of resource mobilization and creation of an enabling environment for population and development.

HOSTS

Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD) in collaboration with the following parliamentary groups:

- Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
- Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)
- Forum of African Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD)
- Inter-European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (IEPPD)
- Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)

ORGANIZERS

The conference is being organized by CAPPD, IAPG and UNFPA.

PARTICIPANTS

Approximately 200 participants are expected to attend the conference:

- 130 parliamentarians from all regions of the world
- Representatives from the national, regional and global parliamentary groups
- Panelists and resource persons (including ministers from donor and developing countries)
- Foundations
- UNFPA
- IPPF

DATE AND VENUE

The conference will take place on November 21-22, 2002 in Ottawa at the Canadian Parliament.

AGENDA

The two-day conference will be preceded by a welcome reception on November 20th. Official interpretation/translation in English, French, Spanish and Arabic will be offered.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A steering committee consisting of two parliamentarians from the above-mentioned parliamentary groups (four parliamentarians in the case of FAAPPD as it covers two regions) has been established to prepare for the conference. The first Steering Committee meeting took place on 6 April 2002 in New York.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Statement of Commitment that will spell out concrete actions to be taken by parliamentarians to further mobilize resources and create an enabling environment for the implementation of the ICPD PoA.
 - An email list-serve for parliamentarians to be used for regular dissemination of information by UNFPA.
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