



Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

**Statement by
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and
of the United Nations Population Fund
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Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make a few comments, on behalf of the Partners in Population and Development (PPD), on the introductory statement made by UNFPA Executive Director Ms Thoraya Obaid.

PPD, as most of you know, was born at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), at the initiative and with the encouragement of UNFPA; and PPD and UNFPA have enjoyed a close working relationship for the past fifteen years. In undertaking our programme of activities focusing on promotion and strengthening of South-South cooperation in population and development, we have always benefitted and continue to benefit from financial and technical support of both UNFPA headquarters and its regional and field offices.

We note with great satisfaction that the concept of South-South cooperation in population and development has received increasing support since the ICPD at both international and national levels as pointed out by Dr. Thoraya Obaid. Family Planning, reproductive health and population is one major area where many developing countries have acquired a tremendous amount of experience and expertise over several decades and sharing such expertise and experience with other developing countries through exchange of information, policy dialogues, training and research, and technical cooperation in promoting commodity security clearly makes sense. This is what PPD was designed to do; this is indeed what UNFPA seeks to promote and support through its own strategic plan. There is thus a clearly established mutuality of interest between PPD and UNFPA.

I wish we could say that the increasing acceptance of the concept of South-South cooperation has been fully accompanied by adequate support for the implementation of this concept at the operational and financial levels.

We also note, with regret, the declining support for family planning, by the international community. We strongly support UNFPA's demand for greater allocation of resources for family planning and reproductive health. It deserves support from the donor community and perhaps more importantly from national governments, especially in the context of the increasing unmet needs in developing countries.

We urge that the commitment and engagement pledged by governments at international conferences be translated into national policies and concrete actions to advance Family Planning especially for our brothers and sisters in the developing countries. The private cost of Family Planning is insignificant in relation to the heavy burden of the social cost it incurs for not investing in family planning. Investment in Family Planning and Reproductive Health brings huge dividends and PPD will continue to ensure that this remains high on the development agenda; and that increasing attention is also given to expanding the support for South-South cooperation in the field.

We all emphasize the importance of capacity development, in this context. But I would like to go a bit further and suggest that we also think of capacity utilization. In the areas of training and research, there are world class institutions in many developing countries, and we should capitalize on these capacities that already existing. Policy dialogues and exchange of information among developing countries play a major role in increasing and strengthening support among policy makers and programme managers for family planning, maternal health, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, empowerment of women and many other areas of reproductive health and population programmes; and such activities should be given greater support in future. Commodity security is another area where mutually beneficial arrangements between developing countries need to be encouraged further, as pointed out by the Indian Delegation yesterday.

PPD would continue to focus on these areas within the limited means available to it and would work with UNFPA to promote and implement the objectives of ICPD and MDGs, particularly in the context of South-South Cooperation.

We are sorry to note that Ms Obaid, who has provided outstanding leadership to UNFPA for the past ten years, is planning to leave at the end of the year. We wish her the very best in the future and pledge our full support and cooperation to UNFPA under a new leadership in future.

Thank you, Mr President.