



**Partners in Population and Development
A South-South Initiative**

**Statement by
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and
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Mr. Chairman
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. Chairman,

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 comprehensive statement made by the Executive Director, Dr. Babatunde Oostimehin, at this Annual Session 2011 of the Executive Board.

The year 2011 will be remembered in demographic history as the year of the seven billion. In the year 1987, the world observed the day of the five billion and in less than 25 years since, the world has added two more billion people. That should remind us all of the continued rapidity of global population growth and its potential for future growth. Demographic diversity is rapidly growing across the countries of the world, and even within developing countries, some continue to face the familiar issues of rapid population growth and young age dependency, while others are experiencing rapid aging of their populations, as well as bulging youth populations. Given the significant implications of these demographic changes for social, economic, political, developmental and environmental trends of the future, a stronger commitment to and more effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action is now more urgently needed than ever before.

Against this backdrop, the key achievements and challenges for UNFPA in meeting the goals and outputs of its strategic plan underlined by the Executive Director in his statement this morning are respectively encouraging and sobering. With enthusiasm, the PPD would like to express its strong support for the Executive Director's strategic vision, as well as substantive and management orientations that he has just outlined to us. In our view, the proposed orientations would not only help support the efforts of developing countries in achieving the goals of ICPD and the MDGs, but would also enable UNFPA to improve its performance, efficiency and impact.

The findings noted in the Executive Director's annual report (*DP/FPA/201/3, Part I*) on the various strategic plan outcomes are discerning and should serve as a useful guide to help determine the scale and depth of required actions in the future to fully implement the Cairo agenda. UNFPA should be congratulated on the format of the report and its efforts at quantification of results through the use of DRF indicators.

More specifically, the Partners in Population and Development (PPD) would like to emphasize that national capacity development to effectively plan and implement the ICPD Programme of Action is especially critical. Thus, PPD notes with appreciation the efforts of UNFPA (as documented in table I of *DP/FPA/201/3, Part I*) in so many countries to help build national capacity in the thematic areas of census operations and use of survey data, quality maternal health services, reproductive health commodity

security and response to and prevention of gender-based violence. While progress noted for the other thematic areas in the report is generally encouraging, far greater attention would be required in the future, in particular, in capacity building for incorporation of population issues in public policies, advocacy for the ICPD agenda, HIV prevention among women and young people and importantly, South-South cooperation, which was also emphasized by distinguished delegates of India, Morocco and others.

Another critical element for the more effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, as indicated in the Executive Director's annual report and elsewhere, is the issue of resource mobilization, both at national and global levels. As is well known, current levels of funding are way below what is necessary to realize the goals of ICPD and the MDGs. Of particular concern here is the decreasing proportion of funding for family planning services. This trend needs to be reversed in order to meet the unmet need for family planning and to support the integrated implementation of MDGs 4, 5 and 6.

The analysis of trends in the various indicators of Development Results Framework (DRF) of the strategic plan, included in the Annual Report, is illuminating. Clearly, areas with lagging behind indicators identified in the report, such as population dynamics, SRH and rights, including the unmet need for family planning, and births with skilled attendants should demand greater efforts in the future.

PPD would like to emphasize, among others, the intrinsic linkages that exist between population dynamics, climate change and sustainable development. This important topic deserves greater attention by the international community. PPD is pleased to inform in this context that PPD is organizing in November 2011 an International Conference on the above issue in Pretoria, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development of South Africa, for Ministers of Health and other senior government officials of 30 developing countries.

The Partners in Population and Development (PPD), as many of you know, is an intergovernmental initiative created specifically for the purpose of expanding and improving South-to-South cooperation in the field of reproductive health, population and development. PPD encourages and supports, in its member countries and others, south-south cooperation activities through training and capacity building, through knowledge sharing by documenting innovative practices in population and reproductive health, and through information exchange, policy dialogue and advocacy for population and development.

In undertaking these activities over the last decade and a half, PPD has greatly benefited from technical and financial support provided by UNFPA, and would like to put on record its appreciation for UNFPA's strong commitment to promoting South-South cooperation in population and reproductive health programmes, at global, regional and country levels. PPD would also like to express its gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for continually hosting and supporting the PPD Secretariat in Dhaka.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, PPD would like to express its support for planned actions by UNFPA in the future to strengthen its substantive and management directions, outlined by the Executive Director. PPD also looks forward to continued collaboration to promote South-South cooperation among developing countries in cooperation with UNFPA, under Dr. Babatunde Oostimehin's leadership. Thank you very much for your attention.