



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

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Statement by  
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*At the*  
*High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals*  
*New York, 22 September 2010*



Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much, Mr. President, for giving me this honour and opportunity to make a few comments, on behalf of the Partners in Population and Development (PPD), at this landmark High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals.

As an intergovernmental organization of 24 developing countries committed to the promotion of South-South cooperation in the field of population and development, PPD has been actively promoting the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the goals of International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), especially in its member countries. A number of international organizations and foundations, including UNFPA continue to support the activities of PPD, and on this occasion, the PPD would like to place on record its appreciation for the Fund's continued collaboration and support.

PPD recognizes that all the MDGs are interlinked, thus necessitating an integrated and comprehensive approach in achieving the goals, as many have noted. In line with its mandate, the programme priority areas of PPD include population data and analysis for sustainable development and poverty alleviation, universal access to reproductive health and HIV prevention, reproductive health commodity security and advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Bearing in mind that PPD is a networking and partnership institution, it is encouraging and supporting activities in those substantive areas by focusing on capacity-building through training; knowledge sharing through documenting and disseminating innovative practices in population and reproductive health; information exchange; policy dialogue; and advocacy for population, reproductive health and development.

Mr. President,

PPD would like to draw attention, as others have done at this meeting, to the slow rate of progress achieved in such areas as improving maternal and reproductive health and reducing maternal mortality (MDG 5), and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (MDG 3).

At the same time, PPD notes with great satisfaction the renewed interest shown by Member States for maternal health and family planning as evidenced by the discussions at the last meeting of the G8 in Canada, and at the African Union Summit, which took place in July of this year in Kampala, Uganda. Likewise, the Secretary-General's Global Strategy on Women and Children's Health is most timely and needs to be commended.

While the recent news release by W.H.O of a decline in the number maternal deaths around the world is to be welcomed, more intensive work is required in the collection and analysis of direct data on maternal deaths. Given that maternal mortality rates are still high, a concerted effort is urgently required if accelerated progress on the health goals is to be achieved by 2015. In this regard, PPD would like to reiterate the recommendations contained in the Outcome document that all women, men, including young people, have information about gaining access to the widest possible range of safe, effective, affordable, and acceptable methods of family planning, and that expanding the provision of comprehensive emergency obstetric care and strengthening the role of the skilled health care providers, including midwives and nurses among others, are necessary interventions to dramatically reduce maternal mortality and morbidity.

PPD notes with deep concern that the funding for family planning is lower today than it was in 1995. As UNFPA has cautioned, if that trend is not reversed, it will have serious implications for countries' abilities to address unmet needs for family planning and reproductive health and could undermine efforts to prevent unwanted pregnancies and reduce maternal and infant mortality. Urgent action is required in this regard.

Mr. President,

In the context of achieving the MDGs and ICPD goals, the role of South-South cooperation needs to be highlighted. The Ministerial Meeting of the High-level segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July of this year highlighted the growing importance of South-South cooperation and noted that it currently accounts for around ten percent of all development cooperation.

While specific statistics for South-South cooperation in the field of population and reproductive health are not yet available, the evidence indicates that such cooperation is on the increase. Family planning, reproductive health and population are areas where many developing countries have acquired a tremendous amount of experience and expertise over several decades which are conducive to South-South cooperation.

PPD has been doing its part since 1994, when it was established at the time of the ICPD in Cairo. PPD experience indicates that first-rate technical capacities exist in the population and reproductive health field in many developing countries and greater efforts

should be made to fully capitalize on such capacities through South-South and triangular cooperation. For example, the Governments of Egypt, Morocco and India have offered long-term fellowships and China and South Africa are offering short-term fellowships to train demographers and population and health experts. The Government of Bangladesh continues to host and support the secretariat of the PPD in Dhaka. In addition, PPD member countries have built a network of world-class institutions that can provide a whole range of training, research and technical support opportunities.

In closing, Mr. President, PPD would like to express its fervent hope that the great potential that exists for South-South cooperation in many developing countries will be utilized and play an enhanced and critical role in contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and, indeed, to sustainable development and international cooperation.

Thank you all for your kind attention.