



## **Network of African Parliamentary Committees of Health (NEAPACOH) Meeting**

**Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda  
October 28 - 29, 2021**

**“Sustainable Programmes for Achievement of ICPD Goals and  
SDGs: Role of Parliamentarians”**

**Opening Remarks by:**

**Chair NEAPACOH**

Hon. Dr. Charles Ayume, the Session Chairperson and Chairperson Parliamentary Committee of Health of Parliament of Uganda

Hon Dr Chris Baryomunsi, Member of Parliament, Parliament of Uganda and Minister of ICT and National Guidance, Government of Uganda

Dr Jotham Musinguzi, Director General National Population Council Uganda

Mr. Adnene Ben Haj Aissa, the Executive Director, PPD

Ms Suzanne Madong, the UNFPA Country Representative Uganda, ,

Distinguished Hon. Members of Parliament

Representatives of Development Partners

Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of NEAPACOH, it is my great honour and pleasure to welcome you all to our 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive NEAPACOH annual meeting.

My special welcome goes to those of you who are attending the NEAPACOH meeting for the first time. This meeting is taking place at a time when the COVID 19 pandemic is still with us and continues to ravage the whole world. This is a reason why we have organized this meeting as a hybrid, allowing some delegates to attend physically and others virtually. I hope by the time of our next meeting, we shall have overcome the pandemic and be able to organize a physical meeting, hopefully in my country.

Allow me to state that NEAPACOH annual meetings have proved to be important platforms that provide good opportunities for sharing insights and lessons emerging from the various diverse national and international experiences in addressing issues of health in general, FP and reproductive health in particular. It again becomes imperative that we have such a meeting when we shall be sharing and discussing innovative practices for accelerating the achievement of the ICPD Goals and the SDGs during and

post the COVID 19 pandemic era. The ICPD Summit held in Nairobi in November 2019 is still fresh in our memory. The far reaching policy, financing and programme commitments that were pledged by our countries during the summit are still very valid and relevant and need to be achieved. This meeting is therefore one way of brokering the sharing of experiences and practices that have worked within our countries that we can potentially adopt and adapt to facilitate accelerated achievement of the commitments made.

Colleagues will recall that since September 2008, we have been meeting here in Uganda, under Reproductive Health/Family Planning ‘Themes’ with the assistance of our ‘Partner PPD-ARO and others’ to strengthen the CAUSE for which NEAPACOH was founded. We are grateful to our partner PPDARO, and its collaborative development partners for their continued assistance, and collaborative vision for the good of our continent, and its people.

Ladies and Gentlemen, NEAPACOH is a Network of African Parliamentary Committees on Health that began organizing itself in the East and Southern Africa regions, and continued to grow to become a continental Alliance in pursuance of Health issues, from the context of the different roles that parliamentarians play. It is an endeavour to enable the legislature to be actively involved in addressing the critical issues of health from the context of the legislative, representative, budget appropriation and oversight roles that they play.

As NEAPACOH, we continue to remind ourselves of the critical role the institution of parliament plays in the creation of enabling policy environment for good health systems for our respective countries, and continent. We do this with full cognizance of the similarity of our health challenges across our

nations that call for similar and uniform actions. The committees responsible for health are the implementing organs of the legislature on health matters. It is within this realization that NEAPACOH drives its CALLING to combine our collective efforts, and collaborating with CSO for health, development partners, and professionals to effectively contribute towards addressing the health challenges of Africa.

Pursuant to the THEME of our meeting which is “**Sustainable Programmes for Achievement of ICPD Goals and SDGs: Role of Parliamentarians**”, NEAPACOH is mindful of the fact that implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in our countries has remained slow since 1994 when it was adopted in Cairo, Egypt. We have to do whatever is in our means to ensure accelerated implementation of the ICPD PoA as well as achievement of the SDGs. We hope that the outcome document of this meeting will express our resolve and commitment to this endeavor.

Finally, allow me to express that NEAPACOH is tremendously impressed with the valuable, and professional work of our partners 'PPD-ARO, and others in assisting NEAPACOH and its member Committees. Without this assistance, the network's efforts could not be realized.

I sincerely hope that the deliberations of this meeting will go a long way in contributing to the national, regional and continental responses towards accelerated implementation of the ICPD PoA and achievement of the SDGs by 2030 in our region.

I thank you!