

Family Planning Summit

11 July 2012

London, UK

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants from across the globe,

Ladies and gentlemen

India is excited to be a part of this momentous occasion which brings back the much-needed focus on family planning.

We recognize family planning as a key priority and India is pleased to commit that family planning shall be a central part of our efforts to ensure Universal Health Coverage.

We have already brought about a paradigm shift in our whole approach to family planning with key emphasis now being laid on promotion and provision of spacing methods. Considering that 45% of our maternal deaths occur in the age group 15 to 25 years where 47% of our total fertility is also clustered, we are moving from limiting to spacing for wider health benefits and wellbeing.

Our new strategy focuses on:

Making contraceptives available at the doorstep through 860000 community health workers who are now going from house to house in rural India distributing contraceptives.

Ensuring IUCD services on fixed days at 150,000 rural health sub centers in close vicinity of the community by leveraging our strong workforce of 200,000 Auxiliary Nurse Midwives,

And offering Post partum IUCD services in facilities having high caseload of institutional births where we are also positioning dedicated counselors for family planning. Considering that annually we have more than 12 million women delivering in public health institutions alone, it is a window of opportunity that we wish to capitalize.

Ladies and gentlemen, India is committed to ensuring that family planning information, commodities and services are provided absolutely free to every client including 200 million couples in reproductive age group in every nook and

corner of our large and diverse country in collaboration with partners that include civil society organizations and the private sector. We intend to bring special focus on the 234 million adolescents too and equip them to make informed choices.

We have already developed indigenous capacity, in public and private sector, to manufacture the entire range of family planning commodities, many of which are now being exported.

India is also committed to mobilizing its own domestic resources without dependence on external aid. We are making massive and strategic investments in the National Rural Health Mission which is the largest public health program in the world. Over 13 billion dollars have already been invested by the Federal Government under this mission to strengthen health systems and rejuvenate reproductive and child health agenda. Public spending on Health including family planning is poised to receive a quantum jump over the next 5 years. A National Urban Health Mission is on the anvil with special focus on the urban poor.

We recognize that the challenge of unmet need and maternal and child mortality is the gravest among poor and vulnerable populations, and therefore aim to accord them the highest priority. Equity and Quality are the cornerstones of our strategy. We have specifically costed plans for reproductive, maternal and child health at not just the national level but also at the sub-national and district levels with substantially scaled up investments in backward districts.

I would conclude by emphasizing that Family Planning must not be viewed in isolation. Taking a life cycle approach, we must address the whole continuum of care including adolescent, maternal and child health. India would soon be unveiling a comprehensive RMNCH+A strategy in which A stands for Adolescent Health with reproductive and sexual health as a central component. We also believe that for wider acceptance and success, FP strategies must be country led based on social acceptance, cultural appropriateness and felt needs of the people.

I would like to assure you that India shall remain in the forefront of this global resurgence on Family Planning, shall raise global awareness on the positive impact of Family Planning through consistent advocacy, and promote

south- south collaboration as chair of the Partners in Population Development, a strong alliance of 25 countries.

I thank you for this opportunity to renew India's commitment to Family Planning.