

Ottawa Statement of Commitment

Committed to the Implementation of ICPD on the Road to 2030

Introduction

We the Members of Parliament from all regions of the world, met in Ottawa, Canada, on 22-23 October 2018 to participate in the seventh International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation (IPCI) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which comes at a significant time amidst preparations to mark the 25th Anniversary of the 1994 ICPD Cairo conference.

We note that while progress has been made by our countries towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the ICPD, challenges remain to implement fully the Programme of Action and achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

We are concerned that despite the gains made in the past 24 years, these gains have not been experienced equally by all, and that there is a rising inequality within populations where a considerable number of people continue to live in conditions of extreme poverty, without the fulfillment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We recognize that the provision of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, leads to a country's social and economic progress.

Declaration

1. We recall and commend the positive contribution of parliamentarians towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the ICPD, including the work done by previous IPCI Conferences¹.
2. We advocate for the full implementation of the ICPD promise of universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, as affirmed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as vital to deliver the vision for a world where preventable maternal deaths, and perinatal, infant and child mortality, are a thing of the past, where unmet need for family planning is met, where gender-based violence and harmful practices do not exist, where young people can live healthy and productive lives, where stigmatization and discrimination have no place in society and where reproductive rights are promoted, respected and protected.
3. We see the continued implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action as essential to achieving the SDGs, in that they emphasize the centrality of human rights in producing equitable development outcomes so that nobody is left behind.
4. We stress the urgent need to end preventable maternal death, fulfill the unmet need for family planning, end gender-based violence, and all harmful practices.

¹ Ottawa 2002, Strasbourg 2004, Bangkok 2006, Addis Ababa 2009, Istanbul 2012, and Stockholm 2014

5. We stress the fact that many women and girls, everywhere, particularly those with disabilities and those who are marginalized or in vulnerable situations, face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality, and are still subject to discriminatory laws, policies and harmful practices and recognize the debilitating effect of sexual harassment on young women preventing them from realizing their full potential.
6. We believe that there is no progress and no achievements under wars and conflicts and therefore enhancing peace, ending occupation and respecting international law are essential towards implementing the ICPD Programme of Action and achieving the SDGs.
7. We express profound concern over the backlash against the progress made by States, international and regional organizations and civil society, to respect, protect and fulfill all human rights, and recognize that these retrogressions can be linked to political or religious interpretations which oppose the struggle against gender-based discrimination and equal rights.
8. We recognize that climate change is a common concern of human kind and that the increasing challenges caused by its impact on population and development, where women, children and persons with disabilities are the most vulnerable. We are therefore committed to the 2015 Paris Agreement that includes the right to health, the right to development, as well as gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and young people.
9. We recognize the unprecedented number of people affected and displaced by humanitarian emergencies, which are increasing in scale and severity that continue to overwhelm humanitarian response capacities. There is an urgent need to strengthen the design and implementation of inclusive policies and social safety mechanisms, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, to address access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, which remain significantly under-funded in crisis settings.

We Parliamentarians, consistent with human rights and the principles of the ICPD are determined to play our role as follows:

Human Rights for All – Promotion and Protection

10. We commit to:
 - a) Ensure that the rights of all individuals are respected, protected and fulfilled as set forth in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, and subsequent international human rights treaties, without distinction of any kind, in order to fully extend the principles of equality, dignity, non-discrimination, participation, and universality, to all generations;
 - b) Enact laws, policies and programmes to prevent and punish hate crimes without distinction of any kind, and take active steps to protect all persons from discrimination, stigmatization and violence, including gender-based violence,

and to amend laws, policies and programmes that violate human rights and discriminate on the basis of gender, sexuality and ethnicity;

- c) Enact laws, policies and programmes that respect, protect and fulfill the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals, including through the adoption of a human rights-based approach that works towards realizing the accessibility, availability, acceptability and quality of a comprehensive package of sexual and reproductive health services and information;
- d) Advocate for actions beyond the health sector to change social norms, laws and policies, to uphold human rights, in particular the most crucial reforms that promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls to have full control over their bodies and lives in line with the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

Promoting World Changing Transformative Results for Achieving ICPD and SDG Goals

11. We commit to:

End Preventable Maternal Death – No woman should die giving life.

- a) Respect, promote, protect and fulfill the right to health by advocating for provision of universal health coverage, including sexual and reproductive health that is accessible, available, acceptable, affordable and of good quality, including services for medical emergency obstetric care, increasing the number of midwives, skilled birth attendants, and family planning services;
- b) Work with governments to further reduce abortion-related complications and deaths by providing non-discriminatory universal post-abortion care; to remove legal barriers preventing women and adolescent girls from access to safe abortion, including revising restrictions within existing abortion laws, and ensure the availability of neutral and fact-based information about abortion, and safe, good-quality abortion services, where legal, in order to safeguard the lives of women and girls;
- c) Take measures to prevent adolescent pregnancy and unsafe abortion, including through comprehensive sexuality education, addressing harmful gender norms and stereotypes, ensuring the delivery of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and demand-driven access to a range of family planning services and modern methods of contraception;
- d) Advocate our governments to provide adequate resources to strengthen nutrition and health systems and infrastructure to ensure access to quality basic health care, including for sexual and reproductive health services;

Fulfilling the Unmet Need for Family Planning

12. We commit to:

- a) Ensure the rights of all individuals to comprehensive, family planning services and guarantee access to safe, modern methods of voluntary contraception as part of an inclusive and integrated package of sexual and reproductive health services and information, which is central to gender equality, women's empowerment and sustainable development;
- b) Advocate for accessible and affordable family planning services as part of universal health coverage for women and men who want to plan their families and still do not have access to modern methods of family planning services, education and information;
- c) Enact laws and policies for access to safe and modern methods of contraception, including in emergency situations, and ensure that family planning services and information becomes a part of humanitarian response in emergencies, where women and girls, especially refugees and displaced persons, are affected by crises such as armed conflict, war and occupation, or natural disasters, where they are at increased risk of sexual violence;

Ending Gender-based Violence and all Harmful Practices

13. We commit to:

- a) Advocate for the enactment or ratification of global and regional legal frameworks, such as the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which combats gender-based violence (GBV), including in humanitarian settings, revise laws that exonerate perpetrators of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence within the framework of strengthened legislation to end impunity in conformity with international human rights law and international humanitarian law;
- b) Adopt legislation, policies and measures that prevent, punish and eradicate gender-based and sexual violence, including within and outside of the family, within communities, internet and online-based, in conflict and post-conflict situations and humanitarian emergencies and ensure that the survivors of such violence have access to a full range of support services, including sexual and reproductive health services, emergency contraception and legal counsel;
- c) Adopt comprehensive legislation to eliminate all harmful practices, including child and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation, and further enact laws to raise the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years;
- d) Support development of policies and programmes that provide awareness-raising, education and training to families, local community and religious leaders, political leadership, educational institutions, and the media, on the

consequence and negative impact of harmful practices on the lives of young people, as well as education for men and boys on gender equality and respect for women, in line with internationally agreed resolutions and commitments;

Addressing the Needs of Young People

14. We commit to:

- a) Promote and advocate for universal access, including in fragile situations, to quality and inclusive education for young people at all academic levels that is learner-centered, adopts a lifelong learning approach, and promotes sustainable lifestyles and sustainable development as further affirmed in the United Nations Youth Strategy, Youth 2030;
- b) Advocate for and support policies that keep girls, including married girls and pregnant girls, in school at all levels of education without discrimination, and ensure admission or re-entry to school after giving birth;
- c) Support and promote effective policies and programmes that provide young people with skills for employment or entrepreneurship, and to strengthen efforts to create decent work consistent with international conventions;
- d) Promote and advocate for accessible quality health care for youth and adolescents, including sexual and reproductive health services, and remove legal and social barriers to sexual and reproductive health services, information, and comprehensive sexuality education containing prevention of STIs, including HIV and AIDS, and early detection and treatment of cervical cancer, and ensure access to a wide range of modern methods of family planning, including emergency contraception;
- e) Support policies and programmes that harness the demographic dividend through enhancing the capabilities of young people to contribute to social and economic development and innovation;
- f) Support and promote young people as catalysts for peace and security and humanitarian action, and their participation in decision-making, recognizing the positive contribution of young people to peace and security, prevention of violence, disaster risk reduction, and humanitarian action;

Timely Humanitarian Response

15. We commit to:

- a) Promote and advocate for strengthened national workforce capacities to swiftly respond to humanitarian emergencies and provide high-quality integrated sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, as well as through the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP);

- b) Support policies and programmes for providing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian emergencies, and to ensure that sustainable sexual and reproductive health services and supply chains are strengthened and to build resilience into national health systems from relief to development;
- c) Work with Governments to address gender-based violence and sexual violence in humanitarian crises and in refugee camps, with access to a wide range of services, including post-rape treatment, sexual and reproductive health services, psychosocial support and legal support;
- d) Advocate for provision of adequate funding and investment in preparedness and resilience-building including for local communities, and ensure that funds for sexual and reproductive health services are sufficiently earmarked in humanitarian and development budgets, and that monitoring mechanisms are established to track funding and investments for sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian settings;

Financing the implementation of ICPD

16. We commit to:

- a) Advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development which provides a comprehensive framework for ensuring that investments are long-term oriented so that growth is inclusive and sustainable and creates an enabling environment for implementing the ICPD Programme of Action;
- b) Advocate for increased development assistance budgets for population assistance, in particular for those in vulnerable countries, and ensure the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance is met as agreed at the previous International Parliamentarians' Conferences on the Implementation of the Programme of Action;
- c) Advocate for at least 10 per cent of national development budgets and development assistance budgets, for sexual and reproductive health programmes, including family planning and reproductive health commodities, and the prevention of STIs, including HIV and AIDS;
- d) Advocate for innovative mechanisms and approaches, including innovative financing, that are rapidly changing the development finance landscape and create opportunities to scale up contributions of all sources of financing towards the full implementation of the ICPD and in achieving the SDGs;

Strengthening Parliamentary Action, Accountability and Political Commitment

17. We will continue to work with our parliaments to:

- a) Ensure stronger political commitment for the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and to use our role as parliamentarians to keep Governments accountable to the commitments made in Cairo and for achieving the SDGs by 2030;
- b) Ensure effective review of policies and programmes and work with our respective governments to promote and facilitate active participation of all constituencies including non-state actors, in order to guarantee effectiveness, transparency, rule of law, and improved governance at the local, national, regional and global levels;
- c) Ensure that appropriate population, health, gender and development data, disaggregated, by sex, age, gender identity, disability and indigenous status, is made publicly available in order to facilitate sharing and use of knowledge and to improve public accountability;
- d) Utilize the knowledge and expertise of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and youth groups, in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of population and development policies and programmes for achieving the goals of access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights;
- e) Hold our respective States accountable for the establishment of appropriate and transparent governance institutions and mechanisms that ensure effective participation, without any form of discrimination, of women and young people in public debate, in planning, decision-making in all policy and programme phases, in particular on matters that affect them directly;
- f) Strengthen parliamentary cross-party networks at local, national, regional and global levels, to facilitate exchange of best practices, and strengthen the effectiveness of parliaments and to achieve IPCI Commitments;

Our Pledge

We the parliamentarians from all regions gathered in Ottawa pledge to:

Continue to implement previously adopted declarations of IPCI conferences and ensure that legislation, policies and programmes are developed and strengthened, and that adequate and predictable funding is made available to advance further the ICPD Programme of Action, as we move forward with resolve in achieving the SDGs by 2030.