



**REPORT ON
CENTRAL - ASIAN REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS
MEETING ON ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL
HEALTH**

organized by

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

and

**National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians
on Population and Development**

In cooperation with:

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

and

Government of Japan

**27 -28 June 2006
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan**

Opening of the Meeting

The opening ceremony of the Central Asian Parliamentarians Meeting on Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health took place on June 27-28, 2006 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The meeting was organized by AFPPD in collaboration with the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians on Population and Development, the UNFPA, and the Government of Japan. The conference was aimed in highlighting youth-related health issues such as reproductive health, sexual health, HIV/AIDS, gender equality and violence against women. Parliamentarians from Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan and Thailand attended this meeting.

Welcome remarks

“We must take care of our young people as they are the builders of our prominent future,” Hon. Felix Kulov, Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, stressed during his welcome address. He noted that the well-being of any nation depended on how well the population development issues were dealt in the country. “As one scientist said, a nation with a population of 5 million people is a very fragile nation. Accordingly, country programs and strategic documents against HIV/AIDS have been formulated and actively implemented to solve the reproductive health issues of the adolescents in Kyrgyzstan,” he said.

Mr. Osmonbek Artykbaev, MP and Chairman of the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians on Population and Development, said that the idea of the meeting was to define the basic problems of the young people of the Central Asian region; to join efforts of the members of the parliament to improve public health services, and population and development issues; and to implement the rights of the young people to sexual and reproductive health by means of reforming the legislation.

Hon. Marat Sultanov, Speaker of the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan underlined the role of the parliamentarians in solving population-related problems and noted that these issues should be resolved in solidarity with all the parliamentarians of the region. “The National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians on Population and Development has been very active in approaching sexual and reproductive health problems of the young people, HIV/AIDS, and gender equality,” he said. He also underlined the essential role of the AFPPD in promoting activities related to poverty alleviation, reproductive health, gender equality and violence against women in the Asia – Pacific region.

Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Senator (Thailand) and Secretary General of AFPPD, stressed the importance of reproductive health issues in Central Asia. AFPPD’s involvement had helped in promoting ICPD issues among parliamentarians. Further work would be realized to mobilize the parliamentarians of the region by conducting person-to-person advocacy on population-related issues; meeting members of the parliament individually and discussing population-related issues on topics such as reproductive and sexual health, violence against women, and HIV/AIDS. “In Central Asia, with the support from UNFPA regional and country offices, we have been able to mobilize a good number of parliamentarians and now they are champions of this cause,” Dr. Sukavejworakit added.

Mr. Khaled Philby, Regional Director of UNFPA for Central Asia, pointed out that primary attention should be given to the needs of the young people in solving reproductive health and HIV/AIDS problems. He also noted that the meeting was also a landmark event as it represented the results of a dedicated and effective partnership between parliamentarians and the UNFPA in understanding the needs and giving a voice to the young generations. “This meeting will bring better focus to the needs of the young people and encourage their participation in the decision making of their reproductive and sexual health”, he underlined. “We will work together over these two days and share our experiences and expectations. UNFPA, parliamentarians, government officials, international organizations and NGOs will put forward their best practices and lessons learned. In this meeting, we will also give a chance to the young people to raise their voices and help us find solutions to their problems”, he concluded.

Reflections from parliamentarians

Mr. Maripov Asamidin Maripovich, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Social Issues of the Kyrgyzstan Parliament, spoke on the needs of the youth and the adolescents in the field of reproductive and sexual health in the first session. He stressed that out of all human rights recognized by the global community, gender equality, right to education and right to health were especially acute to the young generation. “Realization of the right to health requires access to adequate and corresponding-to-the-age opportunity, circumstances, information, and services in the sphere of sexual and reproductive health”, he said.

Ms. Salieva Saltanat, Member of the Youth Committee of International Family Planning Association (YCIFPA) of Kyrgyzstan, stressed the importance of today’s adolescence issues. “Risk behavior, unwanted pregnancies, drug abuse, poor nutrition, violence and legal exposure, these are the realities of the current adolescent and youth issues,” she said.

Ms. Kangeldieva Aigul, Director of the Kyrgyz Scientific Center of Human Reproduction (KCOHR) of Kyrgyzstan, spoke on the growing trend in which young people tended not to seek medical advice from health care professionals.

Mr. Mamyrov Erkinbek, State-Secretary of the Ministry of Justice of Kyrgyzstan, shed light on the existing legal basis to deal with health problems. He emphasized the existing laws in the Family Code and Labor Code of Kyrgyzstan speaking in the second session on the future direction of the participation of young people in the decision-making process on reproductive and sexual health led by Mr. Beksultan S. Tutkushev, Senator (Kazakhstan) and Deputy Secretary-General of AFPPD.

Dr. Kerimova Natalia, Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Perinatology Association of Kyrgyzstan, spoke on the impacts of the modern conditions on reproductive health of the adolescents. She noted that starting from 2001, the number of people living with HIV/AIDS had been gradually increasing and to date, about 4,000 people were living with the virus. “Fifty-two percent of these people are adolescents among 15-21 years of age. Heroin addiction is another issue that inflicts many young people, women and children,” she said.

Dr. Damira Bibosunova, from the USAID/CAR of Kyrgyzstan, talked about the USAID strategy to improve legislative, regulatory and policy framework, and to improve the health care of the population; including infectious diseases, maternal and child health, population involvement, and rational use of resources.

Mr. Beksultan S. Tutkushev, Senator (Kazakhstan) and Deputy Secretary-General of AFPPD has noted, that since 2000 there is an improvement of demographic parameters. However, there has been increase in adolescent prostitution. To effectively approach issues on reproductive health of youth and the population, the program has been designed to reform public health system for 2005-2010 years, and Laws « About the rights of the child in Republic of Kazakhstan », and Law “About reproductive rights of citizens and their guarantees” were accepted.

Mr. Shmelev, MP of Russian Federation, who basing on statistics said that by the end of the year 2005, 0, 4% of population in the age of 15 to 49 years were officially registered as HIV positive. Among citizens of Russia in the age range of 18-24 HIV positive persons have already comprised 1%. The tensest situation is in such cities as Toliati, Irkutsk, and Orehovo-Zuevo (Moscow region); in those locations 6-8% of young males in the age of 18-30 years are infected with HIV. To fight against this acute disease, subsidiary money assets in the sum of 3, 1 billion rubles were allocated by the end of the year 2006 in the frames of “Priority national project in the sphere of health care”. Moreover, as large international projects are starting to be implemented in Russia: Program on against AIDS in the frames of World Bank loan (around 50 million USD for 5 years), and 2 projects based on the grants provided by Global Fund against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria (in the amount of 200 million USD for 5 years, on AIDS – 88,7 mln USD) There is no coordination among departments and NGO’s that to different extent deal with HIV issues. Ministry of Education can not work out one single approach to sexual education of students.

Mr. Niyazov Shailobek, Minister of the Public Health of Kyrgyzstan, spoke on the significance of HIV/AIDS education of the youth. He said that as in other countries, among different infectious diseases such as acute intestinal infection, tuberculosis, and hepatitis; sexually transmitted diseases were of significant weight in Kyrgyzstan in the session on HIV/AIDS, youth and adolescents which was led by Mr. Isachkin, MP (Belarus).

Mr. Isakov Timur, Head of the Service Department, Drugs Control Agency of Kyrgyzstan, said that we needed a general plan for the struggle against narcotics and HIV/AIDS. He described the war against social and biological epidemics as follows, “The present war is different. Two components are united by a regular syringe and this coupling is said to be mortally strong.”

Mr. Salimov Olim, Vice Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs, Public Organizations and Information of Tajikistan, spoke on the action plan towards promoting gender equality in Tajikistan in the session on gender equality and expansion of opportunities of girls and women which was moderated by Mr. Tekebaev Omurbek, Member of the National Committee of Parliamentarians on Population and Development of Kyrgyzstan.

Ms. Niyazova Anara, a special Representative of the President of Kyrgyzstan on Gender Development, pointed out that special emphasis was required on the issues of women rights protection and on achieving international legal standards in the area.

Mr. Dosbol Nur Uuulu, Minister of Education, Science and Culture of the Kyrgyzstan, spoke on educating the youth to effectively cope with the existing problems of reproductive and sexual health, gender equality, violence against women and HIV/AIDS. “For the meantime, the most effective measure to strengthen reproductive health is preventive education. Most targeted and prioritized group in Kyrgyzstan to conduct prophylactic work with are the adolescents and the youth from age 10 to 25. A significant part of this group can be covered by prophylactic programs through educational system,” he said in the session on education and development for the adolescents and sexual health which was moderated by Mr. Salimov O. S., MP Tajikistan.

Ms. Chirkina Galina, Executive Director of the Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan, spoke on the rapidly changing social climate in the region. She said teenagers and children had been most vulnerable at the age of 10 to 15.

Mr. Isachkin Victor, Deputy Chairman of the Commission on Law and Justice of Belarus, spoke on the interplay between the dynamics of population and the development in Belarus. In the session on the role of the parliamentarians and their positive experiences in the protection of the rights and interests of the youth and the adolescents in the field of reproductive and sexual health which was moderated by Mr. Shmelev A. K., MP Belarus.

Mr. Omurbek Tekebaev, MP and Member of the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians on Population and Development, said that in several years there would be tangible achievements on reproductive health issues of population, HIV/AIDS and gender equality in Kyrgyzstan.

Adoption of Bishkek Declaration – towards the achievement of the ICPD goals

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, moderated the session dedicated to the discussion and the adoption of the Bishkek Declaration. The parliamentarians from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Thailand recognized the necessity to take into account reproductive and sexual health problems, and their importance to the youth; and agreed upon unifying the efforts to deal with the above-mentioned issues.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Malinee Sukavejworakit, Senator (Thailand) and Secretary-General of AFPPD “I am really impressed with the energy shown by the parliamentarians during the discussions where good numbers of questions were asked. Some of them generated some heat. I feel comfortable with the quality and level of knowledge and now, one thing to do is to get into action and monitor the program closely, which is lacking in our countries. We assure you that this meeting has given AFPPD the encouragement to enhance its work in the region,” she said on her closing speech of the meeting.

Mr. Khaled Philby, Regional Director for Central Asia of UNFPA, noted that the meeting became an important and starting one for other countries in Central Asia to further solve problems related to reproductive health, gender equality and violence against women, which were of great importance in the region.

Mr. Erkinbek Alimbekov, Vice Speaker of the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, said that the Bishkek Declaration obliged the participating parliamentarians to further promote actions to reform and adopt legislative measures towards the health problems of the young generation.

Mr. Osmonbek Artykbaev, MP and Chairman of the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan Parliamentarians on Population and Development, highlighted the success of the meeting and said that the parliamentarians, in cooperation with AFPPD and international organizations such as the UNFPA, the UNDP, and the USAID, as well as the NGOs and the government agencies; had discussed about adolescent reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and gender equality issues, and had adopted the declaration that would be a guiding factor in planning future program of action in the region.

Mr. Shiv Khare, Executive Director of AFPPD, assured continued inputs to enhance parliamentarians’ activities.

DECLARATION OF THE BISHKEK CENTRAL ASIAN REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS MEETING ON ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH

Final declaration

Date: June 28, 2006

We, the participants of Central Asian Regional Parliamentarians Meeting on Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health, held in Bishkek on June 27-28, 2006, the representatives of the parliaments of six countries from Central Asia and Europe,

we recognize the necessity of reproductive and sexual health problem consideration to be of current importance within the scope of overall development of youth;

we express our anxiety on the fact that poverty, inadequate development and illiteracy are among of the main factors which cause a deterioration of adolescent reproductive and sexual health and restrict an access of young people to the appropriate services;

we acknowledge the fact that conflicts and natural disasters also intensify the epidemic spread;

we emphasize an importance of economic growth stabilization for the sake of younger generation through politics, programs and strategies aimed at sustainable development and improvement of life quality;

we realize that promotion of equal rights of men and women, boys and girls in their access to education, information and public health services will ensure an exercise of youth rights to protect its reproductive and sexual health;

we realize that for effective HIV prevention it is necessary to provide for a change in sexual conduct of young people by inculcating into them habits of safe sexual behavior and of leading a healthy life style;

we recognize the complete exercise of youth rights to be a key action in response to pandemia of HIV as well as in the field of prevention, care, support and treatment;

we consider that concealment, discrimination, estrangement and absence of confidentiality extend the epidemic effect on youth;

we recognize as a constant need an effective solution of problems and expectations related to reproductive and sexual development and education of youth;

we take into consideration the fact that the population of the region is mainly formed of young people of reproductive age who lead an active sexual life;

we take into account a very rapid spread of HIV in Central Asian region, especially among young people, through taking drugs via injections, through casual sexual contacts; we also take into consideration a transmission of HIV from a mother to her infant which is widespread nowadays;

we emphasize an essential and advanced role of regional and international parliamentary cooperation in support of adolescent reproductive and sexual health and rights in the context of discussions of demographic tendencies development in Central Asia, Europe and other regions;

we approve the most important activities having already been conducted by parliamentarians for support and implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in 1994 as well as the Millennium Declaration on Reproductive and Sexual health in 2000;

we recognize a long-term effective cooperation of government bodies, non-governmental organizations and parliamentarians which is aimed to attract a deliberate attention to adolescent reproductive and health problems, to population and development issues;

we emphasize a complexity of young self-consciousness which is to be considered in the process of development and further implementation of the policy in the field of reproductive and sexual health protection as well as protection of the youth rights;

we anxiously recognize the fact that some negative economic, cultural and social factors prevent our efforts to raise awareness and to inculcate habits of HIV prevention;

we realize that in spite of young people being vulnerable, they are the main active participants and guides in the process of changes in our struggle for reproductive and sexual health, HIV prevention and improvement of life quality;

we take into consideration our total work experience in regional inter-parliamentarian groups on population and development, in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health, as well as the UNFPA experience in development and implementation of youth-aimed programs;

we support any initiatives of vital importance developed and implemented under the aegis of the Asian Parliamentarians Forum on population and development in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health,

NOW, THEREFORE, we hereby agree to take the following actions and undertake the following obligations and to fulfill thereof before the beginning of 2009 with the view of promotion to reproductive and health protection and to protection of rights of young generation:

to ensure the responsibilities and obligations to be taken by the parliaments of the countries in the region to provide all possible support to young people by elaboration of new and monitoring of implementation of existing laws and legislative acts in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health protection and protection of youth rights;

to support the formation of parliamentarian groups on population, development and sexual and reproductive health and rights wherever such groups have not been formed yet, for elaboration of appropriate laws within the youth development policy;

to encourage and promote national, regional and international cooperation in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health protection by conducting on both national and regional levels of the activities for providing an access of young people to high-quality services on reproductive health protection and of the actions to exercise reproductive rights;

to apply existing data research and materials in order to attract attention to the adolescent needs in exercise of its reproductive rights;

to encourage the experience of national and international NGOs and independent experts in developing of technical support and programs for protection of adolescent reproductive and sexual

health in order to support initiatives of national and regional governments and parliaments of the counties in the region;

to support the reaching of consensus on priority problems of adolescent reproductive and sexual health and rights between government, non-governmental, religious and international organizations; to raise these questions on political arena;

to create long-term partnership with mass media, considering its crucial role in influence on relations and conduct of young people;

to attract a civil society, especially young people, to activities related to publishing of periodical reviews describing the progress of fulfillment of the obligations set forth in this Declaration;

to create close working relations of all parliamentarian groups, governmental bodies and NGOs involved in the field of adolescent rights and interests protection, with the Asian Parliamentarians Forum on population and development;

to recognize and important role of a family and any other forms and systems of life support for health, choice and rights of individual in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual development;

to recognize high effectiveness of peer education approach to HIV prevention among young people and to support an elaboration and introduction of standards and guidelines into this programme;

to conduct continuous work with government, donors, research and medical institutions to provide an access of youth to up-to-date kinds, methods and services on reproductive health protection;

We commit ourselves to:

promote in all countries of the region the implementation of activities providing quality information, general education and services in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health protection and protection of adolescent rights;

carry out continuous monitoring and conduct progress estimate of actions outlined in this Declaration, by a multi-sectoral group, which is to be formed for this purpose and for carrying out of regular reports which are to be sent to organizations operating in the field of adolescent reproductive and sexual health and to be disseminated in mass media;

improve national laws on protection of adolescent reproductive and sexual health;

promote an exchange of work experience and information related to implementation of actions and obligations under this Declaration between the countries of Central Asian region;

continue work to achieve goals of the Program of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in 1994, ICPD +5 in 1999 and the Millennium Declaration in 2000.

Adopted by members of parliaments of:

1. Belorussia
2. Kazakhstan
3. Kyrgyzstan
4. Russia
5. Tajikistan
6. Thailand