



## **94-09-12: Statement of Pacific Isl.Assoc. of NGO, Mr.Leiataua Alailima**

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AS WRITTEN

Pacific Island Association of Non-Government Organizations

Secretariate

C/- Development Services Exchange P.O. Box 556

Honiara, Solomon Islands

Tel..No. (677) 23-760 Fax (677) 21-339

STATEMENT MADE ON BEHALF OF THE SOUTHERN NGO DEVELOPMENT FORUM

TO

UNITED NATIONS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD)

SEPTEMBER 3 - 13 , 1994

CAIRO, EGYPT

PRESENTED BY

HIGH CHIEF LEIATAUA B. ALAILIMA

Southern NGO Development Forum

Statement to the ICPD

"Sustainable Development Crucial to Resolving Population Issues"

Honorable Chairman

Distinguished Delegates of the International Conference on  
Population and Development

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honor and privilege of standing before you today to speak on behalf of the Southern NonGovernment Organization Development Forum This Forum was first convened at the second ICPD Preparatory Committee meeting in May of 1993 to enable NGOs sharing third World perspectives on a host of development issues to effectively promote and advance the interests of the people they serve This network of NGOs working throughout the world facilitates communications; provides a common expression at international forums; and assists NGOs in strengthening and developing unity, identities cultures and forms of social, economic and environmental action

It is in the spirit of the words of our Egyptian host the Most Honorable President Mubarak, who in his vision and foresight for the ICPD advocated the need for honest and open dialogue that I present the views of the Southern NGO Development Forum on population and

development

#### Members of the Conference

The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 adopted by the international community at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development called for patterns of development that reflect the new understanding of intersectoral linkages. With regard to the Draft Program of Action under negotiation at this conference, the Southern NGO Development Forum has identified some major weaknesses in the document.

We note that it has become the major assumption of Chapter III that sustainable development can be achieved through the control of population growth rates in the Third World. This ultimately places the responsibilities and burden for solving population problems on the South and especially on women from the South. We object to population policy that focus primarily on the control of women's fertility which results in the violation of women's health and integrity without addressing itself to the basic issues of development.

We also note that North-South linkages to the development problem has not been adequately addressed in the document. The whole issue of existing inequities between the North and South and the unequal and exploitative transfer of resources have all lead to over consumption and global environmental degradation. The plight of the South is further aggravated by various types of political instability such as military, rule or occupation and civil strife often waged through low intensity conflict all of which is largely aided and abetted by countries in the North.

Population has a direct relationship to land use and land rights

issues as land is the popular yardstick by which we measure population capacity. Land use patterns and environmentally sustainable production methods in more traditional societies throughout the Third World have a major influence in determining the quality of life and family size. Failure to appropriately address the interrelationship between land and population in the document effectively assures that Northern concepts of land exploitation will continue to dominate the global development pattern at the expense of southern cultures and their alternate land tenure systems.

We recognize that the North with 20% of the population utilizes up to 80% of the global resources and is responsible for 80% of the pollution that causes the green house effect and ozone loss. The Northern per capita Gross national Product is 16 times more than that of the South's. With its one billion people, the North consumes 16 units of global resource while the South with its 4 billion people consumes only 4 units of the same resource. Therefore, the important equation is not that "4 out of every 5 people live in the South" but that "4 out of 5 units of the earth's resources consumed are consumed in the North." Even if the population growth rate in the South were to decline to zero, only 20% of the environmental problems would be resolved and the North would still be consuming up to 80% of the world resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen

We of the Southern NGO Development Forum firmly believe that sustainable development can only be achieved when wealth and power among and within nations are equally distributed and when unsustainable consumption and production patterns in the North and among the Southern elites can be curbed so as to bring about changes in lifestyles while

respecting the sovereignty of nations This would then shift the focus of the population concern to resource use and wastage which today remains at the very heart of the global problem the world is attempting to resolve in this era In addition traditional and cultural values need to be fully respected, restored and protected so as to preserve the beauty and advantages of diversity while enhancing the dignity of the entire human race

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Conference

The Southern NGO Development Forum calls for genuine efforts to be made towards achieving sustainable development as the ICPD Conference is on "Population and Development" For the majority of the people on our planet, this means:

assuring equity in the use and consumption of resources and sustaining the ability, of the earth to regenerate life;

ensuring social integration which requires gender equality respecting the cultural context and equitable access to productive resources;

promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns;

developing equal access to information and environmentally sound technology

promoting popular participation in determining structures of governance by restoring genuine democratic processes and influencing policies that determine people's lives;

ensuring that socio-economic and political systems are created where survival needs of the majority are taken into account and genuine human development ensured;

mitigating the effects of the structural adjustment programs that have driven people to migrate to the cities and to emigrate beyond national boundaries;

resolving the debt problem which continues to place a heavy burden on severely weakened social budgets in Third World countries;

rejecting and developing alternatives to the current dominant model of development that is based on the free market which supports increased privatization and structural adjustments with their ill effects on the majority, of the people;

allowing communities and nations to build their own capacities to determine their own path of development and destiny;

curtailing the increasing growth of the armament industry;

recognizing and respecting alternative land use systems which for many in the South are the focus identity spiritual and sustaining strength of family units

respecting biological and other forms of diversity

The Southern NGO Development Forum further recommends that there be a global conference on unsustainable consumption and production patterns to include lifestyle change and land tenure systems There is an

urgent need to restore a fair balance between the population issue and the consumption-lifestyle Issue on the global agenda

Mr. Chairman Ladies and Gentlemen of the ICPD

In concluding we of the Southern NGO Development Forum call upon conference delegates to seriously reflect upon the main points we have raised when finalizing the ICPD Plan of Action document It is our sincere hope that through your deliberations you will formulate and agree upon an appropriate global plan that responsibly addresses the root problems that foster population concerns I would like to thank the distinguished Chair and members of the Conference for this opportunity to express in open forum the points that we of the Southern NGO Development Forum have agreed upon are the cornerstones that can and will alleviate the suffering and secure our planet for generations to come.

Thank you

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For further information, please contact: [popin@undp.org](mailto:popin@undp.org)  
POPIN Gopher site: <gopher://gopher.undp.org/11/ungophers/popin>  
POPIN WWW site: <http://www.undp.org/popin>