



94-09-30: CAIRO CONFERENCE (Eng)

"ICPD 94"

International Conference on Population and Development

Cairo, Egypt 5-13 September 1994

ICPD Secretariat, 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA

Tel: (212) 297-5244 or 5245; Fax: (212) 297-5250 Press inquiries:

(212) 297-5023, 297-5030 or 297-5279 E-mail: ryanw@unfpa.org

PRESS RELEASE

30 September 1994

CAIRO CONFERENCE ADOPTS 20-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ACTION LINKING
POPULATION, DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

179 States Reach Crucial Compromises to Finalize Document, Endorse
New Approach Focused on Individual Well-Being and Rights

At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) on 13 September, 179 States adopted a 20-year Programme of Action based on a new strategy that emphasizes the interdependence of population and development, the empowerment of women and the needs of individual women and men, rather than demographic targets.

Meeting in Cairo from 5-13 September, delegates engaged in painstaking negotiations to finalize the 16-chapter Programme of Action, reaching a number of crucial compromises.

An account of the Conference, including highlights of negotiations on the final document as well as major speeches to the plenary, is given in the September issue of "ICPD 94", the Conference newsletter.

Key to the approach taken is empowering women and expanding their access to education, health care and employment. The ICPD Programme calls for universal availability of family planning by 2015 or sooner as part of a broadened approach to reproductive health and rights; Governments are urged to commit the necessary funds in this regard, estimated at \$17 billion annually in 2000 and \$21.7 billion in 2015.

The Programme of Action also advocates universal primary education and sharp reductions in infant, child and maternal mortality. And it calls on Governments to address unsafe abortion as a leading cause of maternal death and a "major public health concern".

Other topics addressed include: poverty alleviation; environmental protection and consumption patterns; the family; internal and international migration; and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Also in the September newsletter (No. 19) are:

+ Excerpts from the closing statement given by Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary-General of the Conference.

+ A report on the NGO Forum '94, held next door to ICPD and attended by 4,000 people from 1,500 non-governmental organizations in 133 countries.

"ICPD 94" reports that ICPD had 10,757 registered participants--from Governments, intergovernmental agencies, non-governmental organizations and the news media--and received unprecedented press coverage. Some 249 speakers addressed the week-long plenary session.

At the opening plenary, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called ICPD a "turning point" for humanity, and urged delegates to negotiate in a spirit of "rigour, tolerance and conscience". Other speakers included Egyptian President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, United States Vice President Albert Gore and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

In her major opening statement, Dr. Sadik emphasized that the principle of sovereignty underlies the entire Programme of Action. Within that context, she urged countries to address the issues of adolescent pregnancy and maternal death due to unsafe abortion.

The Conference's Main Committee, chaired by Dr. Fred Sai of Ghana, met all week to finalize the draft Programme of Action written by the ICPD Preparatory Committee. Chapters requiring the

most involved negotiations were those on Principles (which affirms that implementation of the Programme is each country's sovereign right), Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health; Health, Morbidity and Mortality; and International Migration (notably on whether family reunification is a right).

One important compromise was on the recommendation (in paragraph 8.25) that countries address unsafe abortion as a major health concern. "In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning," the paragraph begins. Agreement on this paragraph facilitated the resolution of sections on reproductive health and rights, family planning and safe motherhood.

Also approved were estimates of developing countries' annual costs for reproductive health services including family planning and related programmes. It was agreed that "up to two thirds of the costs will continue to be met by the countries themselves and up to one third from external sources."

The entire Programme of Action was adopted by acclamation; 18 States expressed reservations, including the Holy See which nevertheless joined the consensus on the document in a "partial manner".

In closing, Dr. Sadik said the Programme "places women and men, and their families, at the top of the international development agenda".

"ICPD 94" is available in English, French and Spanish from the ICPD Secretariat, 220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA; tel: (212) 297-5244 or 5245; fax: (212) 297-5250. The newsletter is also in electronic form on several computer networks (for information, send e-mail to: ryanw@unfpa.org).

PRESS INQUIRIES: (212) 297-5023, 297-5030 or 297-5279.

* * * * *

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