



ICPD Press Releases, October 1994 (English)

"ICPD 94"

International Conference on Population and Development

Cairo, Egypt 5-13 September 1994

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PRESS RELEASE

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UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SET TO REVIEW CAIRO CONFERENCE OUTCOME,
INCLUDING PROGRAMME OF ACTION, IN MID-NOVEMBER

Debate in Plenary to be Followed by Action in Second Committee;
UN Population Fund Reviews Policy Guidelines in Light of ICPD

In mid-November, the UN General Assembly will review the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), including the Programme of Action adopted on 13 September. Preparations for the debate in plenary and subsequent action by the Assembly's Second Committee are among

ICPD follow-up activities now under way.

The 5-13 September Conference in Cairo endorsed a new strategy that emphasizes the interdependence of population and development, the empowerment of women and a broadened approach to reproductive health including family planning, rather than demographic targets.

Implementation of the 20-year Programme of Action is being addressed at several levels, reports the October issue of "ICPD 94", the monthly Conference newsletter.

"Our task now," Dr. Nafis Sadik, ICPD Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), told the Fund's Executive Board on 10 October, "is to ensure that the optimism which has emerged from the ICPD process and which the Programme of Action reflects is turned into tangible benefits for people everywhere."

Also covered in the October newsletter (No. 20) are:

- + Remarks by UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali and others in the General Assembly celebrating UNFPA's 25th anniversary on 20 October.

- + Government statements hailing the outcome of ICPD, made during the general debate in the General Assembly's forty-ninth session.

- + ICPD follow-up efforts by non-governmental

organizations (NGOs).

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To help build support for the Programme of Action's goals and recommendations, the ICPD Secretariat has distributed thousands of copies of the Programme (in its current unofficial, English form).

When editing of the six official UN language versions is completed (the expected date is 14 November), the Programme of Action will be presented to the General Assembly as part of the final Report of the Conference. This Report will include reservations expressed by some delegations when the Programme was adopted by consensus. The Assembly will consider the Report in two plenary meetings. The Second Committee, in informal session, will then negotiate a formal resolution on ICPD.

In line with ICPD's call for efforts to win public support for its goals and actions, there have been meetings in a number of countries among government departments, NGOs, the media and others. Dr. Sadik has urged Governments to review and revise population and development policies, resource allocation, and programme content in light of ICPD.

Within UNFPA, Dr. Sadik has instructed that policy guidelines be reviewed to ensure that they fully reflect and promote the Programme of Action; in particular, family planning needs to be addressed in the broader context of reproductive health, as was called for in Cairo.

Other areas under review include: information, education and communication; gender concerns; adolescents; and NGOs. The Fund will also increase support for prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and infertility, reduction of mortality and morbidity, and advocacy work and programme initiatives to eliminate female genital mutilation.

In addition, "ICPD 94" reports that both UNFPA and the ICPD Secretariat are cooperating closely with the Secretariats for next year's World Summit for Social Development and Fourth World Conference on Women to ensure that the commitments of ICPD are carried forward.

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The General Assembly devoted its 20 October morning session to statements marking the 25th anniversary of UNFPA, and adopted a resolution praising the Fund for its role in promoting better understanding of population issues, improving the quality of life, and helping developing countries address their population and development needs.

In an address delivered at the session, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali congratulated UNFPA and Dr. Sadik for the Fund's achievements. UNFPA's emphasis on the empowerment of women, he said, "has made a major contribution to the cause of women's rights".

He pointed out that UNFPA played a key role in organizing ICPD and said the Programme of Action adopted there by

"representatives of many disparate cultures" had "charted a path that could lead the world away from environmental and social disasters." He added: "The international community must follow through on the commitments it has made if it is to reap the benefits of its deliberations. ... That is why UNFPA's role will continue to be important, and to be challenging."

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"ICPD 94" will be published through December 1994. It 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).

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