



Partners in Population and Development
A South-South Initiative

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Permanent Observer for Partners in Population and Development (PPD)

**Fifty-fifth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
22 February - 4 March 2011, Agenda item 2: Gender Equality, Development and Peace
for the 21st Session**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to make a short statement on behalf of the Partners in Population and Development (PPD). PPD is an intergovernmental alliance of 25 developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, committed to the promotion of South-South cooperation among developing countries.

This Fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women is historic as it heralds the launching of UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The entity marks an auspicious genesis. Dr. M. In-Digne Bachelet as the founding Executive Director, PPD in collaboration with UN Women, under the outstanding leadership of Dr. Bachelet, will play its mandated role in an exemplary way and significantly contribute not only to an improvement of the status of girls and women all around the globe, but also to real empowerment of women in the economic, political and social spheres of life, enabling them to shape and impact development, peace and security in the world.

PPD notes with concern the current state and status of women's participation in national and global affairs is inadequate. The persistence of gender inequality and inequity characterizing discrimination against women at national, regional, secondary and tertiary levels and to well-paying jobs and political participation; and by suffering the risk of exposure to maternal mortality, unskilled or unannounced pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, trafficking, as well as early and forced marriages have immensely marginalized women in the world.

Mr. Chairman,

PPD in Population and Development promotes, among other priorities, integration of MDGs and the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) by ensuring that the linkages between population dynamics, reproductive health, gender equality and poverty reduction are central to the formulation and implementation of development plans and poverty reduction strategies. ICPD recognizes that investments in women's empowerment and gender equality offer multiple rewards for accelerated social and economic progress, as well as for peace and security.

The special focus of this session on women's access to education, science, technology and jobs is both timely and crucial for empowerment and for addressing gender inequality. The ICPD Programme of Action emphasized education as one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. Investing in girls' and women's education has a positive multiplier effect for poverty reduction, developmental gains, demographic transition, reproductive health and rights and other benefits. PPD, therefore, believes that it would be essential to adopt, in particular, a comprehensive, culturally sensitive, holistic and rights-based approach in addressing the interlinked issues of women's empowerment, gender inequality, gender-based violence and reproductive health and rights, including family planning and HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

The ICPD stands out as a unique and important milestone, reflects a diversity of experiences in population, gender and development issues. It serves as a good platform to address lessons learned, achievements, as well as challenges tackled by member countries. It is strategically positioned for a useful exchange of learning experiences, mentoring and South-South cooperation. PPD is therefore encouraging South-South cooperation activities in its member and other countries through training and capacity-building, through knowledge sharing by documenting innovative practices in population, gender and reproductive health, and through information exchange, policy dialogue and advocacy.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, PPD in Population and Development would like to congratulate Dr. Mwangi Njoroge on her appointment as the Executive Director and wish her well in her new role. PPD is confident that with your able leadership, Mr. Chairman, the Commission would succeed in providing the necessary leadership and guidance to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women all around the world.

Thank you very much.