

This newsletter presents monthly highlights of EPF's and our member parliamentary groups' work and gives an overview of legislative and Parliamentary initiatives on sexual and reproductive health and rights and international development in Europe and around the world on the part of the global community of Parliamentarians committed to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Enjoy the reading!

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## I. EPF Activities November/December 2008

### 1. EPF Study Tour to Tanzania with focus on Malaria Research/Vaccines, 16 – 22 November 2008

European Parliamentarians have recently returned from a week-long study tour to Tanzania held from 16 to 22 November 2008 that focused on Malaria Research/Vaccines and the country's efforts at combating malaria. The study tour hosted by DSW Country Office in Tanzania offered a deep insight into the malaria burden, the challenges and the needs to tackle the disease in Tanzania. The field visit also provided a concrete overview of the latest progress and findings in the development of malaria vaccines. The Parliamentary Delegation travelled around the country namely to Bagamoyo, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Tanga, and Arusha to visit various malaria prevention, treatment and research projects in order to be introduced to the successes and challenges related to the fight against malaria, with a specific emphasis on the vaccine development field needs.



Participants visited the Bagamoyo Research and Training Center which is part of the Ifakara Health Institute and specialised in clinical research. The Parliamentary Delegation was able to learn about the various ongoing drugs and vaccines' trials and were impressed by the progress made so far in the development of malaria vaccines, and most particularly with the RTS,S which is the most promising vaccine candidate about to enter phase III (January 2009). The Parliamentary Delegation also had the opportunity to meet with key Tanzanian Parliamentarians who are members of the Tanzania Parliamentarians against Malaria (TAPAMA) as well as with the Manager of the National Malaria Control Programme, who provided a concrete overview of the malaria burden in Tanzania and presented their strategies, mobilisation efforts and achievements for

reducing malaria burden in the country and emphasised the remaining financial, human, and material challenges.

### Successful Malaria Control: Zanzibar:



In Zanzibar, the European Parliamentary Delegation was very impressed by the success of the Malaria Control Programme having achieved a significant reduction of malaria cases and deaths (from 50% to less than 1%) due to the introduction of Artemisine Combination Therapy (ACT) in 2004, the constant provision of Long Lasting Insecticidal-treated Nets (LLINs), and the increased Indoor Residual Spraying (ITS). The Delegation had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Health of Zanzibar, to visit the Kivunge Laboratory and observe the fumigation process of some houses in a slum area in Zanzibar.

### Malaria Supplies:

In Arusha, EPF Delegation was able to visit Artemisia store sites and out growers, led by the Africa Artemisia Ltd, which is contracting small scale farmers to grow Artemisia plant. The Delegation was explained that the artemisine extracted of the artemisia plant was currently the most efficient ingredient used to cure malaria. In terms of malaria prevention, the Parliamentary Delegation visited DSW Tanzania Office and the Arusha secondary school and was impressed by the high level of awareness about malaria, sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS among young people and congratulated Population Service International (PSI) for the provision of LLINs to the school and DSW Tanzania Office on their advocacy work among youth. Finally, EPF Delegation had the chance to visit the A-Z Factory, which is producing 90 million LLINs per year, guaranteed to last at least five years.



### Malaria Research:

The study tour ended with the visit of the Bombo Hospital, the biggest hospital in the Tanga region, and the Malaria Research Centre of the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) where the European Parliamentary Delegation had an in-depth presentation of the various ongoing and previous research trials carried out so far. While visiting the NIMR's laboratories, researchers mentioned that the development of malaria vaccines is very complex due to the different types of parasites (*falciparum*, *vivax*..) and target groups (children, pregnant women..). Researchers emphasised that it is necessary to increase efforts, partnerships and mobilise more resources for malaria research in order to find appropriate vaccines the soonest. So far, the RTS,S vaccine candidate targeting children under five is the most advanced one with 30 to 40% efficiency. Combined with the existing effective prevention and treatment methods, this malaria vaccine would enable a significant scale down of the malaria burden among under fives, and enable to save millions of lives.



### Political Support for Malaria:

The Delegation was very impressed by the level of mobilisation of Tanzanian Parliamentarians, officials, civil society and researchers' community having led to successful achievements in the fight against malaria in Tanzania, particularly in Zanzibar. Noting the remaining financial, material and human resources challenges, EPF Delegation also recognised the need and urgency to significantly scale-up support for malaria research. Parliamentarians consequently committed to report back on these challenges to their own Government and Parliament in order to help try and shape future aid policies.

The Parliamentary Delegation included two Finnish members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, Hon. Heli Järvinen, MP (Green, Finland) and Hon. Merja Kyllönen, MP (Left Alliance, Finland), two Portuguese Parliamentarians, Hon. Maria Antonia de Almeida Santos, MP (Socialist, Portugal) Chair of the Portuguese All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development and Hon. Teresa Caeiro, MP (Popular Party, Portugal) member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development, as well as one Spanish Catalan Parliamentarian, Hon. Maria Rosa Fortuny i

Torroella, MP (Liberal Group-Convergència i Unió, Spain) spokesperson for the Committee of Foreign and European Affairs.

The study tour was kindly supported by PATH MVI.

For more information, please contact Ms Silvia Theodoridis, EPF Advocacy Officer at: [Silvia@iefpd.org](mailto:Silvia@iefpd.org)

### 2. EPF brings Parliamentary Delegation to the Global Fund's Partnership Forum in Dakar, Senegal

From 7-10 December 2008 the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) brought an 8 Member Parliamentary Delegation to participate in the Global Fund's Partnership Forum including a Mini Study Tour to Global Fund supported programmes, which took place in Dakar, Senegal. The Partnership Forum is an important part of the Global Fund's governance structure and is convened every two years, providing a platform for open and frank discussions on Global Fund strategies and policies. Its recommendations form the decisions taken by the Global Fund Board, which is the formal decision-making body of the Global Fund. Recommendations developed at previous Partnership Fora have significantly shaped Global Fund policies and processes.



#### HIV/AIDS and Malaria Site Visits:

The Mini Study Tour in Dakar and its districts raised awareness and enabled deeper knowledge about the work of Global Fund Programmes and the performance-based approach in Senegal amongst Parliamentarians. Delegation participants gained first-hand experience regarding the challenges of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis in the country. Within the framework of the study tour, Parliamentarians visited the Fann Hospital with its out-patient service for HIV positive people and its research centre, as well as the second largest District of Dakar - Pikine district with one of the highest malaria incidents. MPs witnessed the malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment activities as well as the activities of the mobile clinic for sex workers operating in the area. The study tour concluded with a discussion held with Senegalese Parliamentarians and Government Representatives at the Parliament of Senegal.

#### Political Level Support from Senegal:

The Delegation also met with the President of Senegal H.E. Abdoulaye Wade, the President of the National Assembly, Hon. Macky Sall, MP and a group of Senegalese Parliamentarians engaged in SRHR issues. EPF President Hon. Anne Van Lancker, MEP and the delegation exchanged views on the role of recipient countries in the proper allocation of funds for the fight against the three diseases and expressed their concern about the insufficient amount of bed nets especially in the areas with high malaria prevalence. The Delegation also discussed the role of Senegalese Parliamentarians in ensuring increased commitments to fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria, the importance of oversight with regard to budgetary support programmes and the need to further invest in the research on the three diseases.

#### Global Fund Partnership Forum

The 2008 Partnership Forum was held on 8-10 December. Under its key theme Listening to the Voices: Stronger and More Effective Partnership for Sustained Impact it brought together around 450 delegates who discussed and made recommendations to further improve the Global Fund's strategy, specifically on the improvements of the mechanisms in which the different public and private partners of the Global Fund at national, regional and global levels work together. Delegates' discussions focused on Partnership and Gender (Women and Girls, Sexual Minorities), Partnership and Demand, Partnership and Coordination Partnership and Implementation. One of the major points of reference for these discussions were the results of the Five-Year Evaluation, an external assessment of the Global Fund which is currently underway. In addition, the

2008 Forum will feature the results in an e-Forum, which from April and until early October 2009 will provide an opportunity for everyone interested in the work of the Global Fund to have their voice heard on the issues that concern the Global Fund today.

Members of the EPF Parliamentary Delegation to Dakar/Senegal included: Hon. Antje Blumenthal, MP (Germany), Hon. Carles Campuzano, MP (Spain), Hon. Françoise Castex, MEP (France), Senator Alain Destexhe (Belgium), Hon. Carina Hägg, MP (Sweden), Hon. Malahat Ibrahimkizi, MP (Azerbaijan), Hon. Anne Van Lancker, MEP (Belgium) and Hon. Birute Vesaite, MP (Lithuania).

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### 3. IPCI /ICPD Steering Committee Meeting held in Tunis

In preparation of the upcoming International Parliamentarians Conference on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (IPCI/ICPD) to be held in October 2009 in Cairo, Egypt, EPF brought two Parliamentarians to Tunis, Tunisia. Hon. George Tsereteli, MP from Georgia, EPF Executive Member and Vice-President of the Georgian Parliament and Dr. Mary Henry, former Senator, Ireland and Honorary Treasurer of EPF successfully represented the Europe Region at the IPCI Steering Committee Meeting.

The 2009 Cairo IPCI/ICPD will be hosted by the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) in collaboration with EPF, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG). UNFPA together with FAAPPD will organise the event. Since 2009 marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ICPD, the Cairo Conference will be an opportunity to reinvigorate ownership, commitment and action by decision-makers during the last stretch of the Cairo mandate. The 2-day conference is expected to produce a forward-looking and action-oriented declaration that would build on previous IPCI commitments. Prior to the 2009 IPCI/ICPD Conference, the Dutch Government will hold a ministerial meeting on MDG 5 in Cairo.

## II. Parliamentary Leadership

### 1. Belgian MP questions Government on HIV/AIDS following the International AIDS Conference and Mini Study tour on SRHR in Mexico

On the occasion of World AIDS Day and following her participation in the XVII International AIDS Conference 2008 & Mini Study Tour on SRH supplies held in Mexico on 2-9 August 2008, Hon. Martine De Maght, MP questioned her Government, specifically the Belgian Ministers on Health and Development Cooperation on how the Belgian Government supports people living with HIV/AIDS at home and in developing countries. More specifically, the questions centred around the amount the Belgian Government spends on a yearly basis in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in developing countries. In her questions, Hon. Martine de Maght highlighted the need for availability of Reproductive Health Supplies (RHS) and wanted to learn more on the Belgian Government's position on equal opportunities for people living with HIV/AIDS.





2. Finnish MPs publish articles on Tanzania Study Tour in Finnish Magazines

Hon. Heli Järvinen, MP and Hon. Merja Kyllönen, MP published various articles in Finnish newspapers and magazines highlighting the seriousness of the malaria burden in developing countries where the parasitic disease is leading to as much as one to two million deaths annually – even though the causes of malaria are well-known. In her article, Hon. Heli Järvinen, MP highlights that Tanzania figures prominently in Finnish development cooperation since 1962. In 2008 the Finnish share of bilateral development cooperation with Tanzania amounts to over 30 million Euros. However, this aid has mainly been invested in the forestry and environmental sector as well as in local governance. The question, Hon. Jarvinen raises is how the importance of malaria will be taken into account in Finnish aid to Tanzania in the future.



In her contribution, Hon. Merja Kyllönen, MP emphasises the need to monitor and control EU aid to developing countries more effectively. Taking the often dismal living conditions in developing countries as an example where millions of people suffer from extreme poverty, hunger and diseases such as malaria, Hon. Kyllönen urges Parliamentarians to incorporate the issue of aid effectiveness into their campaign programs – especially with regard to the upcoming elections to the European Parliament in June 2009. Both MPs

were Members of the EPF led Parliamentary Study Tour on Malaria Vaccines and Research to Tanzania in November 2008.

3. New EPF Executive Committee Member, Hon. Chantal Gill'ard, MP from the Netherlands, champions safe motherhood

Facilitated by the Parliament of the Netherlands, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Hon. Chantal Gill'ard, MP who recently was elected a member of the EPF Executive Committee organised a three-day conference in The Hague, Netherlands to discuss Maternal and Newborn Health and Survival.



More than 60 Members of Parliament from developing and developed countries together with International Organisations such as UNFPA attended the conference. Senator Dan Sabau, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Demography, Population and Development, the Romanian EPF member APPG and Hon. Minna Sironö, MP, Member of the Finnish Parliament and EPF Executive Committee Member were amongst the conference participants.



The meeting aimed to provide a forum for Members of Parliament from developing and developed countries to exchange experience, map out next steps and strengthen parliamentary cooperation to reduce maternal and child mortality. During the three day discussions presentations were given from International Organisations such as WHO, and Members of Parliament. Hon. Minna Sironö, MP gave a overview of the present standard of sexual health and low maternal mortality and morbidity in Finland and showed the need for political commitment in order to reach MDG 5.

The Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation addressed the conference via video message. A special focus was given on field visits, which allowed the participants on the second day to see different projects in the Netherlands concerning maternal mortality, such as the organisation of mid-wives and Rabobank foundation.

A key outcome of the conference was the creation of a roadmap containing concrete commitments to achieve MDGs 4 and 5 (Reduce Child Mortality and Improve Maternal Health) by 2015.

#### 4. Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, MP demands better assessment of inter-organisational work

Hon. Dr. Wolfgang Wodarg, MP (Germany), member of the DSW Parliamentary Advisory Council and member of numerous EPF organised field visits represented Germany during the Global Fund's (GF) Partnership Forum held in Senegal from 8-10 December. As a Delegate, MP Wodarg, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Health of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe demanded more transparency from the Global Fund regarding the denial of proposals for Global Fund aid from applicant countries. This would allow helping countries in the framework of developing aid which have not yet succeeded in successfully applying for Global Fund money to decisively work on the requirements needed, i.e. good governance, to be eligible for GF aid. In addition, MP Wodarg emphasised the importance of applying a comprehensive approach in assessing the performance of international organisations in their field instead of evaluating success on the basis of a single organisation's performance. Only this will enable a thorough assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our common engagement.



For more information about Dr. Wodarg's participation in the Global Fund's Partnership Forum click [here](#).

### III. APPG Affairs

#### 1. EPF conducts APPG Secretariat's Meeting in Brussels

This year's All-Party-Parliamentary Group (APPG) Secretariats Meeting was held on 2 -3 December in Brussels. Next to the Secretariats of the All-Party Parliamentary Groups which are EPF Members, NGOs receiving funding from UNFPA and other selected partners were invited to this meeting with a total number of 37 participants representing 22 APPG Secretariats and other organisations. Amongst the participants were also representatives of the new EPF member APPGs from Armenia, Romania, and the Netherlands. An update on Parliamentary initiatives, exchange of experiences, brainstorming and networking featured on the agenda as in the past APPG Secretariats meetings. This year, Ms Ragaa Said of UNFPA-IERD also provided an in-depth technical capacity-building session on its 2008-2011 Strategic Plan and what this means for UNFPA's partners/grantees in donor countries. The meeting provided new and established members not only with the opportunity to network and connect with colleagues from other parliamentary group secretariats. The meeting also offered a formidable occasion to discuss upcoming advocacy challenges such as the managing of electoral changes, to discuss lessons learned in parliamentary advocacy, to learn about new advocacy tools and initiatives and to exchange national experiences in advancing SRHR laws/policies and funding.



### 2. Belgian Parliamentary Group Members use World AIDS Day to raise awareness amongst Ministers and colleagues

On 27 November 2008, Members of the Belgian Group "Parliamentarians for the MDGs" organized an awareness raising initiative for World AIDS Day in the Federal Parliament. They handed out red ribbons and condoms, as well as leaflets with concrete requests for the Belgian Government.

These requests were:

- To increase the budgets for HIV/AIDS and Sexual and Reproductive Health in development aid
- To create the position of an AIDS ambassador
- To increase attention for prevention and increase support for research on microbicides and AIDS vaccines
- To support programmes that break taboos on sexuality and HIV/AIDS.



The action was a great success as most Senators and Representatives of the Chamber were wearing the red ribbon. They were, however, not the only ones. Also the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Justice, the Minister for Health and others were wearing the red ribbon and took note of the requests from the group. In addition, the initiative received considerable media attention: The Parliamentarians were filmed and interviewed extensively for a political TV-programme called Villa Politica. The next day a short article appeared in Metro, the free newspaper magazine for train passengers.

The parliamentarians participating in the action were: Hon. Hilde Vautmans, MP (Liberal Party), Hon. Maya Detiège, MP and Senator Marleen Temmerman (Socialist Party), Hon. Ingrid Claes, MP and Hon. Elke Tindemans, MP (Christian Democrats).

### 3. UK Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health holds hearings on Maternal Morbidity

In July, the UK APPG on Population, Development and Reproductive Health launched an inquiry into Maternal Morbidity, initially calling for written evidence and received over 50 submissions. Maternal Morbidity can be defined as the illness or disability occurring as a result of or in relation to pregnancy, childbirth or in the postpartum period. It is estimated that for every woman who dies in childbirth there are 20 to 30 others who face serious or long lasting consequences.

In December the APPG that is chaired by Hon. Christine McCafferty, MP held two days of oral evidence sessions in the Houses of Parliament, hearing from a wide range of organisations, including the UK's Royal College of Midwives and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the White Ribbon Alliance, IPPF, MSI, DFID, USAID, UNFPA, UNICEF, Oxfam and the Asian Development Bank. The APPG plans to launch its Hearing Report in Spring/Summer 2009. Written evidence can be obtained from the Parliamentary Group's website at: [www.appg-popdevrh.org.uk](http://www.appg-popdevrh.org.uk)



#### 4. All-Party Parliamentary Group of Andalucía created after elections

After several meetings with the President of the Andalusian Parliament and with the help and efforts of members of the Spanish APPG and its Secretariat, the Spanish Federation of Family Planning (FPFE) is proud to announce the creation of the All-Party Parliamentary Group of Andalucía. The Group, which includes representatives of all political parties of the Andalusian Parliament is composed of:

- Rosa Isabel Ríos Martínez (Socialist Group)
- Verónica Pérez Fernández (Socialist Group)
- María Jesús Botella Serrano (Popular Party)
- Ana María Corredera Quintana (Popular Party)
- José Manuel Mariscal Cifuentes (United Left)
- Diego Valderas Sosa (United Left)

By holding the Secretariat of this new APPG, FPFE will apply all its efforts for the Official Development Assistance from the Autonomous Community of Andalucía to assure the access to sexual and reproductive health and rights in its development policies and programmes.

### IV. Young Decision Makers (YDM) – Cultivating the Leaders of Tomorrow

#### 1. EPF briefs Swedish Young Decision Makers on SRHR developments at EU level

On 19 November 2008, a Delegation of Young Decision Makers from Sweden visited Brussels in the framework of an RFSU organised study tour. The main goal of the participating YDMs was to learn more about Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights and how this issue is dealt with at European level. The one-day stay included a visit to the European Parliament as well as a meeting with staff from the EPF. The YDMs were given an overview of EPF's work with Young Decision Makers in Europe and discussions centred around possible areas of action they could explore in the framework of the upcoming European Parliamentary elections. A special focus was put on the importance of efficient development aid and the importance of involving Parliamentarians from all political parties in SRHR discussion at EU level.



For more information about EPF's work with Young Decision Makers, contact Saskia Pfeijffer at [Saskia@iepfpd.org](mailto:Saskia@iepfpd.org).



## V. Malaria News

1. 16th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, 24-28 November 2008

In the framework of the 16th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Port Moresby, EPF Malaria Taskforce member, Hon. Marie-Arlette Carlotti, MEP put forward an oral Parliamentary Question to the European Commission (EC) about the European Union's involvement in combating malaria. MEP Marie-Arlette Carlotti reminded that malaria is the primary cause of mortality in sub-Saharan Africa and that 247 million people are infected each year, affecting primarily pregnant women and children under five. She asked the EC what initiatives and funding are given over by the EU to combating malaria and what support is the Commission giving, or considering giving, to the global 'Roll Back Malaria' initiative.

The EC re-confirmed its strong commitment to strengthening malaria control, encouraged by the significant progress demonstrated in countries such as Zambia, Rwanda and Ethiopia through expanded coverage with long-lasting insecticidal nets and the introduction of artemisinin-based combination therapies. The EC emphasised its work with Member States to mobilise funding and develop effective ways to support partner countries through the European Programme for Action to Confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis through External Action. The EC reminded the recent launch of the EU Agenda for Action on MDGs setting specific priority actions and milestones, including increased support of €8 billion for health sector support, which, among others, would be expected to contribute to the provision of some 75 million more bed nets in Africa.

The EC highlighted that their key channel for specific financing for malaria is the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, where Europe collectively provides the majority of financing, in total US\$ 1.6 billion in 2008, increasing from US\$ 1.39 billion in 2007. The Commission itself has provided more than €622 million to date, and has pledged additional €300 million for 2008-2010. As for other donors, support from EU and the Commission is not specifically earmarked for each of the three diseases, this allocation is driven by demand of the recipient countries. However, in 2007, 24% of all financing from the Global Fund was in support of malaria control. In 2008 and beyond, the Global Fund is expected to allocate substantially more financing for malaria - in the latest Round 8, its Technical Review Panel has recommended financing for malaria projects for US\$ 1.62 billion.

The EC is also supporting research on malaria – both basic research and translational research– to develop new interventions (vaccines, new drugs, vector control, etc.) through the Framework Programme (FP) for Research, totalling more than €100 million during the 6th FP (2002-2006), including around €35 million of this to support clinical testing of new malaria drugs and vaccines in Africa, through support given by the Europe-Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). Under the present FP7 a similarly high level of research support targeting malaria is envisaged.

In addition, the EC mentioned making predictable and longer term financing available for partner countries through general budget support and MDG contracts, a new financing modality, which links disbursements to progress in MDG-related indicators, and expands the programming cycle from three to six years. These modalities are particularly relevant for disease control and health, since they enable countries to cover recurrent costs for basic health service structures and health personnel.

The question and answer are available at:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60\\_16/pdf/rqo\\_com\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60_16/pdf/rqo_com_en.pdf)

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60\\_16/pdf/qo\\_com\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/acp/60_16/pdf/qo_com_en.pdf)

## EPF – EU News Supplement Election Update

To keep our members and readers up to date, EPF will issue a regular news supplement on the upcoming elections to the European Parliament to be held in all EU Member States from 4-7 June 2009.

The supplement features amongst others reports about the latest developments, initiatives and facts with regard to the pre-election period and intends to provide views and background information in the run-up to this event.

Enjoy the reading

### 1. MEPs in favour of more female EU commissioners

In September 2008, Dods EU Polling conducted a survey amongst Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and other stakeholders according to their opinion on gender balance in the EU institutions, transnational MEP voting lists and where the European Parliament should sit.

MEPs thought that there ought to be more female EU Commissioners though they opposed a mandated 50/50 split on lists for parliamentary elections. A large majority of MEPs thought that the political groups should announce their preferred candidate(s) for the top EU posts in advance of the 2009 elections and a smaller majority said they would favour having some MEPs elected on transnational “European” lists.

An overwhelming majority of MEPs thought that the EP should have the right to decide where it sits (Brussels or Strasbourg) and favoured a single seat in Brussels. Stakeholders expressed less of a willingness to be proactive on gender issues than MEPs. Questions relating to the reform of European parliamentary institutions and procedures elicited similar responses from stakeholders compared to MEPs.

The full results can be viewed [here](#).

### 2. European Council paves way for second Irish Referendum on Lisbon Treaty

On 11/12 December, the EU Heads of State and Government held their European Council Meeting in Brussels - the last one under the French Presidency. European Council Meetings are held four times per year. The decisions taken at the European Council meetings – the so-called Council Conclusions – represent a major impetus in defining the general political guidelines of the European Union. The recently held meeting mapped out the way forward in dealing with the Irish Referendum towards the Lisbon Treaty that is designed to make the EU more efficient and effective. In June 2009 the Irish rejected the Treaty and ever since, ways out of this decision were discussed.



Last week, the EU Heads of State and Government debated the elements aimed at responding to the concerns expressed during the Irish referendum and set out an approach to allow the Lisbon Treaty to enter into force before the end of 2009. The European Council agreed that, provided Ireland makes the commitment to seek ratification of the Lisbon Treaty by the end of the term of the current Commission (in November 2009) the concerns of the Irish People relating to taxation policy, family, social and ethical issues, and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with regard to Ireland's traditional policy of neutrality will be taken into account.

To this end, Ireland was given the guarantee to keep its EU Commissioner – a particularly important decision for the country bearing in mind that under the Treaties currently in force the number of EU Commissioners would be reduced in 2009. In addition, Ireland was given the guarantee that the provisions of the Irish Constitution in relation to the right to life, education and the family are not in any way affected by the fact that the Treaty of Lisbon attributes legal status to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights or by the justice and home affairs provisions of the said Treaty. In practice, Ireland has obtained further guarantees that not EU-level measure or decision could ever be binding on Ireland regarding provisions for abortion.

View the Council Conclusions in [EN](#) and [FR](#).

## VI. EPF - European Parliament Relations:



### 1. Burkinabé Theatre Play on Malaria performed in the European Parliament



On 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008, Hon. Anne Van Lancker, MEP, EPF President and Chair of the European Parliament's Working Group on Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS and Development (EPWG), Hon. Françoise Castex, MEP and Hon. Thierry Cornillet, MEP, members of EPF Malaria Taskforce in collaboration with EPF, Equilibres & Populations (E&P), the EPWG and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) hosted a joint event in the European Parliament combining the performance of a unique theatre play on malaria with the presentation of UNFPA's State of World Population (SWOP) report 2008. The event gathered European Parliamentarians, representatives of the European Commission, UNFPA and civil society NGOs. The presentation of the report was followed by a reception.

Following her participation to a study tour organised by E&P to Burkina Faso on malaria and pregnancy, MEP Françoise Castex invited performers from the ASMADE NGO (Burkina Faso) to show European Parliamentarians and civil society NGOs working in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights around Europe, southern local ways of raising awareness about malaria. Malaria is affecting mainly pregnant women and children under five and the play provided a key example of a successful method of promoting health prevention and treatment measures in the most remote areas of the country. In the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, MEP Anne Van Lancker emphasised that the theatre play combined with the presentation of the UNFPA SWOP Report highlighted the importance of the dialogue between cultures and gave an example of the important role that cultural expression can play in development efforts. The presentation of the UNFPA State of World Population 2008 report "Reaching Common Ground: Culture, Gender and Human Rights" emphasised the existing synergies between human rights, values, and cultures in helping advancing the Millennium Development Goals.





## VII. EPF – United Nations Relations:



### 1. CEDAW Committee adopts its new General Recommendation # 26 on women's human rights and migration

The UN Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted this new General Recommendation in November 2008.

"This general recommendation intends to contribute to the fulfillment of the obligations of State Parties to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of women migrant workers, alongside the legal obligations contained in other treaties, the commitments made under the plans of action of world conferences and the important work of migration-focused treaty bodies, especially the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. (...) While migration presents new opportunities for women and may be a means for their economic empowerment through wider participation, their human rights and security may also be at risk. Hence, this general recommendation aims to elaborate the circumstances which contribute to the specific vulnerability of many women migrant workers and their experiences of sex and gender-based discrimination as a cause and consequence of the violations of their human rights."

Among others, the General Recommendation (GR) notes that all categories of migrant women, including undocumented migrants, must be protected by all forms of discrimination under CEDAW.

For the complete text of the GR, see <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/comments.htm>.

## VIII. EPF – Council of Europe Relations



### 1. EPF addresses PACE-Seminar on the Interaction between Population Decline in Europe, Global Population Growth and Migration

On 25 November 2008, EPF participated in a seminar on the "Interaction between Population Decline in Europe, Global Population Growth and Migration" which was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The Seminar, organised by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in collaboration with UNFPA, aimed to explore political opportunities deriving from the Motion for a Resolution on Europe's population decline and migration which was presented by Hon. Gultakin Hajiyeva, MP, Chair of the Sub-Committee on Population, Azerbaijan on 3 July 2007.



The seminar brought together experts on migration and population policies from international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) as well as from China. Discussions focused on concerns of population decline in Europe as a result of declining fertility rates, changing family patterns, an ageing population and the challenges of migration. The necessity to successfully address these issues through a variety of policies ranging from housing to pension schemes, from family planning to gender equality policies, all of which

urgently need to undergo reforms was raised as well as the challenges an ageing population poses to the competitiveness of European countries.

In addition, the need for adequate migration channels to Europe as a possible means to adapt to Europe's future demographic challenges, the need to ameliorate migrant's rights and access to services as well as the necessity to change the image and perception of migrants in European societies especially amongst media, in politics and public opinion constituted another focal point during the seminar. The essential role Parliamentarians need to play in changing, adapting and improving relevant migration, population, gender equality but also economic policies was highlighted by Neil Datta, EPF Secretary who also emphasised the need to reinforce parliamentary advocacy practices and strategies that clarify existing links between demography and migration, between issues such as fertility and gender equality as well as the social and political empowerment of women. To this end, EPF sees an urgent need to develop studies, dialogues and policy mechanisms to foster learning processes and resource mobilization towards a better use of the opportunities of an ever more mobile world population.

### IX. EPF Visibility:

#### 1. EPF provides insights in parliamentary advocacy during UNPA-Campaign Steering Committee Meeting

On 4-5 November participants in the UNPA-Campaign (a Campaign to establish a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly) from 15 countries convened in the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels for an expanded meeting of the campaign's Steering Committee. EPF staff Neil Datta and Nadine Krysostan provided methodological and structural insights on parliamentary advocacy and how MPs are included in the EPF.



Discussions centred around importance of MP ownership for the Campaign, the role of relevant NGOs and Civil Society Organisations in providing expertise on the work and functioning of the UN to Members of Parliament to enlarge the circle of UNPA Campaign supporters, the necessity to provide MPs with first-hand experience of UN structures i.e. through participation at UN level meetings as well as tailor-made strategies to raise MP interest in the Campaign.

#### 2. EPF invited to join Advisory Group within Women Deliver Advocacy Initiative

EPF has been invited to join the Women Deliver Advisory Group. In response to the call for action from the Ministers Forum, and to maintain the momentum, commitments, and partnerships mobilized at and immediately following the Women Deliver conference, Family Care International (FCI) will work with an advisory group and other partners to implement a global Women Deliver advocacy initiative, which will strengthen and sustain political commitment and investment for MDG5. Women Deliver is a global advocacy initiative to promote and advance maternal health as a core element of the global development agenda. During the next 4 years, the initiative's goal is to strengthen and sustain political commitment and investments for MDG5 at the global, regional, and national levels to improve maternal and newborn health and ensure universal access to reproductive health.



EPF wishes all its supporters, partners and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2009. We thank all Members of our Parliamentary Groups as well as the APPG Secretariats for their vigilance and tireless efforts throughout 2008 to improve SRHR policies at home and abroad and are looking forward to continue working with all of you in 2009.

### The EPF Team



### The EPF Secretariat

The EPF secretariat is based in Brussels and is responsible for implementing all EPF activities. EPF maintains a website with information about its activities and a monthly News Update on the activities of Parliamentarians, SRHR and development policy and related items. It can be found at [www.iefpd.org](http://www.iefpd.org).

As of 1 September, the EPF Secretariat staff is composed as follows (in alphabetical order):

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### EPF's Mission

The European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development believes Parliamentarians have the opportunity and the responsibility to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality, which are core elements of human dignity and are central to human development.

### About EPF

The European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development is a Brussels-based Parliamentary network that serves as a platform for cooperation and coordination for the 25 all-party groups in Parliaments throughout Europe that focus on improving sexual and reproductive health and rights at home and abroad through national and regional health and foreign aid budgets.

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### EPF is a member of:

- The European Alliance against Malaria
- Countdown 2015 Europe
- The Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in the South Caucasus (RHIYC)
- The Steering Committee of the International Parliamentarians' Conference of the Implementation of the IPCI Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)

### EPF

- is an Associate Member of EuroNGOs
- has Special Consultative Status with the United Nation's Economic and Social Council
- has Participatory Status with the Council of Europe