

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 October 2009

1. EPF brings largest MP delegation to 4th International IPCI/ICPD Parliamentarians Conference in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia

As one of the four existing regional parliamentary networks worldwide, EPF brought more than 30 European Parliamentarians and Members of the European Parliament to the 4th International Parliamentarians Conference on the Implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (IPCI/ICPD) that was held in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia from 27-28 October 2009.



Gathering approximately 400 Parliamentarians from 115 nations, representatives of International Organisations and UN Agencies, Ministries, NGOs and CSOs, the conference that is held every 2-3 years since 2002 evaluated the progress that has been made since the formulation of the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) in 1994 and discussed strategic priorities that need to be addressed in the next five years to fulfill the ICPD PoA.

Participants unanimously adopted the Addis Ababa Statement of Commitment, in which they pledged to exercise their oversight responsibilities to break the silence around gender discrimination and to promote sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Parliamentarians expressed their determination to increase budget allocations to at least 10 per cent of national budgets and development assistance budgets for population assistance, and to review laws and practices that still restrict access to sexual and reproductive health. They also committed to concrete and systematic actions to implement the ICPD Programme of Action, including empowering young people, strengthening health systems and addressing climate change and emerging population issues. The Drafting Committee working on the Statement of Commitment was chaired by **Hon. Chantal Gill'ard, MP** and EPF Executive Committee Member.

H.E. Bert Koenders, Minister for Development of the Netherlands presented the Addis Call to Urgent Action for Maternal Health that was adopted during the High Level Meeting on Maternal Health on 26 October 2006 preceding the IPCI Conference. Urging decision-makers to place maternal health high on the political agenda and provide sufficient and adequate funding for MDG 5, the [Addis Call to Urgent Action for Maternal Health](#) contains a specific MP section, urging Parliamentarians to break the silence and mobilize colleagues on the right to SRHR, to increase budget allocations for RH services and supplies, to involve young people and to strengthen partnerships with other MPs, donors, NGOs and the private sector.

The Conference was hosted by the Parliament of Ethiopia and organized by the Forum of African and Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAAPPD) and UNFPA, along with the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), and the Inter-American Parliamentarian Group (IAPG).

For more information on the IPCI/ICPD Conference and the High Level Meeting, click [here](#).

2. EPF Council elects new Executive Committee Members at its Addis Ababa Meeting and conducts Study Tours on Maternal Health and Climate Change in Ethiopia

The European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) held its yearly Council meeting on 29 October 2009 in Addis Ababa. The meeting followed the International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation the International Conference on Population and Development (IPCI/ICPD) and brought together more than 30 European Members of Parliament, APPG Secretariat Representatives and Observers.



After a welcome note by **EPF President Hon. Carina Hägg, MP** (Sweden), **Ms Safiye Çağar**, Director of the Information, Executive Board and Resource Mobilisation Division within UNFPA held a keynote address on UNFPA's ICPD Priorities in the European Region and informed EPF Council participants about UNFPA's strategic priorities for 2010.

During this year's EPF Council meeting, several open positions to the Executive Committee had to be filled due to expiration of mandates of a number of Executive Committee Members. EPF received an impressive amount of applications from candidates with a remarkable track record of working on the ICPD agenda in their countries and at international level. It is with great pleasure that EPF welcomes the following newly elected Full Members and Associate Members to its Executive Committee:

Full Members of the EPF Executive Committee:

- Hon. Petra Bayr, MP (Austria)
- Hon. Sybille Pfeiffer, MP (Germany)
- Hon. Françoise Castex, MEP (France)
- Hon. Saliya Murzabayeva, MP (Russian Federation)
- Hon. Yvonne Gilli, MP (Switzerland)
- Hon. Öznur Calik, MP (Turkey)

Associate Members of the EPF Executive Committee:

- Hon. Nermina Kapetanovic, MP (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Hon. Karsten Lauritzen, MP (Denmark)
- Hon. Antonia Garcia Valls, MP (Spain)
- Baroness Jennifer Tonge (United Kingdom)

All newly elected Executive Committee Members and Associate Members will serve for a 3 year term which is renewable once. **Hon. George Tsereteli, MP** (Georgia) and **Hon. Hilde Vautmans, MP** (Belgium) have been re-elected for a second term on the EPF Executive Committee. **Hon. George Tsereteli, MP** and Vice-President of the Georgian Parliament will act as EPF Interim President until the upcoming EPF Executive Committee Meeting in the first quarter of 2010 where formal elections for the EPF Presidency will be held.

In a closing ceremony, Hon. Tsereteli thanked the outgoing EPF Executive Committee Members **Hon. Anne van Lancker, MEP** (Belgium) and EPF President, **Hon. Antje Blumenthal, MP** (Germany), **Hon. Carina Hägg, MP** (Sweden) and **Hon. Birute Vesaite, MP** (Lithuania) for the exceptional efforts, diligence and commitment they have shown in promoting and advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights at national, European and international level.

3. EPF Mini Study Tours enhance MP understanding about Maternal Health and Climate Change challenges in Ethiopia

During parallel mini study tours on maternal health and young girls and climate change and population held from 29-31 October 2009, European Parliamentarians had the chance to visit projects in and around Addis Ababa. The study tours were organised by EPF and kindly hosted by the **Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE)** and the **Ethiopia Population Health and Environment Consortium (CIPHE)**.



The study tour on maternal health and young girls took MPs to the Fistula Hospital and the FGAE Addis Ababa model clinic. This enabled Parliamentarians to learn more about the unmet SRHR needs of the second most populated country in Africa (79 million). Here, only one in fifteen women has access to contraception and only one in five women has access to education. Two thirds of the total population are under the age of 25 and Ethiopian women have 6 children on average. Without adequate access to family planning services and contraception, Ethiopia's population will double within 22 years.

Ethiopia is also extraordinarily affected by climate change and farmers have to fight with poor harvests because of increased droughts. These challenges were addressed during the study tour on climate change and population where MPs visited projects such as the community home-based care project and an urban gardening project in provinces most affected by HIV/AIDS where farmers, especially women, learn to increase their food intake and income level.

4. Euromapping presentation in Budapest reaches civil society, NGOs, MPs and Ministry representatives

Together with the Hungarian BOCS Foundation, EPF presented Euromapping in a double event in Budapest on October 7.

The first event took place with representatives of Hungarian NGOs and civil society working in the field of development, such as the Africa platform, HAND (Hungarian platform member of Concorde) and HUNIDA. The findings were presented to introduce a rich debate on how Hungarian based NGOs could use Euromapping as a tool for their advocacy activities and more remarkably, on how to include population assistance in the national development aid strategy. According to local NGOs, the lack of awareness about the MDGs and the lack of state structure to implement ODA (Hungary has no



development agency) seemed to be the main obstacles to scale up efforts in Hungary.

In a second event, prominent personalities from the foreign affairs ministry, the education ministry, research center on population, UNICEF and **Hon. Ilona Ékes, MP** participated in a round table debate in the Technical University of Budapest in which EPF had the honor to be represented. The debate was an honest exchange of views about the importance of SRHR and development aid, as well as the challenges and obligations that Hungary faces to become a bigger European donor.

Euromapping is a joint study by DSW and EPF that scrutinizes EU countries' development aid for population assistance and reproductive health (sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, maternal death and disability, family planning, gender-based violence) commitments and disbursements. It "names and shames" good and bad performers, and includes specific recommendations to improve reproductive health and reduce poverty.

For more information, please **contact Miguel Ongil at miguel@iepfpd.org**

4. Euromapping presentation in Rome attracts Italian NGO community

AIDOS, the Italian Association of Women for Development, and EPF presented Euromapping during an NGO meeting in Rome on October 20, to discuss the main findings of the joint DSW/EPF research study and to brainstorm about the possibilities to increasingly include population activities in the Italian development cooperation agenda.

All members of the health working group of the Italian GCAP (Global Coalition Against Poverty) attended the meeting. They showed much interest in the findings of the joint study and discussed about the need to include these issues on the Italian strategy to fight poverty, though the country focus on hunger and the hostile political environment.

For more information, please **contact Miguel Ongil at miguel@iepfpd.org**

II. Parliamentary Leadership

1. Swiss APPG Co-Chair urges Switzerland to invest more in family planning

Hon. Yvonne Gilli, MP, Co-Chair of the Swiss APPG "Caire +" and EPF Executive Committee Member called on the Swiss Government to invest more in family planning as part of the country's development assistance in an interview with the Swiss magazine "ARGUS" while being in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia where she participated in the 4th International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. "It is not acceptable that 200 million women living in the world's poorest countries want less children but do not have access to contraceptives", Gilli states. During her intervention at the IPCI conference, Hon. Gilli explained that Switzerland is about to include female genital mutilation (FGM) into the criminal law "in order to be able to sanction this crime adequately". However, next to Italy, Switzerland is the only European country that has reduced its contribution for population assistance. Gilli emphasizes the need for a targeted and result-oriented increase in Swiss ODA and argues that "Europe can only benefit from an Africa with better chances for development".



Hon. Yvonne Gilli, MP (right in the picture) discusses with a doctor in the FGAE Model Clinic in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia

2. Finnish APPG Chair tables Parliamentary Question on coherence of Finnish Development Assistance

Hon. Minna Sirnö, MP, and EPF Executive Committee Member asked the Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade and Development which actions the Finnish Government will undertake to ensure that the country's Development Policy and Cooperation is consistent with international development targets, especially the Cairo Programme of Action and the UN Millennium Development Goals, to foster access to family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights and the needs of young people and if the Government is committed to allocating 10 % of official development assistance to development cooperation in the field of population and sexual health. In answering, Minister Paavo Väyrynen highlighted that "during 2009, Finland has actively promoted sexual health and rights in many forums. We have influenced to improve the rights and status of women and girls in e.g. the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Population and Development. At UN level, Finland has emphasized population issues as a part of the solution to global challenges and was part of the group of countries whose support enabled the inclusion of a specific sub-target in the Millennium Development Goals". The Minister, however, does not consider that it is practical to set a percentage objective for appropriations to population issues and sexual health since this has not been done for other policy sectors either.



3. Hon. Heli Järvinen, MP questions Finnish Foreign Minister on the implementation of the Finnish Action Plan of the UN 1325 Resolution

In September 2009, **Hon. Heli Järvinen MP** member of the Finnish APPG on Population and Development asked the Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs how the implementation of the Finnish National Action Plan for UN Resolution 1325 can be ensured given that the Ministries have not budgeted any money specifically for the Action Plan for the years 2009 and 2010. UN Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously on 31 October 2000 and is the first resolution ever passed by the UN Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.



In his response, Mr. Alexander Stubb, Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasised that there is not one single specific budget line for the implementation of the UN 1325 Resolution, but that "these are funded by the various budget items of the respective ministries". He recalled that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is taking resolution 1325 as well as the action plan into account for its implementation in planning the Ministry's operations and emphasised that various budget items are involved, including development cooperation assistance. He added that additional expenses related to the implementation of resolution 1325 can be paid from operational funds and that the diversity of sources of funding helps integrate the questions in resolution 1325 to all the activities of the ministry. Finally, he highlighted that Finland is funding projects and International organisations aiming to implement the goals of the Resolution 1325.

4. Azeri MP conducts activities during a month of Awareness Raising on Breast and Cervical Cancer in Azerbaijan

On 21 October the public Union "Women-Leaders" headed by **Hon. Malahat Ibrahimgizi, MP** and Chair of the APPG in Azerbaijan, conducted a workshop entitled "Oncological Diseases: the situation with breast and cervical cancer in Azerbaijan", with the purpose of awareness raising of mass-media and the public about the disease, information on prevention methods, causes and first symptoms. The workshop was held in co-operation with the Social Committee of the Parliament, UNFPA, USAID, the National Oncological Centre and Oncological clinic of Azerbaijan Medical University in Azerbaijan.



"In 2007, seven thousand women were diagnosed with oncological diseases in Azerbaijan; 1037 of them with breast cancer." Mr. Nasimi Gasimov, Head Doctor of the Oncological Clinic of Azerbaijan Medical University stated.

"The rate of early diagnostics of breast cancer in Azerbaijan in comparison to European countries and the USA is very low. This is the situation not only in Azerbaijan, but in many post-Soviet countries. Breast cancer ranks first among all oncological diseases of females. To increase the detection rate at early stage, when the full recovery is possible, we need to conduct awareness raising of women above 40 years old", Hon. Ibrahimgizi stated at during press conference.

On 30 October, the organisers conducted a large-scale charity concert in Baku. The funds raised from the ticket sale will be used to purchase new mobile mammographs to ensure early screening all over the country, including in most remote regions.

III. Malaria Update

1. Catalan EPF Malaria Taskforce member puts forward a non-binding resolution on malaria in the Catalan Parliament

Following her participation in the study tour to Cameroon on malaria held in April 2009, Catalan EPF Malaria Taskforce member **Hon. Maria Rosa Fortuny i Torroella, MP** introduced a non-binding Resolution to pave the way for the Catalan 'Generalitat' to start funding programmes for malaria research, prevention and treatment. The non-binding resolution adopted in the Catalan Parliament on 15 October 2009 calls for continuous support to the Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation as well as increased commitment and action in the fight against malaria and for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. It calls for supporting additional initiatives aiming at strengthening health systems, combating poverty and infectious diseases as well as for awareness-raising campaigns and trainings in malaria endemic countries.



2. Belgian EPF Executive Committee member and EPF Malaria Taskforce member urge Belgian government to increase funding for the fight against Malaria



Belgian Liberal EPF Executive Committee member **Hon. Hilde Vautmans, MP** and EPF Malaria Taskforce member **Hon. Katia della Faille, MP**, Vice Chair and member of the Belgian APPG "Parliamentarians for the MDGs" introduced a Motion for Resolution in the Belgian Federal Parliament calling on the new Government to increase support for the fight against malaria. Highlighting the lessons learned thanks to their participation in numerous EPF study tours to developing countries, **MP Katia della Faille** recalled that "Malaria is one of the biggest causes of death worldwide, especially in developing countries" while **MP Hilde Vautmans** emphasised that "Malaria can be both prevented and cured thanks to relatively simple and inexpensive tools". The Resolution calls on the Government to improve access to malaria prevention tools (such as long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets, indoor residual spraying, intermittent preventive treatment etc.) as well as to effective antimalarial treatment through support and promotion of innovative financing mechanisms, such as the provision of Affordable Medicines Facility for malaria (AMFm). In addition, the Resolution calls for increasing support to health systems, including infrastructure, services and human resources, and urges Belgium to increase its contribution to the Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM) and the Global Fund. Finally, the resolution emphasizes the need to strengthen financial support for malaria research. The Resolution will be presented and discussed in Plenary in the upcoming weeks.

The full press release (in Dutch) can be found at: <http://www.katiadellafaille.be>

For more information, please **contact Silvia Theodoridis at silvia@iepfpd.org**

IV. APPG Update

1. Norwegian All-Party Parliamentary Group holds first meeting after elections



Under the chairmanship of **Hon. Truls Wickholm, MP**, members of the Norwegian All-Party Parliamentary Group held their first meeting after the parliamentary elections in September. The meeting, initiated by the Norwegian Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights "Sex og Politikk" which also provides the Secretariat to the APPG, was designed to "meet and greet" newcomers to the parliamentary group and to inform them about the Association's work, initiatives and priorities for the next year. EPF Senior Advocacy Officer Nadine Krysostan introduced the work of the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF) to the group members, presented highlights from its 2009 activities and gave a short overview about upcoming events and activities.

V. EPF – EU Relations

1. EU Commission launches online consultation for Communication on Global Health

Civil Society and academic institutions, UN agencies, the private sector and other key partners in global health are invited to participate in an online consultation in light of the preparations for a major EU policy document on Global Health. The document in form of a Communication is currently being drafted by the European Commission and is scheduled to be adopted by the Spanish EU Presidency in 2010. The Communication will include key guiding principles which should apply to all EU internal and external actions related to global health and contains three different sub-sections: a) Global Health Equity, b) Global Health Coherence and c) Global Health Knowledge.

The consultation is open until 9 December 2009 and can be accessed at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/consultation/index.cfm?action=viewcons&id=4765>

VI. EPF – Visibility

1. Launch of new website on climate change and population



EPF, member of the Population and Climate Change Alliance (PCCA), launched a knowledge sharing website created by a group of NGOs working together on population and climate change issues. Through this website it is possible for each member of PCCA to upload events, publications and news items regarding the linkage between population and climate, in order to enhance communication on this issue between NGOs. The website can be accessed at: <http://www.popclimate.org>

EPF invites everybody interested in joining the Population and Climate Change Alliance (PCCA), to sign up through the website. The criteria for joining would be:

- 1) Adherence to ICPD Programme of Action
- 2) Belief that climate change matters to population
- 3) Be a bona fide population, Reproductive Health or environmental NGO.

NGOs interested to become a member of PCCA, please **contact Saskia Pfeijffer at Saskia@iefpd.org**.

2. EPF releases its annual report 2007-2008

In time for the 4th International Parliamentarians' Conference on the ICPD, EPF presented its annual report 2007-2008. The report features highlights of EPF's activities and achievements over the past two years.

Since its establishment in 2000, EPF expanded its membership and, today, counts twenty-eight All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) across Europe. Since 2006, EPF has built relationships with Parliamentarians and SRHR/Health advocates in an additional five European countries. Altogether, EPF had worked in 83% of European countries, with member APPGs in over half of the Parliaments in Europe.



EPF has successfully mobilised Parliamentarians every time the ICPD Programme of Action has come under attack by opponents to free choice and condemned policies such as the Global Gag Rule and funding cuts to reproductive health providers. EPF would like to congratulate all EPF members around Europe as well as key actors such as UNFPA, IPPF, and the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria for playing a key role in setting policies to integrate HIV/ Aids and malaria into a broader SRHR context, expanding human rights protection to same-sex couples, and for mobilising additional funding for ICPD and MDGs related programmes. EPF hopes this report will educate and inspire an ever increasing number of Parliamentarians that we can, individually and collectively, make a difference in the lives of many people around the world.

3. EPF raises awareness on the links between climate change and population in airline magazine



Prior to the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 15) to be held from 7-18 December in Copenhagen, EPF has placed an article on the linkages between climate change and population in the November edition of the Brussels Airlines Inflight magazine "B-there" reaching over one million readers each month. The advert highlights the fact that over 200 million women want, but currently lack access to modern contraceptives. Meeting this demand for voluntary family planning could slow high rates of population growth, thereby reducing demographic pressure on limited resources especially in the countries in the developing world which are least responsible for the growing emissions but will be bearing the greatest toll, with women being the most vulnerable to the impact of climate change.

The UN Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change provides an opportunity to draw attention to the centrality of women. The urgent need for increased rights-based family planning development assistance – including through integrated sexual and reproductive health, malaria and HIV/AIDS programmes – as an important addition to international efforts to assist least-developed countries to adapt to climate change.

VII. EPF Activities – Outlook 2009

1. ICPD at 15 Regional Forum for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 12-13 November 2009, Istanbul/Turkey

Convened by UNFPA, in partnership with the UNECE, the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), the IPPF, and Turkey's State Planning Organization (SPO), this Forum will be held on 12-13 November 2009 in Istanbul/Turkey.

2. Global Alliance for Vaccine Initiative (GAVI) Fourth Partners' Forum, 16-21 November 2009, Hanoi, Vietnam

EPF will be bringing a 10 member Parliamentary Delegation to the Alliance's Fourth Partners' Forum to take place from 18-20 November 2009 and combine it with mini field visits around Hanoi. The event will provide a forum to discuss the role of vaccination and immunisation in achieving the health Millennium Development Goals, review lessons learned in the first 10 years of GAVI's existence and share best practices. Participants will reflect on the challenges and opportunities ahead, and the way towards fulfilling GAVI's mission to save children's lives and protecting people's health by increasing access to immunisation in poor countries.

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.

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

EPF

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