



**PARTNERS IN POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**  
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*Statement by Sethuramiah L Rao, Permanent Observer  
Meeting of the Second Committee*

*GA 66<sup>th</sup> Session, on Agenda Item 24(b) on South-South Cooperation, 12 October 2011*

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Mr. Chairman,**

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make brief remarks, on behalf of the Partners in Population and Development (PPD), on the agenda item of South-South Cooperation. The Partners, as most of you know, is an intergovernmental organization of 25 developing countries, representing close to seventy percent of the developing countries' population, and is dedicated to the promotion and strengthening of South-South cooperation in population, reproductive health (including family Planning and HIV/AIDS) and development. Through advocacy, policy dialogues, exchange of information and experience, capacity building and training, and technical cooperation, PPD assists both its member countries and other non-member countries in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, within the broader framework of the MDGs. Its activities and programmes, which have received increasing financing from member countries themselves, have also enjoyed the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other donors and foundations. The Government of Bangladesh continues to host and support the secretariat of the PPD in Dhaka. PPD gratefully acknowledges these supports.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The year 2011 will be remembered as the year when the world's population reached 7 billion. According to the latest projections by the United Nations, the world population will continue to increase to 9.3 billion by the year 2050. To put these numbers in perspective, the world population did not reach one billion until the Year 1804. It then took 123 years to reach 2 billion in 1927, 33 years to reach 3 billion in 1960, 14 years to reach 4 billion in 1974, 13 years to reach 5 billion in 1987 and 12 years to reach the 6th billion in October 1999, and the seventh billion will be reached by the end of this month. That is phenomenal growth in historical perspective.

Equally significant is the fact that population dynamics has become more divergent around the world, like for example, high fertility and rapid population growth in many Least Developed Countries (LDCs), a preponderance of young people in a large number of developing countries, rapid population ageing in many other developing countries, and accelerated migration and urbanization in most developing countries. These divergent trends, in the face of continued poverty, lack of robust economic growth and sustainable

development, pose serious and varied social, economic, environmental and other consequences among the different countries of the world.

Against this backdrop, it should be welcomed that several countries in the South have successfully formulated and implemented population-related policies and programmes relevant to their needs and requirements. In these countries, use of modern contraceptives has gone up significantly, fertility rates have come down and population growth rates have declined dramatically. Some have succeeded in reducing the poverty levels and some have achieved impressive growth. Yet, many key elements of the ICPD Programme of Action remain presently incomplete and several of the MDGs are still far from being met, especially MDG 5 on improving maternal health. Least Developed Countries and many of the Sub-Saharan African countries continue to face these challenges of population and poverty.

Thus, population, reproductive health and development are a particularly suitable theme for South-South cooperation. PPD has been doing its little part since 1994, when it was established at the time of the ICPD in Cairo. Under the aegis of PPD, training and capacity building activities are already going on for the last several years in the developing countries. For example, among others, the Governments of Egypt, India and Morocco have offered long-term fellowships for graduate education in population and public health; China, India, Thailand, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and South Africa are offering short-term fellowships to train demographers and population and health experts; and China, Indonesia, Thailand, Kenya, Egypt and Tunisia have hosted a large number of familiarization tours of their population and reproductive health programmes for member country professionals. PPD experience indicates that first-rate technical capacities exist in the population and reproductive health field in many developing countries, especially at the PPD network of Partner Institutions (PIs), and greater efforts should be made to fully capitalize on such capacities through South-South and triangular cooperation.

In addition to capacity building and training, PPD has also promoted exchange of reproductive health commodities and exchange of information and experiences. PPD is pleased to report that recently it has, in collaboration with UNFPA and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation at UNDP, catalogued innovative experiences that have led to success in its member countries in addressing population, reproductive health and development challenges, as a way of sharing experiences and knowledge. This publication is being launched in Pretoria in South Africa in early November. PPD greatly welcomes and appreciates this collaboration with the Special Unit and UNFPA.

Furthermore, PPD has also been organizing advocacy and policy dialogue activities on urgent topics in population, reproductive health and development in the form of international conferences and workshops for member and non-member countries. The outcomes of those conferences in the form of Declarations have served as a useful guide for participating countries in addressing their population, reproductive health and development issues. Such declarations adopted during the last decade include Beijing Declaration in 2000, Kochi Declaration in 2001, Jakarta Declaration in 2003, Yangtze Declaration in 2004, Agra Declaration in 2005, Rabat Declaration in 2007, Kampala Declaration in 2008, and Yogyakarta Declaration in 2010. For 2011, an international conference on population

dynamics, climate change and sustainable development is being organized by PPD early next month in Pretoria in collaboration with, among others, the Government of South Africa and UNFPA. These conferences have provided an excellent opportunity to advocate for political, financial and technical support for addressing population, reproductive health and development issues in PPD member and other countries.

**Mr. Chairman,**

PPD experience in South-South cooperation in population and reproductive health indicates that it is an effective approach and countries of the alliance value very much its horizontal partnership, the principle of sharing and learning, the sense of solidarity and its sensitivity to cultural diversity and its lack of conditionality. PPD is convinced that South-South cooperation could play even larger roles in the future provided some of the following are better addressed viz., greater ownership for South-South cooperation, clearer national policy and institutional framework for the approach, focus on demand-driven initiatives, greater attention to results-orientation and finally, a recognition that south-south and tri-angular cooperation are complementary to traditional North-South cooperation.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, PPD would like to express its fervent hope that the great potential that exists for South-South cooperation in many developing countries would be utilized and supported by all concerned to channel its contribution to the achievement of the ICPD Goals and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and beyond, and indeed to sustainable development and international cooperation.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, for your attention.