



AFPPD Statement of Support to United Nations Population Fund

6 May 2017 | Rome, Italy

The Executive Committee members of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), representing its 29 member national committees of parliamentarians in the Asia-Pacific region, share deep disappointment in the decision of the Government of the United States to withhold future funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). AFPPD strongly supports the statements made by the UN Secretary General Mr. António Guterres and UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin on 4 April 2017 on this matter.

On 30 March 2017, the U.S. Administration announced that it would strip UNFPA of all U.S. funding, based on a misinterpretation of UNFPA's work, claiming that it "supports, or participates in the management of, a programme of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization" in China. UNFPA refutes this claim, as all of its work promotes the human rights of individuals and couples to make their own decisions, free of coercion or discrimination.

UNFPA is a leading UN agency that works in more than 150 countries and territories, home to more than 80 percent of the world's population. In the past year itself, UNFPA saved the lives of more than 2,340 women from dying during pregnancy and childbirth, helped to ensure more than 1,250 fistula surgeries, and prevented 947,000 unintended pregnancies, among other very important work.

This de-funding is expected to amount to a loss of roughly \$71 million in the fiscal year 2017 alone for UNFPA. This could have devastating effects on the health of vulnerable women and girls and their families, hitting the poorest countries, including many of our AFPPD member states.

AFPPD stands together with UNFPA and all affected international organizations that fight for the same cause as we do. We must remember that since AFPPD's establishment in 1981, UNFPA has been our strongest supporter and champion in promoting parliamentary advocacy for population and development issues. Together, we must strive to ensure that there is sufficient resources to support and continue this critical work.