



Dr Margaret Chan

Director General
World Health Organisation
Avenue Appia 20
1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

4 July 2014

Dear Dr Margaret Chan

RE: Omission of reproductive health from the WHO position on the draft health goal for the post-2015 development framework

As Parliamentarians representing the millions of citizens who have elected us and as active legislators in the field of population and development, we are writing to you with regards to universal access to reproductive health and the draft health goal for the post-2015 framework, released by the World Health Organization (WHO) at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2014.

While we are comforted to note the effort to go beyond health financing and ensure healthy lives, and we particularly welcome the specific inclusion of Universal Health Coverage, we wish to express our deep concern at the apparent omission of universal access to reproductive health (currently MDG 5b) from sub-goal 1 which is meant to carry over the unmet health Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

As the current Director General of the WHO, you are as familiar as we are with the deleterious effect that the initial omission of MDG target 5b has had on the lives of millions of women around the world. The subsequent later addition of MDG target 5b was a significant step forward and while much progress has been made, this remains woefully incomplete. Addressing maternal health remains an unfinished challenge, of which reproductive health, access to family planning and eliminating unsafe abortion are essential ingredients.

Moreover, we are concerned that a body which should be guided by sound evidence such as the WHO should even consider such a significant step backwards in its own positioning regarding the health and rights of every woman around the world.

Allow us to reassure you that the political will and the consensus to include sexual and reproductive health and rights does indeed exist. On 23-25 April 2014, 260 Parliamentarians from 134 countries met in Stockholm, Sweden at the Sixth International Parliamentarians Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)¹ and unanimously called for:

- *for targets and indicators on sexual and reproductive health and rights to be included in the standalone goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; universal health goal including for universal health coverage, and on the rights of young*

¹ More information at www.ipci2014.org



people, including investing in their quality education, decent employment opportunities and effective livelihood skills, as part of the post 2015 development agenda.

- Promote access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all persons, including quality health care and youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services, while removing legal regulatory and social barriers to reproductive health information and services for adolescents; and ensure access to contraception as well as a wide range of modern methods of family planning, and emergency contraception as recommended by WHO;

In light of the sound body scientific evidence which itself amply justifies including access to reproductive health (MDG 5b) in any position regarding the post-2015 development framework, there is also the political will of the Parliamentarians - democratic representatives of the world's people - that access to sexual and reproductive health and rights must feature as an indispensable component of the post-2015 development framework. We would therefore strongly support a revision of the WHO position in this direction.

We are pleased to share with you in annex the full text of the Stockholm Statement of Commitment which represents the unanimous consensus of 260 Parliamentarians from 134 countries.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Jenny Tonge

President, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health
House of Lords, UK

Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi, MP

Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Member of the High-Level Taskforce on ICPD
Chairperson, Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)
Chair, Japan Parliamentarians' Federation on Population and Development
House of Councillors, Japan

Hon. Abdullah Dughaiash Abdulbari, MP

Member, Public Health- Population Committee
Chair, Yemeni Association For Reproductive Health
Parliament, Yemen

Hon. Delia Back, MP

Member of the Board of Directors, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
Congress of the Republic, Guatemala

Hon. Petra Bayr, MP

Vice-President, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
The Parliament, Austria

Hon. Amery Browne, MP

Drafting Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Vice-Chair, Global Parliamentary Network on Universal Health Coverage
Parliament, Trinidad and Tobago

Hon. Öznur Çalık, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
President, Population and Development Group
Grand National Assembly, Turkey

Hon. Monica Ferro, MP

Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Population and Development
National Assembly, Portugal

Hon. Dr Hedy M Fry PC, MP

Drafting Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Vice-Chair, Executive Committee, Canadian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD)
House of Commons, Canada



Hon. Yvonne Gilli, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Co-Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights "Cairo+"
Federal Assembly, Switzerland

Hon. Juan Carlos Grau Reines, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, Parliamentary Inter-Group on Population and Development
Congress of Deputies, Spain

Hon. Highvie H. Hamududu, MP

Chairperson, Zambia All-party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development
National Assembly, Zambia

Hon. Malahat Ibrahimqizi, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Population and Development
Milli Məclis (Parliament), Azerbaijan

Hon. Emir Kabil, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
House of Representatives, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Hon. Ulrika Karlsson, MP

Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
Riksdag, Sweden

Hon. Volda Lawrence, MP

Treasurer, Board of Directors, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
Coordinator, Caribbean Network of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CNPPD)
National Assembly, Guyana

Hon. Betty. E. Machangu, MP

Member, Foreign Affairs and International Relations Sectoral Committee
Vice Chair, Parliamentarian Population Club
Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Executive Committee Member, African Parliamentarian Forum Representing E. Africa Zone
Parliament, Tanzania

Hon. Saliya Murzabayeva, MP

Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
State Duma of the Russian Federation

Hon. Norbert Ndiwokubwayo, MP

Chair, Commission of Health and HIV/AIDS
National Assembly, Burundi

Hon. Pauline Ndoumou, MP

Quaestor, Office of National Assembly, Cameroon

Hon. Marie-Rose Nguini Effa, MP

Chair, Health Labour and Social Affairs Committee of the Pan African Parliament
Vice- chair, African Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
National Assembly, Cameroon

Hon. Marco Antonio Nuñez, MP

Drafting Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Vice Chair of the Council, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
Chair, Global Parliamentary Network on Universal Health Coverage
National Congress, Chile

Hon. Bakary Ouattara, MP

Vice chair, Ivorian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
National Assembly, Ivory Coast

Hon. Dr. Sahar Qawasmi, MP

Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Legislative Council, Palestinian Territories

Hon. Bertha Sanseverino, MP

Member of the Board of Directors, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
House of Representatives, Uruguay

Hon. Ana Maria Solorzano, MP

Member of the Board of Directors, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
Congress of the Republic, Peru

Hon. Jani Toivola, MP

Steering Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Executive Committee Member, European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF)
Chair, All-Party-Parliamentary-Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
Eduskunta (Finnish Parliament), Finland



Hon. Fatima Vega, MP

Drafting Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
National Congress, Honduras

Hon. Soledad Vela, MP

Drafting Committee Member of the International Parliamentarians Conference of Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD)
Member of the Board of Directors, Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG)
National Assembly, Ecuador