



Parliamentarians for Global Action
Acción Mundial de Parlamentarios
Action Mondiale des Parlementaires

Kathmandu Declaration of Action

Parliamentary Seminar on HIV Policy

Kathmandu, Nepal, 24 - 26 February 2009

Reaffirming

- Our earlier PGA commitments made in Islamabad, Dhaka and Colombo to achieving agreed development goals.

Recognizing

- That, for parliamentarians, leadership brings with it imperatives for acting in the interests of all citizens, and setting an example for others to follow.
- That Nepal, as with many countries in South Asia, experiences a low national HIV prevalence but significantly higher rates amongst most-at-risk groups.
- That a country's development can be held back by HIV.
- That the forthcoming International Parliamentarians' Conference on ICPD Implementation offers an opportunity to increase the knowledge of parliamentarians about reproductive health including HIV.
- The opportunities offered by the recommendations contained in the report of the Independent Commission on AIDS in Asia.
- That there is often a failure to recognise married women as being vulnerable because of high risk behaviour by their partners (the "missing women").
- The need to increase access to reproductive health care, testing, treatment, and counselling.
- The need to incorporate HIV prevention into sexual and reproductive health services.
- That adolescents and young people require special attention in HIV education and awareness campaigns;
- That access to safe blood is a universal right which can only be guaranteed in the context of sustained co-operative efforts.

Stressing

- The need to sensitize and involve representatives of citizens at all levels in providing leadership in combating HIV especially in adopting rights-based non-discriminatory HIV legislation.

We, parliamentarians from South Asia and across the world, gathered at the PGA Seminar on HIV Policy, held in Kathmandu, Nepal 24 – 26 February 2009, undertake to make both a personal and a collective commitment to:

1. **Act** as drivers for change in promoting reproductive and human rights as well as effective reproductive health education;

2. **Continue** to demonstrate the political will to address the prevention, treatment, care and reduction of stigma and discrimination of HIV and to ensure multi-sectoral approaches;
3. **Encourage** the creation of mechanisms to address cross-border issues on HIV;
4. **Call** on countries receiving migrant workers to address HIV issues that migrant workers face in their host countries and commit to providing, at the very least, counselling and referral services for HIV+ migrant workers.
5. **Support** legislation to provide an enabling environment to scale-up access to prevention, treatment, care and support for all citizens, especially those from marginalized groups;
6. **Ensure** that there are costed national action plans and that HIV responses are adequately funded from both national and international sources;
7. **Share** lessons learned from other parliamentarians on steps taken to harmonize roles, responsibilities and relationship between civil society, government, country coordination mechanisms (CCM), the UN, external development partners (EDPs), media and political parties;
8. **Promote** the need to improve voluntary counselling and confidential testing (VCCT), sexually transmitted infections (STI) and anti-retroviral therapy (ART) services and cross-border referrals for migrants;
9. **Express** concern at the continuing trafficking of men, women and children for the purpose of sex work and child labour;
10. **Assist** governments to understand the linkage between safe motherhood, (including prevention of mother to child transmission), paediatric HIV care and HIV prevention;
11. **Advocate** that governments develop social security and hospice provisions for those in advanced stages of AIDS;
12. **Work** together as parliamentarians to make HIV a priority for national and regional agendas;
13. **Insist** that governments continue and/or initiate programs targeting and addressing the special needs of children, adolescents and young people in HIV prevention, awareness, treatment and care;
14. **Demand** that bio-safety practices in both public and private sector blood banks are given immediate attention and that mandatory systems of continuous screening of all blood for HIV antigens and other blood-borne pathogens, with unannounced verifications, are put in place and that there should be regular monitoring by parliamentary committees on health; and
15. **Demand** that governments review and amend legislation and policies that hinder or frustrate HIV prevention.