



Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development

Activities 2002-2005



The Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development was formed in 1995. It has continued to grow in size, experience and activities over that time, and in particular in the last 3 years. I am pleased to be able to present this report on our activities over the past 3 years on behalf of the PGPD.



Membership

- Membership consists of
 - Members of Federal Parliament (46)
 - Members of State/Territory Parliaments (36)
 - Executive Committee



Senator Claire Moore with Yoshio Yatsu, AFPPD Chairman

PGPD membership has continued to grow over the past 3 years. There are now 46 members in the Federal Parliament and 36 in the various State and Territory Parliaments. Most of the work of the PGPD is undertaken by the Federal Members, however State-based members are also strong advocates on population and development issues and put motions, make speeches and highlight reproductive health, population and development issues where possible through parliamentary processes and to their constituents and other organisations they are involved in.



Work of PGPD

- working meetings held 6 times a year
- meetings of PGPD members in state parliaments held in 2005

PGP holds six working meetings a year, to plan activities and receive briefings on key issues. In addition, in 2005, meetings with PGPD members from two state parliaments were held.



Parliamentary activities

- Questions on notice
- Private member's motions
- Speeches
- Meetings with ministers



*Senator Marise Payne, PGPD
Hon Secretary*

One of the ways PGPD members raise the issues of population and development is through speeches, questions and motions in Parliament.

Over the past three years, speeches have been made on:

- Population and development
- Population and environment
- Reproductive health and the MDGs
- Funding for population activities through Australia's aid program

PGPD members also highlight population and development issues on important international days. This year motions were put and speeches made in several parliaments and the Senate highlighting:

- World Population Day
- Launch of State of World Population Report, and
- World AIDS Day (upcoming)

PGPD members also seek information and highlight specific issues by placing questions on notice to the Government. Over the past three years members have put QON regarding funding for HIV/AIDS prevention programs, emergency reproductive health supplies, and domestic reproductive health policies.

From time to time members of the PGPD seek a meeting with the Minister for Foreign Affairs. This year PGPD members met with the Minister to urge him to support reproductive health issues at the World Summit held in September.



Launch of *State of World Population Report*

- PGPD hosts this launch annually
- Lunchtime function at Parliament House
- NGO and community forums



Ian Howie (UNFPA), Dame Carol Kidu MP (PNG Minister for Community Development), Senator Marise Payne

Each year the PGPD hosts the launch of the State of the World Population Report on behalf of UNFPA. The launch is done at a lunchtime function in Parliament House, which enables PGPD to highlight population and development issues, and the work of the UNFPA, to their parliamentary colleagues who are not members of PGPD. Community and NGO forums and functions also form part of the launch activities.

Each year the launch of the Report has attracted more interest and more support. This year the PGPD had a very successful launch, with the Australian Government making a public statement in support of the Report and the issues it highlights. The launch was attended by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bruce Billson, and by the Shadow Minister for Overseas Aid, Bob Sercombe.



Visiting dignitaries

- PGPD has hosted meetings with:
 - Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director, UNFPA
 - Dr Robert Feachem, Executive Director, Global Fund
 - Ms Shazia Rafi, Secretary-General, Parliamentarians for Global Action



Thoraya Obaid speaking at a forum hosted by PGPD

PGPD takes the opportunity to meet with visiting international dignitaries when they are visiting Australia. In the past three years the Group has hosted meetings with Thoraya Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA

Dr Robert Feachem, Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

Ms Shazia Rafi, Secretary-General, Parliamentarians for Global Action

These meetings are invaluable in providing PGPD members with the opportunity to learn about the work of key international agencies, as well as keeping members informed of current population and development issues.



Engagement with AFPPD

- Kelly Hoare MP, Chair of Standing Committee on Women
- Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Meetings



Kelly Hoare MP, Chair of Standing Committee on Women

The PGPD is actively involved in the work of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians for Population and Development and attend most of its meetings and conferences. Kelly Hoare MP, who I am representing today, has been Chair of the Standing Committee on Women for the past three years. In this position she instigated the annual Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conference, which provides specifically women parliamentarians and ministers in the region with the opportunity to meet, learn from one another and learn more about population, development and reproductive health issues. I would like to take the opportunity to commend Kelly for the work she has done in this role.

Over the past three years, PGPD members have attended many of the meetings and conferences hosted by AFPPD. PGPD appreciate the invaluable opportunities for learning and networking provided by AFPPD at these conferences.

Members have participated in

- APDA conferences
- High Level Policy-Makers' Symposium on South-to-South Collaboration: Multi-sector Approaches to Population and Development
- International Conference of South Asian Parliamentarians on HIV/AIDS
- East & Southeast Asia and Oceania Region Roundtable ICPD at 10
- 2004 International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action
- Asian Women Parliamentarians' and Ministers' Conferences



2nd Asian Women Parliamentarians Meeting

- PGPD hosted meeting in 2004



In 2004 the showpiece event for the PGPD was the organisation and hosting of the 2nd Asian Women Parliamentarians and Ministers Meeting in June. The title of the forum was “A Woman’s Perspective: Population, Development and Reproductive Health in the Asia Pacific Region”. The venue for the meeting was Parliament House in Canberra. This major international event brought together over 80 women parliamentarians and ministers from across the region. Participants found the discussion sessions particularly useful, where they had the opportunity to share experiences with their counterparts in the region on issues including the policy environment and challenges faced in implementing the ICPD.



Philippines study tour

- 6 Australians
- 1 from Tonga, 1 from Kiribati
- 10 days
- Visited projects addressing RH, population and environment



John Hyde MLA at an elementary school on Guimaras Island

The major event for the PGPD in 2003 was a study tour to the Philippines. Three MPs from the Federal Parliament and three from State Parliaments participated in the tour, which provided PGPD members with the opportunity to observe reproductive health, population development and environmental projects. Three parliamentarians from Pacific Island Countries also attended, providing the opportunity for PGPD members to develop a closer relationship and share common experiences with their colleagues from the Pacific.



Website



www.pgpd.asn.au

In 2005 the PGPD launched its new website www.pgpd.asn.au which details much of the work of the Group, as well as providing resources to members. The PGPD also refined its mission statement and objectives to better reflect the nature of the work that it does, and shortened its name to “Parliamentary Group on Population and Development” and agreed on a suite of new communication and media tools. The Group has begun to develop a number of fact sheets to use in its advocacy and education work with other parliamentarians and constituents, producing fact sheets on “What is reproductive health”, “Why reproductive health/What are reproductive health services” and “What the ICPD says about abortion”.



Thank you