

High-Level Task Force for ICPD

RIGHTS, DIGNITY & HEALTH FOR ALL

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New High Level Task Force for ICPD launched to prioritize gender equality, youth health and rights, in international development efforts

October 4, 2012, New York — Former Presidents Tarja Halonen (Finland) and Joaquim Chissano (Mozambique) will chair a new global High-Level Task Force for ICPD to galvanize political will and social mobilization for sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The Task Force, which was officially launched on October 1 in New York, is comprised of 26 eminent government, civil society, and private sector leaders who will work with governments, UN agencies, and civil society to ensure that sexual and reproductive rights and health is central to the global development agenda going forward. Particular attention will be paid to addressing women's and young people's empowerment.

In 1994, at the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, 179 governments set forward a visionary plan to advance women's empowerment, gender equality, and reproductive rights. It also established a goal to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health. The critical importance of these investments has been reaffirmed in subsequent United Nations agreements, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the next few years, the United Nations and the international community will evaluate progress made towards these goals and chart the course of global development for years to come.

"The year 2015 will be a milestone," said Halonen. "As governments chart a global agenda to reduce poverty and inequality, sexual and reproductive health and rights must be prioritized. To this end, the High-Level Task Force was formed. Investments in services and programs that help young people and women achieve their full potential are common sense: they improve the lives of individuals, strengthen communities and create a more just and sustainable world."

While considerable progress has been made towards expanding access to sexual and reproductive rights and health since Cairo, the world is still far short of meeting the core ICPD goals:

- **Every day, 800 women die from causes related to childbirth and pregnancy**, with 99% of deaths occurring in developing countries
- **More than 200 million women in developing countries want—but lack access to—effective contraception**
- **Every 30 seconds, a young person becomes HIV-positive**

"Nearly twenty years ago, governments and civil society laid out a plan to ensure the sexual and reproductive rights of the world's women, men and young people," said Ishita Chaudhry, a Task Force Member and recognized youth leader. "It's now time to keep our promise and realize that bold vision."

Task Force members are individuals from a range of countries and regions who share a long record of dedicating their talent and time to the struggle for equality and equity and championing the rights of those who most lack power and voice. Their profiles and experience reflect a rich diversity—of service as former heads of state, ministers and parliamentarians, civil society leaders, philanthropists, recipients of awards and the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Members of the Task Force are:

- H.E. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, Former President of the Republic of Mozambique, Task Force Co-Chair
- H.E. Tarja Halonen, Former President of the Republic of Finland, Task Force Co-chair
- Maria Antonieta Alcalde, Director of Advocacy, International Planned Parenthood Federation - Western Hemisphere Region, Mexico
- Renate Bähr, Executive Director, Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung, Germany
- Mariela Castro Espin, Director, National Center for Sex Education, Cuba
- Ishita Chaudhry, Founder and CEO, The YP Foundation, India
- Oluwafunmilola (Lola) O. Dare, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Health Sciences Training, Research & Development, Nigeria
- Elena Dmitrieva, CEO, Health and Development Foundation, Russia
- Julio Frenk, Dean of the Faculty, Harvard School of Public Health
- Bience Gawanas, Commissioner for Social affairs, African Union, Namibia
- Leymah Gbowee, CEO, Gbowee Peace Foundation USA, Liberia
- Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Minister of Health, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- Holo Muchangwe Hachonda, Program Director, Broad Reach Healthcare, Zambia
- Pinar Ilkkaracan, Founding President, Women For Women's Human Rights - New Ways, Turkey
- Musimbi Kanyoro, President and CEO of the Global Fund for Women, Kenya
- Carol Anne Kidu, Founder/Patron/Adviser of Safe Motherhood Alliance, Retired Minister and Member of Parliament, Papua New Guinea
- HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark
- Alessandra Nilo, Coordinadora de Políticas Estratégicas- GESTOS, Brazil
- Wanda Nowicka, Deputy Speaker of the Sejm (Lower House of the Parliament), Poland
- Sandeep Prasad, Executive Director, Action Canada for Population and Development, Canada
- Gita Sen, Professor at the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore- Founding member of DAWN (Development Alternatives with Woman for a New Era), India
- Keizo Takemi, Senior Fellow, Japan Center for International Exchange, Japan
- Luis Ubiñas, President, The Ford Foundation, USA
- Marijke Wijnroks, Ambassador for Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and HIV/AIDS, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands
- Mona Zulficar, Founder and Chair of the Executive Committee, Zulficar and Partners, Egypt