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PRESS COMMUNIQUE  
AUGUST 31, 1994

Thank you.

**PROGRAM OF ACTION OF ICPD CONTAINS NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO IMMORAL OR DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR, AND NO ADVOCACY FOR ANYTHING OFFENSIVE TO RELIGIOUS SENSITIVITIES, DECLARES DR. NAFIS SADIK**

Opening the Youth Consultation on Population and Development this morning at the International Scout Center in Cairo, Dr. Nafis Sadik, Secretary General of ICPD, urged the young people "to read (the Program of Action of the Cairo Conference) carefully, and note what it says, and what it does not say". "You will find in it no encouragement to immoral or deviant behaviour. You will find no advocacy for anything offensive to religious sensitivities, or different systems of beliefs. Accepting the Program of Action will bind no country to act in conflict with its own laws and culture. 90% of the Program of Action is already agreed by governments", she added in front of 120 young people aged less than 30, coming from more than 60 countries, and working with youth organisations or in youth-oriented projects in their respective countries.

These young people will exchange their views and ideas during 5 days in Cairo in this Youth Consultation for ICPD, on issues such as population growth and youth migration; discrimination against girls and women; choices and responsibilities in reproductive behavior; young/older or UN/NGO power sharing. The results of the consultation will be presented in the form of a declaration, at ICPD in a few days.

"Adolescents tend to be invisible to many bureaucracies and health systems. But youth must be empowered to make informed decisions and choices concerning all aspects of their lives. They can and should become directly involved in the implementation of programs that they want and they need. In this regard youth organisations have a critical role to play. You are effective in reaching out to other young people. UN system should form a closer partnership with youth organisations", Dr. Sadik added.

In his opening speech, Mr. <sup>Abdoulaye</sup> ~~Abdoul~~ Sar, speaking on behalf of the NGO Steering Committee for the Youth Consultation for ICPD, explained that "it is important that the youth voice their concerns, and give their opinion".

<sup>Prof.</sup> Mr. Maher Mahran, Minister of Population and Family Welfare, said that, even if ICPD was cancelled, the Conference has already "done 80% of its job", because it has: 1) "infused a tremendous amount of information to all the world on population problems", and 2) "it has reached politicians and policy makers, an extremely important sector, and difficult to reach".

<sup>Dr.</sup> Mr. Abdelmeneem Emara, Minister of Youth and Sports, stated that "since the crisis is a global one, solutions have to be found at a global level".

"This consultation is also to show the world what the young people can do for dealing with population and development issues", says Jean-Marc Bidjo, a young cameroonese participant. "Young people are not well utilised. They are the most numerous, they have plenty of ideas, a lot of energy, but often they are desperate. What they need is hope", he stated.

Plenary sessions, scheduled every day at 9 AM. are open to the press.

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# PRESS COMMUNIQUE

MRS. NAFIS SADIK, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ICPD,  
MR. M. MAHRAN, AND MR. A. EMARA,  
TO OPEN ON AUGUST 31ST THE FIRST ICPD-RELATED EVENT:  
THE YOUTH CONSULTATION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Nafis Sadik, Executive Secretary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), will open the Youth Consultation on Population and Development on Wednesday August 31, at 9 AM, at the Cairo International Scout Center. It will be her first public appearance in Cairo in relation to ICPD.

Mr. Maher Mahran, Minister of Population and Family Welfare, and Mr. Abdelmeneem Emara, Minister of Youth and Sports, will also honour of their presence the opening session.

The Youth Consultation is the first important event related to ICPD to take place in Cairo. Bringing together 120 young people coming from more than 60 countries, its goal is to provide a platform for young people's voices and concerns to be heard.

They are the ones often most affected by and most affecting the important population changes taking place in the world today; but they are also the ones least heard when it comes to implementing strategies. Population aged 15-24 today represents one fifth of the total world population. They are entering the changing labor market, they are the new parents, the new migrants, and the most affected by STDs, and notably Aids. The choices they make today and the opportunities being offered to them will have a significant impact for the future.

Understanding how young people's lives are affected by the population changes taking place, and what the youth themselves think could be done about it, is an important objective of the Youth Consultation - a "premiere" at this scale in the history of international population conferences.

The output of the Youth Consultation will be presented at ICPD, to serve as an input and advocacy tool to the Programme of Action, to be adopted by the participating countries.

The organisers of the Youth Consultation are nine major international NGOs, including notably the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, the Red Cross Youth, and the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The meeting is hosted by the Cairo International Scout Center.

The Youth Consultation will end on September 4.

A press conference will take place on September 4, at 5 PM, at the Cairo International Scout Center, Youssef Abbas Street, Madinet Nasr.

A film displaying some moments of the Youth Consultation will be shown on that occasion.

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