



WATCHDOG

Support Us Support Our Rights

The 4th day of the 45th Session of the CPD progresses with great expectations from civil society attending the meeting and civil society around the world.

By this time, all efforts must be done to achieve consensus and commit to adolescents and young people's human rights, empowerment and health. We hope that during this process, delegates remain continually aware of the great impact their commitments can make on our daily lives, and we are hopeful that the impact

can be positive by truly recognizing our realities.

Young activists present have constant communication with other young activists, adolescents and youth from all over the world, through social media, and are reporting on how this process is proceeding. We are expectant that delegates will continue to recognize that we have the right to make decisions about our own body, and we want to be able to make informed, supported decisions without stigma or discrimination.

We want to remind delegates that the protection of young people and adolescents' sexual and reproductive health and rights is recognised and upheld in international human rights law.

Support us, support our rights.

YCSRR delegation for #CPD2012



Round of Applause, please!

Wow! We are so happy to see so many governments supportive of young people and adolescent's rights!

We would like to applaud:

- **South Africa**- For their great support on removing barriers that hamper young people's access to contraception and other reproductive health services 'including termination of pregnancy', improving adolescent's access to contraceptives, enhancing female autonomy and for highlighting that South Africa is committed to gender equity, equality and universal human rights. Yes!
- **Mr. Zane Dangor - Special Advisor of the Minister of Social Development of South Africa**- For a statement he delivered during a recent UNAIDS side-event: "The UN system is still discussing who to leave out of Human Rights 60 years after the recognition of Human rights, we need to be implementing Human Rights as oppose to deciding who's in and who's out."
- **Philippines** - We have to mention the Philippines again! For supporting adolescent sexual and reproductive health and sexual rights, the need to empower adolescents to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health and well-being, and to enable young people to act on these choices. Again, we applaud you for your support for inclusion of those who are socially discriminated because of their sexuality, gender

identity or expression.

We would also like to applaud the following delegations for their support for youth and adolescent rights: [Gambia](#), [Bolivia](#), [Zambia](#) and [Ghana](#)!

YCSRR delegation for #CPD2012

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What IS the World Programme of Action for Youth!?

What is it? The WPAY was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1995 to mark the 10-year anniversary of the International Youth Year in 1985. The purpose was to strengthen the UN's commitment and response to youth and the challenges they face. The WPAY provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve young people's lives. The WPAY focuses in particular on measures to strengthen national capacities to improve the lives of young people and to improve the quality and quantity of opportunities available to them for full, effective and constructive participation in society.

What are the key priorities for youth in WPAY? The original WPAY spelled out 10 key priority areas for young people: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, youth participation in the life of society and decision-making.

At the 10 year review of the WPAY, five additional priority areas were identified: globalization, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and intergenerational issues. These were adopted in a supplement to the WPAY in 2007. Collectively, the fifteen priority areas are known as the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Why is it important and relevant for young people? WPAY is the pioneer international document, agreed by member states that outlines policy framework & practical guidelines for national, regional & international efforts to support the human rights and development needs of young people. It builds on the agreements of RIO Summit, Vienna Declaration, ICPD, Beijing Platform for action, & furthers the priorities to the needs of young people. It also stresses the need for meaningful involvement of young people in decision-making

in social, economic and political spheres; & prioritizes the need for the promotion of health services including SRH and sexuality education based on international human rights instruments. Similarly, it urges governments to eliminate discrimination against girls and young women and ensure their full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms through comprehensive policies, plans of action and programmes on the basis of equality. The WPAY incorporates an integrated approach to the human rights and development of young people.

Where does the WPAY reference the ICPD PoA and the 2012 CPD negotiations? In addition to highlighting many challenges that are relevant to young people's health, well-being & development, the WPAY specifically highlights the importance of promoting young people's SRH. In several places, it references the ICPD PoA.

The following priority areas relate specifically to the CPD negotiations in 2012.

Education

- Improve the level of basic education, skill training and literacy among all youth
- Promote human rights

education in schools & educational institutions.

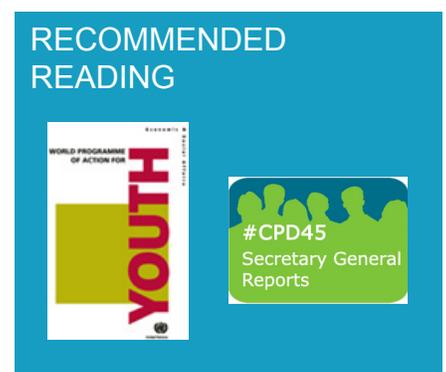
Health

- Develop country action plans to ensure universal, non-discriminatory access to basic health services, including sanitation and clean drinking water, to protect health, & to promote nutrition education and preventive health programmes.
- Develop accessible, available & affordable primary health care services for youth, including SRH care, as well as education programmes, including those related to sexually-transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.

Girls and young women

- Develop materials and practices that are gender balanced & promote an educational setting that eliminates all barriers that impede the schooling of girls & young women.
- Remove discriminatory laws & practices against girls & young women in food allocation & nutrition, & take measures to ensure their access to health services.
- Enact & enforce national legislation protecting girls & young women from all forms of violence, including female infanticide & prenatal sex selection, genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and child prostitution and pornography.
- Promote equal access for young women to all employment opportunities and encourage their participation in traditionally male-dominated professions.

Developed by a Coalition of Young People at #CPD2012



Born in.....1994

This is your first time participating at the Commission on Population and Development. What are your impressions of the meeting?

I think that, for a first experience, it is going very well. It's so good to see how many young people are not only participating, but also getting involved in the decision-making process. Given that the theme of this year's CPD is "Adolescents and Youth", now, more than ever, young people should be involved in this process, because country delegations are not only negotiating issues that are directly related to our interests, but also youth-related issues that will affect our health, our rights, and our life. Given this situation, I think now, more than ever, is the right time to advocate for our rights, and especially for our sexual and reproductive rights.

How do you see young people being most effectively engaged during this process?

In my perspective, I think that having this year's theme focused on young people and adolescents gives us an advantage. I think that this theme allows us, as young people, to advocate directly for the issues that affect us, instead of us also trying to convince decision-makers of the importance of listening to us, and taking our issues into consideration. For me, this means that we can invest more time and energy on advocating for our issues, as they relate to the population and development agenda.

As an involved activist in Paraguay, is there a way that you can bring your experience at the country and regional level to the United Nations?

I consider that the Programme of Action (PoA) seeks to make a real change in this world. That is why having young people involved in local and

regional level and as well in the UN is really important in order to make a connection with what is happening with the implementation of the PoA and also with the realities of adolescents and youth at the local level.

In my personal experience, the activities I undertake in Paraguay may not generate a global change, but they are definitely contributing to the implementation of the PoA in my country and even more in the Latin American region. This is where I think the local meets the global. I definitely think that we view the global as 'bigger processes,' but we should be involved. There's a huge need of young people, working at the local level, to be participate in UN processes, especially if these processes are related to sexual and reproductive rights.

As an 18 year-old, you were born the year that the Program of Action was created. How do you think the ICPD PoA affects your life as a young person?

I do recognize the importance of this PoA, and I honestly think that this is a life-changing process for many young people around the world, facing many different cultural, social and economic contexts in their countries. So the idea of being here, at the UN, almost 20 years after the beginning, it's really helping me to better understand the Cairo+20 process. Being here is also giving me a lot of lessons to keep working on in the coming 2 years.

What are the key issues that you see are missing from the PoA?

Considering the social context in which it was made, I think it is very progressive on some issues. The PoA is very clear about putting the rights of people first, but I think there

has been a lack of proper implementation of the PoA. This is where our

participation, as young people advocating for sexual and reproductive rights, is crucial.

Unfortunately, we still face a lack of political will from decision-makers. This is why now, more than ever, we should focus on making decision-makers understand why the full exercise of our SRR is so important for young people, especially for adolescent girls globally. I recognize that the PoA is based on a clear human rights-based approach, however, I think that in order for it to be fully achieved we need strong commitments from our governments as well as a brave commitment from young people to keep the promise and stay in the battlefield, strongly fighting to achieve our goals.

What would you like to see in the post 2014 agenda and how do you think young people can play an essential role in this process?

I think that we are already playing an essential role in this process. What I expect to achieve in the post 2014 agenda is to have generated a strong, youth-led movement for sexual and reproductive rights where, I hope, I can still be able to advocate for all the convictions I have regarding youth participation and the advancement of human rights around the world.

cont.d' on page 4.



Born in... 1994 cont.d'

I do believe that we, adolescents and young people, are the future. In order to ensure a future where the rights of all of young people can be fully respected, we need to empower and involve young people in these processes, and we have to do it now. This is our present. If the present is based on youth participation, the future is ours.

Sergio Lopez, YCSRR Member from Paraguay



UNAIDS, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, and ICW panel entitled: "Advancing HIV Prevention among Young People", #CPD45 April 25 2012

Check out the Youth Coalition's new blog: www.youthcoalition.blogspot.ca

 **WATCHBLOG**

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MY stance on the FAMILY, when it comes to SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH and RIGHTS

I am 29, a woman, from Mexico, and I'm here working on promoting young people's Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. I come from a family, which I love, and from which I have received a lot of support in all my endeavors. I am a strong believer that family, in all its forms, is sociologically speaking, an important unit of society, and that it can play a strong role in educating young people and adolescents. I am also a strong believer that individual human rights should be respected.

I do believe, however, that youth and adolescents' access to comprehensive sexuality education should not be limited to just parents. Why? Because; many young people do not have a family, their family may not know or may not want to answer young people's questions, or, worse, they have the wrong information, thereby putting young people at risk.

Some young people may be mistreated by their parents for bringing up controversial topics. How does THAT help? Additionally adolescents will not ask questions if they are not in a safe environment, and the family doesn't always make this easy. These are questions they need answered and have right to have answers on, as their health and well-being is at stake.

I agree that the family teaches us important skills, communication, relating to others, and responsibility; but not all families do this. Not providing UNIVERSAL access to comprehensive sexuality education, information and services, excludes youth and adolescents who are already at risk. Just like health care, just like vaccines, just like schooling. Why is sexuality education so different?

Why do we want to limit young people to getting answers from only their parents? What about the right to con-

fidentiality, privacy and to be free from stigma and discrimination? How was I, at 17, supposed to answer truthfully the questions from the doctor about having health concerns "down there" if my mom is sitting next to me?

This does not make me anti-family, in fact, I am pro-family in all its forms. I love my parents and my family, and I received so much from them, but they were not always in the best position to answer questions. And for children, adolescents and young people's sake, we need to accept that limiting their ability to access information and services related to their sexual and reproductive health and rights is not very wise.

Consider the role of the family, yes. Educate the family? Please!

But in a UN document, to give the family the responsibility of comprehensive sexuality education? I don't agree. We need to always give adolescents and young people the right of confidentiality, the ability to address their own problems through easily available services. This is part of growing up. Be assured that those young people and adolescents who are lucky enough to have informed, open parents, will not leave them out of the equation.

Yolí Sánchez Neyoy, Mexico