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NEWSLETTER in NUMBERS

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EPF welcomes 3 new Executive Committee members
Over 200 MPs participate in Nairobi Summit ICPD25 MP Forum

In the news

First ever Global Parliamentary Alliance for Health, Rights & Development launches in Nairobi

NAIROBI, 13 November 2019 - An independent, global initiative: the Global Parliamentary Alliance for Health, Rights and Development (GPA), with the objective of providing a platform for parliamentarians from around the world to advocate for better health care, expanding human rights and to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) both in their home countries and abroad.
Guided by an Advisory Group selected by their peers, GPA is a flexible parliamentary initiative aimed at boosting parliamentarians’ efforts to deliver on the SDGs, specifically in the areas of health and human rights. During the GPA launch, 48 parliamentarians signed up, totalling 120 members of the GPA from 72 different countries from all regions of the world.

Remarks were made by Hon. Laura Boldrini, MP (Italy), Hon. Petra Bayr, MP (Austria), Hon. Hala Abou-Ali, MP (Egypt), Hon. Robert Kuganab-Lem, MP (Ghana) and Hon. Sabina Chege, MP (Kenya), former Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Rt. Hon. Helen Clark, EPF Secretary Neil Datta.

For more information about the GPA and a registration form for parliamentarians to sign up, please see the link below.

GPA page

200 MPs gather for Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 MP Forum

NAIROBI, 12-14 November 2019 - Over 200 parliamentarians from around the world participated in the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 - the most important meeting on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in 25 years.
The governments of Kenya and Denmark and UNFPA co-convened the Summit, which brought together advocates dedicated to achieving SRHR for everyone, everywhere. The high-level conference mobilised political and financial commitments, centred around achieving:
- zero unmet need for family planning information and services
- zero preventable maternal deaths
- zero sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls

EPF organised a Parliamentary Forum (MP Forum) each day of the Summit, gathering over 200 Parliamentarians from over 100 countries around the world and across the political spectrum. The MP Forum focused on three topics over the three days: health, rights and development. See the summary below for more information.

Summary of Parliamentary Engagement at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25

EPF Council elects 3 new Executive Committee members
NAIROBI, 15 November 2019 - Following the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, over 20 EPF member APPGs gathered for the EPF Council meeting, which was presided over by EPF Vice-President, Hon. Petra Bayr, MP (Austria).

After an exchange of views on SRHR developments at national level, members were briefed on EPF’s activities and achievements over the past year.

The Council reviewed all candidates for the Executive Committee and elected three new members: Hon. Bojan Glavasevic, MP (Croatia), Hon. Sara Heikkinen-Breitholtz, MP (Sweden) and Hon. Goedele Liekens, MP (Belgium).

Furthermore, membership requests of the newly formed APPGs in Croatia and Ukraine were approved.

**French Economic, Social and Environmental Council publishes in-depth report on SRHR**

Authored by Véronique Séhier, co-chair of Le Planning Familial, the study reviews the state of play of threats to SRHR in Europe and outlines avenues for further reflection to ensure effective access to these fundamental rights.

The report highlights that while sexual and reproductive rights should apply to all people across Europe, there are major discrepancies according to each country’s state legislation. The report therefore suggests that the European Union should play a greater role in reinforcing SRHR, with a prerequisite for European recognition of these rights being the European Union’s ratification of the Istanbul Convention in its entirety.

The report mentions the next French Presidency of the European Council in 2022 as a window of opportunity for France to deliver on its important role in this mobilization, as it already does at the UN.

Read the report here (in French)
Read the summary (in French)

Stop the backlash – Stop domestic violence event in Helsinki

HELSINKI, 26 November 2019 - A side event of the official program of the Finnish EU-Presidency, EPF attended the 2-day conference “Stop the backlash – Stop domestic violence” in Helsinki. Organised by Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, in cooperation with Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Women against Violence Europe (WAVE) network, the conference aimed to make the ongoing backlash in Europe visible and to show the decisionmakers that this needs urgent actions throughout Europe.

Attended by 200 EU and Member State decisionmakers, as well as European NGOs and Finnish participants, the conference assessed the current situation of domestic and intimate partner violence, examined the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in EU Member States, and considered means to prevent and stop domestic violence and violence against women. The first conference day focused on the perspective of victims, the second day on the perspective of children, culminating with a declaration to the Finnish and Croatian EU presidencies.

EPF Secretary Neil Datta delivered a speech on analysing the anti-gender movement in Europe during the opening session.

Conference declaration
BRUSSELS, 27 November 2019 – Last week, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament reached an agreement for the 2020 EU budget to increase the Development Cooperation Instrument by EUR 20 million, which was today approved by the European Parliament during a plenary vote.

While the +18.5% increase in payment appropriations to a total of EUR 257.24 million compared to last year is a positive one, this increase falls short of compensating for the accumulated human development funding gap, which includes funding for SRHR.

Crucial to promoting education, youth, health and gender equality through access to family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as the Sustainable Development Goals, the EU has repeatedly committed to allocating 20% of its official development aid to human development and social inclusion. This budget is however yet another step further from the 20% commitment.