

Statement by Dr. Anupam Ray, Counsellor, on Second Regular Session 2008 of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA on Septemebr 08, 2008

Mr. President,

We congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election. We look forward to working constructively with you and the other members of the Board during the course of this meeting and for the rest of the year. We also thank the Executive Director for her introductory remarks and for the statement.

At the outset, India would like to express its appreciation of the work of UNFPA and its consistent support, to the National Programmes, particularly those aimed at realization of the MDGs. The contribution of UNFPA as reflected in its country programmes has grown from US \$ 46.40 Million under the country Plan – 1 (1974-79) to US \$ 65 Million under country Plan – 7 (2008-2012). The country Plan – 7 as approved by Government of India, includes US \$ 60 Million from regular resources and another US \$ 5 Million from Other Resources. While this is but a small part of the total funds proposed to be invested by India in its Reproductive and Child Health Programme Phase – II, the strength of UNFPA lies in its partnership, technical support and the access to global best practices that it brings to our national efforts.

The Government of India is also appreciative, of the decision of UNFPA, to join pool financing along with the World Bank and the United Kingdom. The resultant sector-wide approach will, we hope, assist Government of India to expedite attainment of the MDGs and at the same time enhance the scope of participation of the UNFPA in the related programs of the country.

India has been making a steady progress towards attainment of the MDGs. A National Rural Health Mission has been launched in 2005. Health sector funding is expected to increase from the 2005 level of 0.9% of the GDP to 2-3% of the GDP by 2012. The total budgetary support to the health and family welfare programmes for the year 2008-09 is approximately 3 Billion USD. This is the larger framework at the national level of which the Country Programme – 7 will be a part. In particular India welcomes the focus of the programme on reproductive Health, Gender and Population and Development.

Health policy is gender sensitive. Gender analysis is used in health sector policy and planning and gender disaggregated data is being collected under all major programme interventions. Gender budgeting has been introduced across all sectors by the Government of India. A strengthened Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act has, as its main objective checking female foeticide. UNFPA's partnership in this area has been particularly valuable. This has included important advocacy initiatives of working with Parliamentarians, partnering the medical fraternity, reaching out to religious leaders, working with the media & the entertainment industry etc.

In concluding, my delegation would like to state that the Government of India also values UNFPAs contribution in Government initiatives to operationalise the adolescent reproductive and sexual health strategy. This has included assistance in training and outreach and involvement of civil society.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)