**5th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights:**

**Beijing, China, October 2009**

**YOUTH DECLARATION AT THE 5TH APCRSHR**

We, the youth participants of the Fifth Asia Pacific Conference Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights – held in Beijing, China October, 2009, commit ourselves to advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all young people.

We pledge our cooperation and collaboration throughout Asia and the Pacific region to identify solutions to the challenges that all young people are facing to fulfilling our sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We believe that the youth play a contributory role in improving the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people. Embracing the fact that our communities should be a reflection of equal participation and contributions made by each of its members, particularly the youth, we are committed to finding new ways to engage our peers’ sexual and reproductive and sexual health and rights.

We are therefore committed to excellence in every realm and refuse to settle for inaction as we resolve to strengthen and combine our efforts to ensure the eventual realization of ICPD PoA and MDGs .

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ALL YOUNG PARTICIPANTS OF THE 5TH APCRSHR SUPPORT THAT:

The ICPD PoA has and will continue to play a key role in Asia and the Pacific regional reproductive health and rights movements.

Under the framework of MDGs and ICPD, consistent actions of national governments, courageous political commitments, and positive policy changes to population, health, and the environment contribute significantly to a comprehensive development of young people and adolescents in Asia and the Pacific region.

Young people’s sexual and reproductive health rights are inalienable to young people’s basic human rights and are integrated into young people’s rights to development. National programs and policies to protect young people’s sexual and reproductive health and rights and to protect them from gender-based violence and discrimination are central to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The efforts made to provide integrated reproductive health services and education to young people, which are age-appropriate, gender-sensitive and youth-friendly, are an invaluable investment to young people and to the future of the region.

Partnership between Governments, civil societies, especially with young people as one of the most important stakeholder and partner, is crucial. Young people should have a non-tokenistic representation not only in programs, but also in all level decision-making bodies.

DESPITE THE PROGRESS, HOWEVER, WE REALIZE THAT:

There are approximately 450 million young people distributed in Asia and the Pacific Region, majority of whom are under 24. Few young people receive adequate preparation for their sexual lives. This leaves them potentially vulnerable to coercion, abuse and exploitation, unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. Denying young people for reproductive health services and education is a violation of young people’s human rights and their rights to development, as affirmed by the ICPD and the Beijing Platform for Action.

Poverty still affects young people of the region. About two-thirds of the world's poor people are living in extreme poverty in Asia and the Pacific. Poverty and malnutrition make the youth vulnerable to disease, and it also contributes to an increase in the risk of HIV transmission. More importantly, the regioanl disparity in social and economic development has become the largest barrier in realizing the reproductive health and rights of young people.

Gender discrimination has widespread ramifications and clear economic and social costs. The Asia and the Pacific region has made good progress in reducing gender discrimination in recent years, but appalling disparities remain.

TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES, WE RECOMMEND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETIES:

To facilitate young people to recognize their sexual and reproductive and sexual health and rights, and commit to working collaboratively with them to fully achieve the ICPD PoA and MDGs. Both young people and adults need to strengthen this partnership, which is a key to our success;

To invest in young people as a priority in population and development strategies, with programming specifically directed at increased access to information, education, skills and high quality reproductive health services;

To strengthen multisecteral collaboration among Governments, civil society, NGOs, private sectors to promote policies changes and funding support that guarantee young people’s health and rights in the entire Asian and Pacific community, especially in the region where progress is relatively slow;

To put non discriminatory sexual and reproductive health related laws, regulations and policies into force at local, national, regional and international levels; Under these laws, to supply authoritative consultation, friendly and qualified services to diverse young people, especially to marginalized groups such as migrant workers;

FOR THE EVENTUAL REALIZATION OF THE ICPD AND MDGs, WE, THE YOUTH OF THE 5TH APCRSHR:

Commit our individual responsibilities to the society. Although we are considered one of the most vulnerable groups in a society, we are also the greatest source of hope for the region’s future. We will make every effort to work hands-in-hands in realizing a sustainable, environment-friendly development of the region, towards achieving the ICPD and MDGs.

Commit to our peers and families that we share the responsibility to protect the health and rights of our families and fellow young people. We will strive to raise awareness of the public, to promote reproductive health knowledge and information so that our peers will be protected against unwanted pregnancies, sexually transimitted diseases and violences.

In the era of information society and emerging new technologies, we are committed to a life-long learning and use these techonologies to reduce social disparities in reproductive health and rights, and enhance cultural understanding across geographic regions with a future vision, hence to achieve a harmonious social development.

We will continue to promote SRHR as a primary component of equal opportunity and human development. We will collaborate with all the people and parties concerned to advance access to comprehensive SRHR information, education and services for all the youth, especially the most vulnerable. Let’s work together to implement more comprehensive youth-friendly and gender-sensitive services, empower women and girls, and promote gender equality.