

President Bush: War on Women Around the World

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January 2001

REINSTATES THE GLOBAL GAG RULE – As one of his first actions in office, the President put in place the global gag rule, restricting international health care organizations from providing or even advising on the option of abortion, even in countries where choice is legal and even if the woman's life is in danger. This action would be unconstitutional in our own country and is unconscionable to impose on women and families around the world.

July 2002

DECISION TO DEFUND UNFPA – Contrary to his first budget request, bipartisan Congressional agreement, his own “expert team” sent to investigate UNFPA’s activities in China, and his Secretary of State, who has testified to UNFPA’s “invaluable work” around the world, President Bush denies \$34 million for the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**. Secretary Powell used an expansive interpretation of the so-called Kemp-Kasten amendment to eliminate all funding of UNFPA.

May 2002

U.N. SUMMIT ON CHILDREN– At the Children’s Summit in May, 2002, the Bush Administration aligned with Iraq, Iran and other hard-line states to block broad international consensus on sexuality education for adolescents – even those who are married while teenagers. Instead, the Bush administration promoted an abstinence only approach – ignoring cultural and gender realities, the global AIDS crisis and the view of international experts.

July 2002

HIV/AIDS EFFORTS – Blocked increased funding supported by Congress for international HIV/AIDS efforts in deliberations over the supplemental appropriations bill, and promoted increasing resources only for efforts to fight mother-to-child transmission of AIDS - apparently believing that the mothers of these children are not worth saving. Indicated that U.S. funding for AIDS would be shifted to abstinence, and away from family planning commodities (such as condoms), despite the fact that there is a massive global shortage of condoms.

July 2002

CEDAW – Reversal of the administration’s initial support for Senate ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (**CEDAW**), which is unratified by only two countries, the United States and Somalia.

September 2002

AFGHANI WOMEN – The President signed a FY 2002 Supplemental Appropriations bill August 2, 2002 that included the provision of \$2.5 million for programs to support women in Afghanistan. He later determined that the programs included in the bill did not merit emergency funding. This decision not only blocked funds for women, it also prevented the release of more than \$90 million in additional funds for Afghanistan (and \$200 million for HIV/AIDS).

October 2002

BUSH ADMINISTRATION FREEZES \$3 MILLION IN FUNDING TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) IN RESPONSE TO ANTI-CHOICE OBJECTIONS TO WHO'S HUMAN REPRODUCTION PROGRAM – State Department froze \$3 million of the U.S. contribution to the WHO because it conducts research on mifepristone, despite the fact that no U.S. monies are spent on mifepristone research.

December 2002

UNESCAP MEETING IN BANGKOK, THAILAND – U.S. delegation fought to change language of a landmark international reproductive health care agreement (International Conference on Population and Development – ICPD) that was reached in Cairo in 1994 and advanced position that life begins at conception. The Bush administration tried to pressure Asian nations into watering down the global consensus on reproductive health and rights and claimed that the document both promoted abortion and underage sex. It also tried to substitute language that would eliminate sex education, undermine condom use in HIV/AIDS prevention, and water down policies that would help prevent and treat unsafe abortion.

February 2003

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY PLANNING – President Bush's proposed FY 2004 budget requests only \$425 million for bilateral family planning programs, a \$21.5 million cut from the amount appropriated in FY 2002, and does not explicitly request a U.S. contribution for UNFPA.

March 2003

THREATENS TO EXPAND GLOBAL GAG RULE TO HIV/AIDS PROGRAMS ABROAD – The Bush Administration announces their plans to expand the Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule, to HIV/AIDS funding which will impact even more programs including those assisting with domestic violence, treatment of STDs, and maternal mortality and force already strapped organizations to separate their family planning work from their work against HIV/AIDS.

March 2003

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) PLANS TO ISSUE DECISIONS THAT WILL RESTRICT ACCESS TO GENDER-BASED ASYLUM CLAIMS – The Bush Administration plans to restrict gender-based asylum through regulations which would deny asylum to women who have fled trafficking, sexual slavery, honor killing, domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence in their home countries and who not being protected by their own governments.