

Nafis Sadik, M.D.



Dr. Nafis Sadik, a national of Pakistan, is Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific. Educated at Loreto College (Calcutta) she received her Doctor of Medicine degree from Dow Medical College (Karachi). She served her internship in gynaecology and obstetrics at City Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, and completed studies at The Johns Hopkins University, and as a research fellow in physiology at Queens University, Kingston, Ontario (Canada). She was Pakistan's Director-General of the Central Family Planning Council responsible for developing, preparing and evaluating the country's health and family planning programme as part of the nation's development plan. In 1971, she joined the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) serving in various capacities until her appointment as its Executive Director in 1987. Dr. Sadik retired in December 2000.

On her appointment, Dr. Sadik was one of the highest ranking women in the UN system and the first woman, in the history of the United Nations, to lead one of its major voluntarily-funded programmes. She is well-known for her dynamism and guiding force in the field of international maternal and child health, reproductive and sexual health, including family planning. Under her able leadership as Secretary-General of the landmark International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1994, the approach to reproductive health which includes empowering women through education and economic opportunity was unanimously agreed to by the international community.

Her many international awards and honours include her selection as the Laureate, in the individual category, of the United Nations Population Award 2001, for her outstanding contribution to the awareness of population issues; an award presented by His Excellency President Soeharto for her participation in developing the family planning programme in Indonesia; an award from the Government of Pakistan for her contribution in the field of medicine; Order of Merit (First Class) decreed by His Excellency President Hosni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt in recognition of her efforts in the field of population and development and in the successful carrying out of the ICPD, 1994; the Hugh Moore Award for her leadership in the family planning field; 1993 International Award from the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (NEPHRA); the 1995 Prince Mahidol Award; the Bruno H. Schubert-Stiftung Prize, 1995, for her outstanding and excellent contribution in the field of population; the Margaret Sanger Award from Planned Parenthood Federation of America; the Martha May Eliot Award from APHA; the FIGO Recognition Award for Social Contribution to Women's Health; and the "Hilal-I-Imtiaz" Award from the Government of Pakistan. She is the recipient of honorary degrees from United States universities such as, Johns Hopkins, Brown, Duke, Michigan and Claremont, and Wilfred University (Canada), Nihon University (Japan), and the University of the West Indies-Mona (Jamaica). In 2003, Dr. Sadik was designated as UNFPA's Goodwill Ambassador for Obstetric Fistula.

In November 2003, Dr. Sadik was appointed a member of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. Dr. Sadik is a Commissioner of the Global Commission on International Migration, and a member of the International Task Force on Global Public Goods.

In addition, Dr. Sadik is a member of the Board of Governors of the Foundation for Human Development, the UN Foundation, the Asia Society, the South Asian Commission on the Asian Challenge as well as several other international and national foundations and universities. She is the author of numerous publications in the areas of reproductive health and family, population and development, women, and gender and development.

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Mailing address and contact information:

Nafis Sadik, M.D.

Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General and

Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for HIV/AIDS in Asia and the Pacific

300 E 56th Street Apt 9J

New York, NY 10022

T: (212) 826-5025 (H); F: (212) 758 1529 (H)

T: (718) 735-5843 (Office); F: (718) 778-3649 (Office)

E-mail: sadik@unfpa.org