



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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Statement by H.E. Mrs. Ileana Núñez Mordoche,
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Commission on Population and Development. 42nd Session.

Agenda Item 4: General debate on national experience in population matters: the contribution of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. New York, 1 April 2009

Madam Chair,

First and foremost, allow me to congratulate you and the rest of the bureau on behalf of the Delegation of Cuba, for your election to lead the works of the Commission.

My delegation also joins the statement made yesterday by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Madam Chair,

For my delegation, it is particularly important to speak in the general debate on item 4 concerning national experience in population matters and the contribution of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Cuba engaged actively in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, as well as in its follow-up processes: Cairo+5 and Cairo+10.

Fifteen years after this Conference was held and its Program of Action adopted, Cuba has worked and will continue to work harder on the what it had defined and implemented since 1994 stated in its Program of Action and I quote: "human persons are at the center of social development"/.../ which is "a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights", /.../ "and so they must be fully integrated in the population factors in development strategies, planning, adoption of decisions, and allocation of resources at all levels..."

Since the very triumph of the Cuban Revolution 50 years ago, the Government has been implementing an economic and social development program enabling current sociodemographic indicators to be similar to those in developed countries. This is interrelated with the achievement of the MDGs, both those

agreed upon in 2000 in the Millennium Summit and the new goals and indicators included in 2005, namely the universal access to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS treatment and employment recognition, particularly of women and youth, as well as the promotion of the Environment to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable development.

In this context, I will briefly summarize the results of my country in achieving the Objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development and the follow-up of the MDGs.

The life expectancy at birth in Cuba is 78 years old. The infant mortality rate is 4.7 per thousand live births and 6.2 per thousand live births for children under 5 years old. The maternal mortality rate is 30.2 per 100 000 live births. These examples of progress in health and reproductive health speak for themselves.

The fertility in Cuba is currently 1.4-1.5 children per woman and the use of effective contraceptive imply a 70% of women in childbearing age. This is another example of the aforementioned, achieved in a favorable framework guaranteeing the consequent exercise of sexual and reproductive rights of female population.

The figures previously given are achieved in a priority context of the interrelations between the population and development. In this regard, Cuba has attained important results in universalization of education, gender equality, infant and maternal mortality reduction, the incidence of AIDS and other communicable diseases, environmental protection as well as international solidarity and cooperation with many countries and peoples in the world, expressed in:

- The universal State-subsidized social policy enabling the entire Cuban population, even those with lowest income, to have access to consumer goods and services, by guaranteeing employment to all. The unemployment rate in 2008 was 1.6%.
- The illiteracy rate of 0.2% and a net enrollment rate in primary education of 99%.
- The presence of women in all areas of Society with the empowerment to decide. To exemplify, over 43% of the members of the Parliament, 66% of professionals and scientists, and over 46% of the country's work force are women.
- The 99.9% of childbirths takes place in health centers.
- The lowest prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Latin America, only 0.1% of the population from 15 to 49 years old, and a universal access to treatment on a free of charge basis by all carriers and people infected with this epidemic.

- Over 95% of the entire population has access to drinking water and 95% of sanitation coverage.
- Twenty-five percent of the territorial surface of the country is covered with forest. Principles of sustainable development are included in the annual policies and programs.
- The vocation for sharing and extending the bonds of solidarity that has, over the years, translated into unselfish collaboration in over 150 countries in areas like health, education, construction, sports, agriculture, and others. Tens of thousands of foreign students, mainly from developing countries, have graduated in Cuba in medicine, engineering and technical studies, pedagogy and others.

Madam Chair,

Cuba reiterates its commitment to the objectives stated in the International Conference on Population and Development. It likewise will continue to champion the full implementation of its Program of Action and contribution to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you.