PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

CHIEF SAMU'ILA DANKO MAKAMA, CON
CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION

AT THE

42ND SESSION OF COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

NEW YORK, 30TH MARCH – 3RD APRIL 2009.

Madam Chair,

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to commend you for the able manner you have been conducting the 42ND Session of the Commission on Population and Development. We equally commend the Secretariat for the comprehensive reports. Nigeria aligns itself with the statement of the G-77 and China and wishes to reflect on its national experience.

Nigeria's national development policies, priorities and actions to achieve sustainable development have been largely derived from its commitments to internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. Of particular and continued relevance to Nigeria's overall development agenda is the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action (PoA) which was adopted in Cairo in 1994.

Permit me to recall, Madam Chair, that in 1988, Nigeria adopted a National Population Policy (NPP), which was designed to improve standards of living and quality of life of the people, promote maternal and child health and achieve a lower rate of population growth. The policy was revised to take into account issues highlighted by the ICPD PoA. Given the significant linkages between the ICPD PoA and the MDGs, implementation of the NPP will no doubt contribute to attainment of the MDGs. The policy addresses the relationship between population, social and economic development and the environment. It also addresses related issues of poverty, literacy, reproductive health and rights, including maternal health, family planning, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and other STIs, gender equality and women empowerment among others.

Madam Chair,

According to the 2006 population and housing census, Nigeria has a population of 140 million, with an annual growth rate of 3.2 percent. This rapid growth in population is a great challenge to the attainment of the goal of poverty eradication. There is however an increasing recognition at the highest levels in Nigeria of the relationship between population growth and poverty eradication and the need to attain slower population growth rates to achieve the target of poverty eradication.

Nigeria has also made some progress with regards to promoting reproductive health care which is a key priority area identified in the ICPD PoA. Currently, the Federal Government is embarking on national health reform through the development of a National Strategic Health Development Plan and Investment plan consistent with the Paris and Accra declarations on Aid effectiveness. Implicit in this national plan document are key strategies and recommendations to improve reproductive health and rights of Nigerians. Furthermore, our national road map for accelerating the attainment of the MDGs related to maternal mortality provides a framework for building strategic partnerships for increased investment in maternal and new born health at institutional and program level and addresses all key issues relating to maternal and newborn health(MNH). Nigeria has also developed an Integrated Maternal, New Born and Child Health Strategy. This strategy is currently being rolled out to states and local government areas across the country. Advocacy efforts of the federal government and

development partners have yielded positive results with more than half of the 36 states adopting and operationalizing policies on free maternal health and the enactment of laws abolishing harmful traditional practices in some parts of the country.

To intensify HIV prevention and address the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents and young people and vulnerable groups, the Government launched in 2007, the National HIV Prevention plan. In line with the plan, all states have included in the strategic plans on HIV/AIDS, strategies and activities to address HIV prevention among youths. Also, in line with ICPD Programme of Action, emphasis is increasingly placed on strong partnerships between key stakeholders in the health sector, including donors, the private sector, local communities and civil society. Furthermore, fostering closer inter-linkages between health, education and gender equality and other poverty reduction strategies in the country's development and other sectoral plans will greatly enhance the prospects of achieving the MDGs.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion, we acknowledge that population, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and gender equality are central to development and that the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Key Actions for its further Implementation are essential to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty eradication, promoting gender equality, improving maternal and child health, combating HIV/AIDS and ensuring environmental sustainability.

In this respect, Nigeria is committed to strengthening the National Population Commission and other relevant institutions and mechanisms to generate the data needed for monitoring the improvement of maternal health and the achievement of the target of universal access to reproductive health.

I thank you.