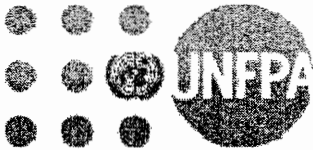


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**United Nations Commission on
Population and Development**

Advancing the ICPD Agenda

**Statement
Delivered by Purnima Mane
Deputy Executive Director**

on behalf of

**Thoraya Obaid
Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund**

**3 April 2009
New York**

Madame Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of Thoraya Obaid, the Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund.

UNFPA pays tribute to the many governments and non-governmental organizations that participated in the 42nd session of the Commission on Population and Development. We applaud your strong and unwavering commitment to the ICPD Programme of Action.

UNFPA welcomes the unprecedented participation of civil society in this Commission. It is only by joining hands and working together—governments, NGOs, the United Nations and partners across all sectors of society—that we will make greater progress in advancing sexual and reproductive health, protecting reproductive rights, and meeting the needs and promoting the rights of young people and women.

By joining forces and staying strong, we will make greater progress in carrying forward the visionary ICPD agenda.

Madame Chair, this week the Commission reaffirmed the centrality of the ICPD Programme of Action and Key Actions to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. The ICPD agenda is a central agenda for sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The right to sexual and reproductive health is central to human freedom and development. Promoting reproductive health and rights and the full human rights of women is vital to efforts to build a more peaceful, prosperous and stable world.

This week we took stock of progress made since Cairo, and we recognized that much progress has been achieved and much more remains to be done. As the financial crisis unwinds, now is the time to increase social investment and redouble efforts for the ICPD agenda.

As we move ahead, we will do all we can to protect and promote the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and women, including harmful and customary practices such as female genital mutilation. We will continue to champion equality between women and men and boys and girls in all spheres of life and encourage equal and shared decision making and responsibilities.

We will promote and protect women's and girls' right to education at all levels, and work to provide young people with comprehensive education on human sexuality, sexual and reproductive health and gender equality. We will work together to enact and enforce laws to end child marriage. We will work to ensure the right of women to have control over

and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

Madame Chair,

During this session it was pointed out that additional funding is necessary to meet current needs and costs which have grown considerably since the Cairo targets were agreed upon in 1994. The revised cost estimates presented by UNFPA more accurately reflect current needs and costs and are more in line with funding needs for achieving the MDGs.

Our discussions this week and the experiences shared by the distinguished delegates clearly showed that we are aware of the urgent need for intensified action and committed to the cause. With five years remaining, we will rise to the challenge.

UNFPA will continue to support governments and civil society in the areas of population and development, reproductive health and rights, women's empowerment and gender equality as we promote implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

We will continue to encourage countries to prioritize universal access to reproductive health as health systems are strengthened. We will continue to support countries to incorporate issues related to population, gender equality and reproductive health and rights in national development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies. UNFPA will continue to support activities that promote the human rights of all groups in society.

To support solid data for evidence-based policy formulation and programme planning, UNFPA has made it a priority to help countries prepare for the 2010 round of censuses.

Madame Chair,

We thank you and the Members of the Bureau for your leadership of the 42nd session of the Commission. We thank the Chairman and members of the Informal Consultations for all the hard work that went into drafting the resolutions. We express our sincere appreciation to the distinguished delegates and representatives of civil society for making this session a success.

We look forward to working with all of you, this year as we commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Cairo Conference and beyond, to carry the ICPD agenda forward.