



**Partners in Population and Development (PPD)
A South-South Initiative**

*Statement on behalf of
Partners in Population and Development*

Delivered by

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**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make a brief statement, on behalf of the Partners in Population and Development (PPD), at the Forty-fifth session of the Commission, under agenda item 3 on Actions in follow-up to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development. PPD, as most of you know, is an intergovernmental organization of 25 developing countries dedicated to the promotion and strengthening of South-South cooperation in population and development, and reproductive health. Through advocacy, policy dialogues, exchange of information, best practices, research, training and technical cooperation, it assists both its member countries and many non-member countries in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), within the broader framework of the MDGs.

This forty-fifth session of the Commission is noteworthy for many reasons. First, the special theme of the session dealing with adolescents and youth is crucial for our thorough understanding of the future landscape of demography, economy, environment, social trends and peace in the world, given that young people of today are the collective shapers and custodians of the future; second, the session is an excellent opportunity to initiate the debate on the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in the light of its twentieth anniversary in 2014, and to make its inputs towards international discussion on the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015; and third, the session is expected to make its contribution on the relevance of population and

development issues to the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC on the topic of promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty.

The world population reached an unprecedented total of 7 billion in late 2011, which represents nearly a three-fold increase in the world population, from 2.5 billion in 1950. The world population continues to grow and is projected to reach 9.3 billion by 2050 according to the most recent United Nations estimates, underscoring the critical relevance of this continued population growth for the eradication of poverty, achievement of sustained economic growth, fostering of social development, implications for climate change, the promotion of sustainable development, and securing sexual and reproductive health and rights for all. In this regard, the seven themes that UNFPA has underscored as urgent issues to be addressed in a world of seven billion, namely, poverty and inequality, women's and girls' empowerment, reproductive health and rights, young people, ageing population, environment and urbanization are all critical issues that would be expected to have tremendous impact on the central theme of the ECOSOC Ministerial Review to be held in July 2012. Indeed, changing population demographics, including population ageing were emphasized, among other challenges, as important at the Asia and the Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting on the theme of the Ministerial Meeting held in Kyoto, Japan in December 2011.

The importance of adolescents and youth, their situation in different national contexts, their varied aspirations for the future, as well as their potential and actual contributions in the context of population growth, sustainable development, human rights, gender empowerment, and sexual and reproductive health including and family planning cannot be

overemphasized. PPD appreciates very much the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.9/2012/4) on the special theme for this session, which presents “an overview of demography of adolescents and youth, describing current and expected trends for that population, their experience in regard to marriage, childbearing and the use of contraception; challenges to their health and survival; and their participation in international migration.” The report serves as an excellent analytical backdrop for the discussion of relevant demographic issues of adolescents and youth, as well as their implications for the needed policy and programmatic measures.

PPD shares the issue of lack of uniformity in the definition of youth and adolescents that has been noted in the report, and welcomes the analytical distinction made in the report between the age groups 12-17 and 18-24, since the antecedents, the socio-economic and policy implications of these two demographic groups are vastly different. PPD fully supports recommendations contained in the report to ensure that young people have access to the guidance, information, skills and services they need to safely make crucial life transitions, and to ensure their participation more fully and effectively in society.

The second report of the Secretary-General on monitoring of population programmes, focusing also on adolescents and youth (E/CN.9/2012/5) is a comprehensive overview of programmatic activities undertaken by many stakeholders, among others, Governments, UNFPA, NGOs and other civil society sectors in supporting, empowering and contributing to the improvement of the lives of young people. Recommendations made in the report on further actions required to promote and secure, among others,

sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of young people are very critical for the future.

The third report of the Secretary-General on the flow of financial resources in support of the ICPD Programme of Action (E/CN.9/2012/6) is a very thorough compilation and analysis of financial flows from domestic and external sources. The findings of the report call for both optimism and concern. While the report notes, on the one hand, more recent slight increases in support from external resources and a growing level of support from domestic sources of many individual countries, they are not, on the other hand, keeping pace with the projected requirements. Furthermore, the Least Developed Countries and many other Sub-Saharan African countries, which are going to experience increasingly difficult demographic challenges in the future, are among the most ill-equipped to support the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and related MDGs through their own domestic resources. International resource requirements for this critical group of countries thus need to be addressed more urgently.

PPD would like to point out to the Commission that it is actively working with its members and other developing countries in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action by promoting South-South cooperation through training and capacity building, exchange of information, experiences, best practices, advocacy and policy dialogue. In particular, PPD has organized policy dialogues on topics of global, regional and national level priority and importance on population, development, and reproductive health in the form of international conferences for member and non-member countries. The international conferences have resulted into Declarations which have served as useful guidelines for participating

countries in addressing context specific population, reproductive health and development issues. Such declarations adopted during the last decade include the Beijing Declaration in 2000, Kochi Declaration in 2001, Jakarta Declaration in 2003, Yangtze Declaration in 2004, Agra Declaration in 2005, Rabat Declaration in 2007, Kampala Declaration in 2008, and Yogyakarta Declaration in 2010 and Pretoria Declaration in 2011. These international conferences have been excellent opportunities for PPD to advocate for political, policy, financial, technical and program support for addressing population, reproductive health and development issues in PPD member and other countries. Taken together, the topics and themes of these conferences cover major components of the ICPD Programme of Action.

Similarly, PPD, through a joint publication with UNFPA and the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation at UNDP, has recently documented programmatic experiences of ten member countries in implementing selected aspects of the ICPD Programme of Action, as they relate to reproductive health and family planning, gender equity and equality, HIV/AIDS, population and environmental linkages, and population and sustainable development planning to help eradicate poverty.

The PPD member countries have undertaken, in the past, a number of initiatives to address important key and priority issues that affect young people, for example promoting gender equity and equality and investing in adolescent girls, reducing gender based sexual violence, meeting sexual and reproductive health and rights, prevention of HIV, equipping young people with accurate knowledge and skills, and providing age appropriate sexuality education and youth friendly services. The experiences from many PPD countries including Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia,

India, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are particularly noteworthy best practice type of initiatives in addressing issues that affect young people.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, the PPD looks forward to the debate on all the substantive and programmatic issues coming up at this session, has unwavering commitment and stands ready to contribute PPD's experiences in South-South Cooperation in population and development, and reproductive health in furthering the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action and the MDGs. We would like to stress the importance of promoting South-South Cooperation in achieving ICPD Goals and the MDGs. We have among the South tremendous potentials, expertise and know-how, lessons learned and best practices, which if adequately tapped, would make a very meaningful difference. It is saddening and most unfortunate to note that South-South Cooperation as a modality of change is not adequately funded and supported. Official Development Assistance from the North has been well below the mark, especially in promoting South-South Cooperation in the field of Population and Reproductive Health including Family Planning as key aspects for achieving the MDGs, sustainable development and poverty eradication. We thus make an appeal to countries from the North to provide greater support to South-South Cooperation, as a complement to North-South cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your attention.