

STATEMENT BY
H.E. Mr. MASOOD KHAN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN,
and VICE-PRESIDENT, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

TO THE FORTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

New York, 25 April 2013

Your Excellency, Vlad Lupan,
Mr. Jorge Bravo, representative of the Population Division,
Department for Economic and Social Affairs
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you today and to deliver a statement on behalf of the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Nestor Osorio of Colombia. Ambassador Osorio asked me to highlight the importance that the deliberations of the Commission on Population and Development have for the development agenda of the United Nations, and in particular, the valuable contribution of population matters to the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by making brief remarks on the on-going process to strengthen the Economic and Social Council and the system that includes the functional commissions and other subsidiary organs of ECOSOC. As noted recently in the sessions of other functional commissions, there are three main aspects to consider in this process:

- First, to sharpen the focus on key thematic areas, benefitting from the knowledge and expertise of the specialized bodies in the system;
- Second, to review the work of the functional commissions in order to achieve a closer integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as prescribed in the International Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20;

- And third, to improve the dialogue and cooperation between the different organs of the system.

In connection with this last point, since 2009 the sessions of this Commission have included an agenda item on the contribution of population to the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR). This practice constitutes a good example of the reinforcement of substantive relationships that the Economic and Social Council has been forging with the functional commissions. We must aim to expand and strengthen these linkages in the system of the Council as a whole.

Distinguished delegates,

As you know, the theme of the AMR this year is “Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals”. As noted recently in the regional meetings held in Africa and Europe for this year’s Annual Ministerial Review, scientific and technological innovations are essential to modern societies. Without nurturing them and applying them systematically, there is little hope for countries to develop and to achieve healthy, well educated and integrated societies.

Historically, scientific advances and technological innovations have helped to improve substantially the living conditions of the population, both in the currently more developed regions as well as in developing countries.

New technologies in medicine and diagnostic tools, including those that operate through mobile phones, are expanding access to health services and to diagnostic tests at affordable costs. Over the past several decades, innovations that have improved personal hygiene and public health, as well as the introduction of antibiotics, low-cost vaccines and mass immunization programs, have resulted in impressive reductions in mortality. According to data from the Population Division of the United Nations, between 1970 and the present, life expectancy at birth increased from 55 to 67 years in developing countries, and from 71 to 78 years in the more developed regions.

The greater availability of contraceptive methods, especially modern methods made possible by the scientific and technological innovations of the twentieth century, has enabled a more efficient regulation of fertility, and helped to improve the health of mothers and children. Data from the Population Division show that the usage of modern contraceptive methods in the world has increased from less than one-fourth in 1970 to slightly less than 60 per cent today, among women who are married or in a stable union. The diffusion of this innovation has led to a

global reduction in fertility from four and a half children per women in 1970, to two and a half children per women today.

With regard to migration, scientific progress and innovations have reduced the time and financial costs of transportation by air, land and sea. This, together with the extension of information and communication technologies, has made internal and international migration much easier, and has greatly facilitated the contact of migrants with their places of origin. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on new trends in migration that was prepared for this session of the CPD, the global number of migrants has increased substantially during the last 20 years.

Mr. Chairman,

Continuing the application of scientific knowledge and technological innovations, together with appropriate social and economic policies, is critical to the achievement of continued progress toward the objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action, the Millennium Development Goals, and other internationally agreed development goals.

Likewise, there is no doubt that progress in the area of population and future demographic dynamics will play an important role in shaping the possibilities for development in the years and decades ahead. This has been duly recognized in the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference. Given the objective of the Economic and Social Council to function as a more integrated system, I would like to assure you that in the Council we will continue to promote the inclusion of population trends in the post-2015 development agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In closing, I would like to reiterate my appreciation for the invitation to participate in this session of the Commission on Population and Development, and to express my support and that of the ECOSOC Bureau for the integration of the work of this Commission in the system of the Council in a more organic and effective manner.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.