

**United Nations
Commission on Population and Development, 47th Session
7 – 11 April 2014**

**Agenda item 5: General debate on the contribution of population and development
issues to the theme of the annual ministerial review in 2014.**

**Statement Delivered by
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Mr. Chairman,

Twenty years ago, the international community came together in Cairo to affirm that individual rights are the driving force of human progress. Together, we committed to placing people at the heart of development. We shifted our thinking—and began to look at individuals not simply as demographic numbers, but as powerful agents of change.

In just two decades, the world has seen profound social, economic and political transformations. These changes make clear that the size and distribution of the global population will inevitably have an impact on the future development agenda. The vision of ICPD is becoming more relevant every day, in every region of the world. This is particularly true as we set out to define the post-2015 agenda, and as we engage on ways to extend and better protect the rights of all people.

Mr. Chairman,

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will only be possible if we actively promote and protect these rights. The vision of the ICPD has not yet been fully realized. A post-2015 development agenda that is truly inclusive must place individuals—particularly the most vulnerable—at the core of our efforts.

We cannot allow women's sexual and reproductive health and rights to continue to suffer. We must work together to provide universal access to sexual and reproductive health, contraception, post-abortion care, sexuality education and prevention and treatment of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, including HIV/AIDS. We need to end forced marriages, female genital mutilation and domestic violence. We need to prevent workplace discrimination and promote parental leave. And we must strive to guarantee fully inclusive education, equal opportunities and equal participation in all sectors of society.

Mr. Chairman,

Education is the ultimate tool to empower young people around the world. Today's generation of adolescents and youth is the largest in history. We must do everything in our power to support them and secure their transition into adulthood.

We must acknowledge that lack of education and services does not deter adolescents from sexual activity. Empowering young people with information about sex and health and reproduction is crucial if we want to achieve our goals.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel is deeply committed to the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. In November 2013, our government hosted an International Women leaders' Conference in Haifa, where participants from all corners of the globe gathered to ensure the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The leaders signed the "Haifa Declaration", and explored strategies to advocate for the integration of a gender equality perspective in our future agenda, and identify priority areas that contribute to the empowerment of women and girls.

Mr. Chairman,

As we countdown to 2015, Israel looks forward to working closely with UNFPA, governments, civil society and other partners to achieve the goals set out in Cairo 20 years ago.

The Cairo Conference and the implementation of its Programme of Action have demonstrated the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to reduce poverty and inequality, and promote sustainable development and human rights for all.

We must continue to move forward on meeting the ICPD goals, and not lose momentum in the face of resistance or persistent challenges. New thinking in our approach and a renewed commitment will bring us closer to achieving the ICPD goals for current and future generations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,