

**Closing Statement by the United States at the
49th UN Commission on Population and Development**

Delivered by:

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Madame Chair,

The United States is pleased to join consensus on this resolution. We are grateful for your leadership, your bureau colleagues, and our four very proficient co-facilitators, and the Secretariat, for your collective efforts in bringing member states to consensus on an outcome that not only supports strengthening the demographic evidence base for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development but also confirms the relevance of this Commission. This resolution also reaffirms that the ICPD Program of Action remains an invaluable road map to sustainable development because it is grounded in human rights and underscores that the fundamental needs of all people must be addressed if our aim is to leave no one behind.

The resolution we crafted this week reinforces our global commitments to strengthening health information systems, adopting open-data policies, and using data to benefit health and development for all. This Commission is keenly aware that strengthening the demographic evidence base and overcoming data gaps is a critical step if we are to effectively measure and achieve our globally agreed goals.

We recognize there are major data gaps for some of the health and gender equity targets and we believe this resolution strengthens our case even further, and helps those outside our community understand why this data is important. It is clear that we must further strengthen local and national capacity to use data to plan and implement effective policies, measure the impact of programs, and respond to public health needs. To make meaningful progress we must commit to working not only with traditional partners, including civil society, but also with non-traditional actors to improve data collection, analysis, and use.

We are pleased this resolution reinforces the importance of the promotion, protection, and respect for human rights. Regarding the reference to the right to development, the U.S. concerns about the existence of a “right to development” are longstanding and well-known. The “right to development” does not have an agreed international meaning and work is needed to make it consistent with human rights, which the international community recognizes as universal rights held and enjoyed by individuals, and which every individual may demand from his or her own government.

As is also well known, the United States notes that it is not a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and we join consensus on this resolution with the express understanding that it does not imply that States must become parties to instruments to which they are not a party or implement obligations under human rights instruments to which they are not a party. To the extent that it is implied in this resolution, we also underscore that this resolution does not change or necessarily reflect the United States’ or other States’ obligations under treaty or customary international law, nor does this resolution expand the content or coverage of existing rights.

In closing, Madam Chair, we deeply appreciate your efforts to bring us to consensus on this important outcome.