



नेपाल NEPAL

**Statement by Dr. Illa Mainali, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN at the 50th Session of the Commission on Population and Development on Agenda item 3: Special theme of the fiftieth session:
"Changing population age structures and sustainable development"
New York, 5 April 2017**

Madam Chair,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau for assuming the leadership of the 50th session of the Commission on Population and Development. I am confident that you will steer the Session to a fruitful conclusion. I pledge my delegation's full support to that end.

Nepal welcomes the reports of the Secretary-General under this agenda item as well as on the special theme for the Session.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by Ecuador and Bangladesh on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Group of LDCs, respectively. I wish to state the following points in my national capacity:

1. The Commission has thoughtfully chosen "Changing population age structures and sustainable development" as the special theme for the fiftieth session of the Commission, which is based on the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The changing demographic patterns require our concerted efforts with a particular focus on women and girls, youth and adolescents among others, in a holistic manner to improve the lives and dignity of all.
2. Now is the time for accelerating further implementation of the Programme of Action of ICPD, vis a vis the corresponding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this regard, Nepal is fully committed to its principles, goals and objectives and reaffirms its commitment to ensuring the universal and life-long access to easily affordable gender-responsive quality health services to all including women and girls. Nepal is supportive and ready to add value to global and regional efforts for its effective implementation.
3. The Government is implementing its first National Population Policy 2015 based on the post-ICPD framework and the existing long-term Population Perspective Plan alongside National Health Policy to implement the country's ICPD related commitments. In this context, we underline the importance of gender desegregated demographic data, among others in view of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

4. The National Health Policy, among other things, aims at improving people's lives by integrating population issues into development plan, ensuring people's reproductive health and reproductive rights as fundamental human rights and promoting gender equality and inclusion in all sustainable development strategies.
5. Nepal strongly supports the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants of September 2016 – the outcome of the high-level summit during the 71st UNGA -- that reaffirms wider political will to protect rights and share responsibility on a global level. There is a need for partnerships and cooperation with highest political commitment to promote extensive dialogues between countries of origin, transit and destination to address the issues related to migration and refugees, with the participation of all stakeholders.

Madam Chair,

6. The inclusive Constitution of Nepal, promulgated by the democratically elected Constituent Assembly in 2015, guarantees human rights, human dignity, inclusion, proportional representation and gender mainstreaming in a comprehensive manner. It seeks to ensure the realization of these ideals through the rights-based approach to development.
7. The Government has concerted its efforts for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by integrating national plans and policies accordingly. The Steering Committee headed by the Prime Minister provides guidelines for acceleration of SDGs implementation, which has further been broken down into the thematic groups. The 14th Development Plan of Nepal that commenced this year has integrated the SDGs from the national context, including Goal 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.
8. The changing age structures have brought both the opportunities and challenges. In Nepal the proportion of people above the age of 60 represents 8 percent of the total population, while the share of those between 15 years and 59 years old is 57 percent. The UNDP Human Development Report 2016 also mentions that Nepal is one of the countries with largest median age and estimates a rapid increase in the working-age population, including women migrant workers. The Government is focused to benefit from demographic dividend by involving youth and adolescents in the development efforts, as they are key component for the implementation of the ambitious and transformative 2030 Agenda. In the same spirit, the issues of the elderly population are treated with utmost importance as their rights are protected by the Constitution.
9. Similarly, Nepal recorded notable progress in the health sector, involving people of all ages. The final report on implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) showed that all population and health-related MDGs were fully or partially met. However, challenges still remain, such as reducing maternal and preventable child mortality, ensuring universal reproductive health services to the marginalized people, and providing elderly care facilities. The challenges have multiplied after the massive earthquakes of 2015.

10. In conclusion, **Madam Chair**, Nepal reiterates its commitment to step up efforts to implement post-ICPD framework despite being a Least Developed and Landlocked country emerging from conflict and natural disasters. The development challenges we face require robust support from all stakeholders in crafting responses to these challenges. Nepal looks forward for a revitalized partnership with all our bilateral and multilateral development partners and stakeholders including the UN system with predictable means of implementation to execute the ambitious 2030 Agenda, taking full consideration of the changing age patterns, so that no one is left behind. As always, Nepal will continue to play constructive role at the UN and other multilateral forums in our collective interest towards achieving the population and health-related SDGs across the globe.

Thank you Madam Chair.