



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

828 SECOND AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017 • TEL. (212) 953-9130 • FAX (212) 697-1970

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**STATEMENT**

BY

**EZE DURUIHEOMA, SAN**

CHAIRMAN,  
NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION

ON

***Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable  
Development***

AT

50<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON POPULATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

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*Check Against Delivery*

### **Madam Chair**

On behalf of my delegation and myself, may I congratulate you and your Bureau for your appointment to preside over the session and for expertly conducting the affairs of the Commission.

Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by Ecuador on behalf of G77 and China and the Kingdom of Swaziland on behalf of the Africa Group and in my national capacity I deliver this statement.

Nigeria welcomes the theme of the Session – ***"Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development"*** as it reflects our major current development challenge and a burden for aspirations to achieve demographic dividend, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and sustainable development.

We take note of the Reports of the Secretary-General on several issues regarding the theme including on monitoring and flow of financing resources to support the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

### **Madam Chair**

Our population, as the largest in Africa remains relatively young with 63 percent of the population still under the age of 25, growing rapidly over the last three decades with insignificant shift towards middle-age. The population projected from 2006 Population and Housing Census shows that the population size has more than doubled in 24 years from 88.9 million in 1991 to over 189 million. More than 40 percent of our population is under age 15 and over half of the population is in "Productive Ages (15-64 years)". Thirty two million of the population is under 5 years and another 28 million between the ages 5-9 years. Half of the female population is in their reproductive years, while only three percent constitute 65 years or older due to low life expectancy rate.

Fertility remains at an average of 6 children per Nigerian woman between 1990 till date, contributing to the sustained and prospective population growth. Although infant, child and under five mortality have declined appreciably, this decline has not sufficiently influenced the desire for children, and dependency ratio remains high at 83. Status of Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (mCPR) meant to aid population management has also remained stagnant at 10 percentage point within recent National Demographic & Health Surveys (2003, 2008 & 2013) reports, although with slight improvement in unmet need for mCPR. Hence the current and prospective population age structure will continue to grow in the next two to three generations (70 years ahead) propelled by concentration of people in the youngest ages.

### **Madam Chair**

Our population age structure present challenges for our development, but also huge opportunities for reaping ***demographic dividend***, including opportunity to realize specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are relevant to our development priorities. We

intend to invest heavily on creation of decent and productive jobs to absorb the large proportion of **"Productive Age Population"**. In this regard, Nigeria is determined and committed to increase investments in education of young people particularly of girls. The tools include Homegrown School Feeding Programme, health care services with expanded access to appropriate reproductive health/family planning commodities, information and services as demonstrated effort towards achieving 36 percent Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (MCPR) by 2018 with \$4 million annually to support commodities security. We are also committed to positively engage young people in governance to address youth restiveness, combat desertification and invest more in modern agriculture to ensure food sufficiency and security.

To achieve the change we seek in moderating our population growth for improved quality of life, we are at the verge of finalizing the National Population Policy (NPP), update of the Resources for Awareness of Population Impacts on Development (RAPID III) as an advocacy tool to support efforts at achieving small family sizes. In addition, we are finalizing preparations for conduct of the next population and housing census to provide accurate population information for development planning.

#### **Madam Chair**

**Our Hopes & Aspirations:** Nigeria stands on its abhorrence of corruption as it impedes on peoples' right to development. We remain committed to the entrenchment of good governance and the achievement of Sustainable Development. In this regard, Nigeria calls for a robust and integrated cooperation in combating illicit financial flows and facilitating assets recovery back to countries of origin.

We have developed a medium term national economic recovery and growth plan (NERGP) that aligns with the fundamentals of Africa's Agenda 2063. We seek unconditional support and partnership of the UN and friends of Nigeria to open up opportunities for our young people to access decent productive jobs, implement appropriate economic reforms and initiatives, and fight extreme poverty. Nigeria is committed to leaving no one behind, end all forms of discrimination, inequality and expand participation of women in the labour force as a prerequisite for economic progress.

#### **Madam Chair**

In conclusion, we are optimistic that we can and we will achieve sustainable development even with our transitional age structure because our population remains our greater asset and resource.

I thank you!