



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT DELIVERED BY

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ON THE

**SPECIAL THEME " "CHANGING POPULATION AGE STRUCTURES
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"**

AT THE

**FIFTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

New York
3rd April, 2017

Madam Chair

Distinguished Delegates

On behalf of the Zambian delegation, I wish to congratulate you for convening this 50th Session of the Commission on Population and Development and for your election, together with the other members of the Bureau.

Zambia associates itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Cameroon on behalf of the African Group as well as by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh on behalf of Least Developed Countries group.

This year's theme, is important as the world population is undergoing an unprecedented transformation brought about by the transition from a regime of high mortality and high fertility to one of low mortality and low fertility. It is worth noting that most countries are however at different levels of this demographic transition presenting different development opportunities and challenges.

Zambia is in its second stage of demographic transition with high fertility despite the use of modern contraceptive among married women which is high at 45 percent. The country's mortality rates have been declining although still remains high. Infant mortality declined to 45 deaths per 1000 live births in 2014 from 70 deaths per 1000 live births in 2007. Under-five mortality declined to 75 in 2014 from 119 in 2007. Maternal Mortality declined from 729 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2002 to 398 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2014.

Madam Chair

The population of Zambia is still relatively young and its age structure has remained the same over the past years. The young population constitutes 45.4 percent of persons aged below 15 years. The population below the age of 35 years represents 82 percent of the total population. Zambia's young population provides in-built

potential for continued population growth and the age structure is expected to remain unchanged into the future.

This population structure also entails that there is a big proportion of the population dependent on a small population that is involved in gainful employment. With the child dependency ratio of 87.4, it poses a challenge for sustainable development. However, the country has the potential to realize a demographic dividend from the current population age structure.

Madam Chair

Zambia has been implementing a number of measures for its youthful population such as School Adolescent Health Strategy and re-entry policy for pregnant girls; establishing youth friendly credit facilities; re-introducing cooperatives for young people; and the introduction of skills building camps for youth development activities among others. However, much more needs to be done to fully address the challenges associated with the youthful population.

In moving forward, for the country to leverage from its youthful population, the Government has put in place policies and programmes prioritizing investments in economic, social and demographic factors in an integrated approach as outlined in the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) for the period 2017-2021. The Government of the Republic of Zambia reaffirms her commitment to the demographic dividend agenda in an effort towards achieving sustainable development.

The 7NDP pillars of economic diversification and job creation; reducing poverty and vulnerability; reducing development inequalities; enhanced human development; and creating a conducive governance environment for a diversified economy provides the platform for actualizing the demographic dividend policy options. The 7NDP has taken into account Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Africa Union Agenda 2063 in an effort to ensure that the development agenda for the country is inclusive.

Madam Chair

The Government through the 7NDP has made provisions for investments that will facilitate rapid voluntary fertility decline through universal access to family planning, enhance female education at all levels and general empowerment of women. This will be done through reformation of the education sector and increased retention in school and progression to tertiary education.

The Plan has also made provision of sexual and reproductive health services and access to comprehensive sexuality education especially young girls as one of the measures to have improved knowledge and skills aimed at reducing teenage pregnancy, HIV/STIs infection and child marriages. Government will focus on improving the quality of education provided for the young people to ensure that they acquire the requisite skills and knowledge relevant to the current economy and job market. Government is also strengthening fiscal policies and under taking governance reforms to enhance savings, attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and ensure efficiency and accountability in the use of public resources.

With regards to the ageing population, the country has a National Ageing Policy (NPA) to guide the stakeholders in the delivery of services to older persons and is also implementing the National Social Protection Policy since 2014 for the poor and vulnerable population.

Madam Chair

Government will continue adhering to the tenets of good governance and accountability and will harness the power of Information Communication Technology (ICT) to advance data ecosystems to inform resource allocation, prioritization of development programmes, including for vulnerable populations, as well as effective youth engagement and participation in national democratic and development processes. Government will therefore, continue to promote the collection, dissemination and analysis of demographic data disaggregated by age, sex and other relevant characteristics.

I thank you.