

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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Statement

By

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**The Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of
Egypt to the United Nations**

in New York

Before

**The 42nd Session of the Commission on Population and
Development**

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Madam Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as chairperson of the Forty-second Session of the Commission on Population and Development. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his reports on the contribution of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, and his report on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action. In this context, I would like to recognize the efforts of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UNFPA in the follow-up of the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action and in supporting the efforts of developing countries in its implementation, and the complementarity between their efforts in achieving that goal.

This session gains special importance as it coincides with the fifteenth year anniversary of the ICPD. It also gains special importance as it marks fifteen years since the establishment of the Commission of Population and Development in 1994 under its expanded mandate. This commission, under the supervision of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, represents the main inter-governmental forum for following up the implementation of the ICPD Program of Action and the key actions for further implementation of the Program of Action adopted by the General Assembly in 1999.

From this perspective, Egypt hosted this conference fifteen years ago. We have attached great importance to the follow-up of the implementation of the outcomes of the Programmed of Action, as we are keen on the effective follow-up of the implementation of the outcomes of major UN conferences in the economic and social fields aimed at achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. From that standpoint, the People's Assembly of Egypt, in coordination with the UNFPA and the Arab and African Parliamentarians Forum on Population and Development, was keen to host the fourth International Parliamentarians Conference on implementing the ICPD Program of Action in October of this year in Cairo on the fifteenth anniversary of the Cairo conference. We hope that this conference will lead to the adoption of effective recommendations at a high level in order to contribute to strengthening the implementation of the goals of the Program of Action at all governmental, parliamentary and people levels, including the effective participation of civil society and the private sector.

Madam Chairperson,

The selection of this session's theme "The Contribution of the ICPD Program of Action in the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, Including the MDGs" strengthens the linkage and complementarity between implementing the program and achieving the internationally agreed development goals. However, addressing this issue cannot be undertaken in isolation from important events that the world has witnessed over the last two years. We are currently facing an unprecedented and grave challenge as a result of a number of multiple and inter-related crises linked to the rise of global food and energy prices and the international financial crisis whose negative impact has affected the economies of developing countries. As a result of the current international downturn in economic growth, trade, financial flows, remittances, and the rise of unemployment, these crises constitute a grave threat to the achievements that have been made until now towards attainment of the internationally agreed development goals. In addition, this negative impact is expected to continue during the coming years.

This places additional burdens on the budgets of developing countries thus constraining the volume of allocations directed to poverty eradication programs and to services in vital fields such as health and education and other central components of the ICPD Program of Action.

In addition, the implementation of the goals of the ICPD is inextricably linked to the implementation gap which faces the outcomes of major UN conferences in the economic and social fields. Similarly, the lack of fulfillment by our development partners of many of their commitments according to these outcomes, affects the implementation of the outcomes of the goals of the ICPD Program of Action. These two frameworks constitute a comprehensive and inter-related context for international cooperation for development.

Accordingly, the exceptional circumstances that face the world today require exceptional actions to confront them, and not to use them as a pretext for non-implementation. These circumstances require directing the political will of the international community towards intensifying international cooperation and coordination, and not towards enhancing isolation and protectionism in a manner that negatively affects the efforts towards development in our developing countries. One of our main goals should be strengthening human resources as a vital element for achieving development in all its dimensions.

From this viewpoint, the convening of the ICPD fifteen years ago represented a critical juncture in the field of international development cooperation in parallel to other major UN conferences in the economic and social fields. It founded the direct link between population and achieving human development in parallel with achieving economic and sustainable development. Fifteen years after the convening of the conference, the global population has almost reached seven billion while resources are still limited, and are constantly being depleted, thus leading to the inability of developing countries to take the primary responsibility in achieving economic and social development. This, in the midst of a state of recession and a loss of confidence in the global economy and its financial institutions which are controlled by developed countries. It has become a necessity to attach importance to exchanging best practices and lessons learned at the global level, particularly in light of what the Secretary General's reports reflect in terms of success in some geographical regions in dealing with population growth. It has also become essential to strengthen the assistance needed by the international community. This requires creating an enabling international environment that supports the success of these efforts in implementation of the Global Partnership for Development according to the outcomes of relevant UN conferences and summits, the last of which was the Doha Conference of Financing for Development, which reaffirmed the centrality of this concept.

Based on that, the ICPD Program of Action stipulated that providing national financial resources in a coherent manner with bilateral and multi-lateral funding lies at the heart of implementing the Program of Action. We welcome the increase in funding directed to the activities related to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. However, we call on donor countries, and based on the importance of preserving the necessary balance, to attach the same importance to other fields such as family planning and reproductive health which suffer from a real lack of funding. I would like to refer, in this context, to what the report of the Secretary-General on Financial Flows indicated, that inadequate funding remains the chief constraint towards the implementation of the goals of the ICPD and the Millennium Summit.

Madam Chairperson,

Egypt has undertaken big strides towards the implementation of its commitments according to the ICPD based on its responsibility towards its people and according to its commitment to implementing the outcomes to UN conferences in the economic and social fields. Egypt's interest in population and development issues was recently enhanced. Two weeks ago, Egypt established a new ministry entrusted with family and population issues in all their dimensions, as well as coordinating national efforts at different levels with effective participation between the government and civil society organizations under the supervision of the Presidency. Egypt will continue to forcefully push towards the full and balanced implementation of the Program of Action of the conference, contributing to the achievement of the aspired economic and social development.

Thank you Madam Chairperson