

**Statement to the Commission on Population and Development
Acting as Preparatory Committee for the Special Session
of the General Assembly**

As written



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT BY
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TO THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
ACTING AS THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SEPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
IMPLEMNTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to extend on behalf of the Ethiopian delegation my congratulation to you upon your election as Chairman and through you to the members of the bureau. I would also like to extend my appreciation for the statements made to introduce the two Reports of the Secretary-General and the Report of the Hague Forum. I believe they have set the tone for the Work of the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. Chairperson,

Ethiopia is engaged in earnest to accelerate her socio-economic development since 1991. We have put in place appropriate macro-economic, sectoral policies, strategies as well as institutional framework through devolution of power to ensure and empower the local community to define, formulate development programmes and manage their affairs.

Policies and strategies in the key sectors of food security, health, education, population and women have been put in place long before ICPD - Cairo. As such it was not difficult for us to accommodate it as part of our overall socio-economic development and start its implementation. Much has been done so far, though the challenge that still faces us is daunting. Our

population policy is based on the strong links between population and development. We continue to stress the interdependency that exists between poverty, economic development, environment and population and their implications for the attainment of our human centered sustainable development.

We reaffirm the particular importance we attach to gender equality, equity and empowerment of women. The fundamental change of their political, social and economic status is key for us to eliminate poverty and accelerate our socio-economic development. This is clearly attested by our Constitution of 1995 which contains special provisions on the rights of Ethiopian women as well as our national policy on women, food security, education, health and population policies and programmes.

Our overall development policy and strategy gives high priority to rural development where the majority of our population lives. Our education policy and programmes give priority to primary education particularly targeting girls. Likewise our health sector policy and Programme give focus and priority to primary health care. This focus will contribute to significantly lessen to the burden of disease in Ethiopia: reproductive health care, treatment and control of infectious diseases, control of epidemic diseases, immunization and control

of sexually transmitted diseases. All health institutions will incorporate in their services preventive and promotive aspects of health.

Mr. Chariperson,

While we are generally satisfied with the key future actions proposed as contained in the Report of the Secretary-General there are issues that we feel could be added and given more emphasis. The first is the proposal on population and education. We do recognize education as key to development in general and to the empowerment of women in particular. The proposal while critically significant masks great difference among countries in achieving the universal access to primary education. There are many countries who are close to achieving this target. But there are also some who have to cover a lot of grounds whose abilities will be limited by their capacities. Therefore, in order to provide appropriate future guidance explicit statement should be included to strengthen capacities particularly of least developed countries. We also feel the same holds true for health - reproductive health.

Secondly, it is important to take note of the delicate balance required in priority setting and resource allocation between reproductive health and other components of the health sector: epidemic disease control such as malaria,

infectious disease like TB and others which are equally critical health problems of most developing countries within the wider health system.

The third point is that we need to take note of the important complementary role of critical sectors like food security, rural energy, rural water supply and appropriate technology to reduce the house-hold chores of rural women - in facilitating the attainment of access to primary education particularly for the child girl in the rural areas. We will not be able to bring about their increased participation in primary education however much we increase provision of schools close to their localities unless we make meaningful change in the above sectors and therefore make the demand for the labour of rural child girl redundant. This creates enabling environment for them to go to school.

The fourth issue is that we would have liked to see in the proposed key future actions as contained in the Secretary-General Report more focus and visibility to global economic trends and its impact on future ICPD Program of Action Implementation. We feel that the proposed key future actions could be enriched by drawing upon the proposed action of the Hague Forum Report on global economic trends thereby accord it its required visibility in the Report of the Secretary-General on proposed key future actions.

Lastly we would have liked to see a place given in the proposed key future actions to the complementary Programme of actions in the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, World Food Summit in Rome etc. This cross reference explicitly stated is important in that what we do or fail to do in these areas will positively or negatively affect the full implementations of the ICPD Programme of Action during the coming years.

I thank you all for giving me your attention.