

Statement to the Commission on Population and Development
Thirty-second session, March 1999

As written

Statement
by representative of Ukraine at the 32-nd session
of the UN Commission on population and development
agenda item 3 "Follow-up to ICPD"

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset our delegation would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Bureau with the election.

In spite we are short of the time we are sure to complete our regular work under your guidance till tomorrow's evening.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to ~~express my~~^{our} ~~delegation's~~ gratitude to the Population Division for its analytical and profound reports under agenda items 3 and 4. Some topics outlined in these reports are of the special interest to our country.

As it may be seen from the "Report on world population and monitoring", and has already been mentioned by previous speakers, the situation on the population growth in the countries in transition, primarily in the Eastern Europe, is not satisfactory.

The general social and economic situation in Ukraine, and particularly, the consequences of last year's financial crisis continues to negatively impact the development of basic demographic trends. Regrettably, these negative processes still impact population reproduction. It is mainly conditioned by a social instability and a common decline in living standards.

As of January 1, 1999 the Ukraine population was 50.1 million of which 67.9% (34.0 million) live in urban settlements and 32.1% (16.1 million) in rural areas.

Population distribution by sex is as follows: 53.3% (26.7 million) are females and 46.7% (23.4 million) are males.

The population age structure is as follows: population aged 0-14 accounts for **19.2%**, those aged 15-59 constitute 61.3% and people of 60 years old and over are 19.5%.

Over the last five years annual decline in the Ukraine population was on average **almost** 0.4 million.

One of the basic reasons for the population natural decrease is the falling birth rate against a background of high death rate of the Ukraine population. In comparison with the beginning of the **1990's**, the total birth rate in the country has gone down by

3 1.4%. The country's birth rate is considered as being inadequate since for a long time it does not ensure the simple reproduction of the population. **Almost** a half of the total number of families with children under 18 is one child families. The number of one child families and childless couples has been increasing in **Ukraine**.

The second component of natural population movement is death. Over the past seven years the total death rate has gone up by 15.5%. It reached 14.3 per 1 000 in 1998. The grow in death rates took place in all male age groups while for the female population it effected those aged 20 and more. A high death rate for the working age population gives particular concern. The following age and sex characteristics should be noted: among the population aged 20 to 50 the death rate of males is three times higher than that of females. In rural areas the death rate significantly exceeds the death rate for urban areas.

One of the reasons for the growth in morbidity and mortality is the change that has taken place in social and economic relationships. Increased social differentiation has also had its impact on human behavior and population attitudes towards health status. It is also worth mentioning a high rate of occupational morbidity, injuries and the population disability.

The most serious threat to the health of the population comes from AIDS (HIV-infection). The most dangerous thing about it is that the majority of those infected are young people among which 15% are teenagers. Recently Ukraine experienced a significant growth of venereal diseases (syphilis and gonorrhoea) as well as venereal infections of the newly born. The situation with the population mainly of fertile age affected by venereal diseases, gives rise to anxiety. Venereal diseases also have a negative impact on the reproduction function.

The death rate due to diseases of endocrine system, infectious and parasitic diseases, tuberculosis, malnutrition, metabolism and immunity disorders were increased almost by a forth. It is basically accounted for a worsening environment and, among other things, because of the Chernobyl nuclear plant disaster. Those who participated in the elimination of the disaster after-effects, evacuees, children, persons who still live in the areas that are under contamination monitoring and children born to parents exposed to ionizing radiation, require more attention since the health indicators of these population categories have an explicit negative tendency.

While a relatively high level of population mortality has been identified in Ukraine, it should be noted that some features are improving. Indications became evident over the past three years implying a downward trend. Infant mortality has started declining. Infant deaths up to age 1 declined **from** 14.7 in 1995 to 12.6 in 1998 per 1 000 children for that age group. It is worth mentioning that this **indicator** is much lower than the expected **figures** (50) envisaged by the Action Plan adopted in September of 1994 by the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development. To a certain extend, it is

Getting back to the natural movement of the population, it should be noted that the processes that take place there negatively effect the life expectancy at birth. Since

the beginning of the 90's life expectancy for the Ukrainians has dropped by 4 years to 67 years. It is a little lower than the estimates mentioned in the Action Plan (by the year 2005 life expectancy at birth will have reached 70 years).

Over the mentioned period life expectancy for males has been falling rapidly. Now it is 62 years (decline in 4 years). For females that indicator fell by 2 years during the current decade to 73 years.

Thus, social and demographic situation in Ukraine is represented by the following trend in progress: population aging, a decline in births at the time of relative stabilization of high death rate, the nation's health worsening including the reproductive health, high level of abortions and **STDs**, acute problems of family, mother and child, a large migration outflow mainly among working ages, unfavorable ecological situation.

To prevent these negative trends the National Programme on family planning was established in 1995 in Ukraine.

Since last year, the Ukraine Government has been implementing a special Action Plan aimed at improving the demographic situation in the country. The main objective of the actions being implemented is to find solutions to the sharpest problems in the area of population through the development and implementation of complex and targeted programs within the unified strategy of demographic policy.

All these moves should encourage the implementation of the basic and the most important tasks set for the world community by the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development.