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The 56th session of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD)
“Population, education and sustainable development”
General Debate
Statement by the Delegation of Georgia
New York, April, 2023

Mr. Chair,

Georgia aligns itself to the cross-regional joint statement delivered by Argentina and now it is my pleasure to deliver this statement in my national capacity.

Let me start by thanking you and the other members of the Bureau for your guidance during the 56th session of the Commission on Population and Development.

Let me also thank Mexico and Indonesia, the co-facilitators of the CPD resolution for their tireless effort in seeking consensus and their constructive engagement during the negotiations. We regret that there is no consensus on CPD Resolution on population, education and sustainable development, and hope for a last-minute consensual solution.

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year's special theme - “population, education and sustainable development” gives us an excellent opportunity to exchange on this important topic and to explore linkages between the recent and upcoming thematic discussions on education, population and development themes.

The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development recognized the universal access to quality education as fundamental in achieving sustainable development and amongst others, called for the elimination of

gender disparities in primary and secondary education. However, twenty-nine years since its adoption, much remains to be done in this direction.

According to the Secretary General's report, achieving the SDG 4 on quality education will be a 'formidable task' despite the progress. Regrettably, the pandemic intensified the global learning crisis by aggravating pre-existing inequalities in access to and quality of education, as girls and women were especially hit the hardest by school closures.

Let me highlight the special need for multilateralism and international cooperation to overcome the education crisis, accelerate the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The landmark "Transforming Education Summit" held in September last year, proved to be a valuable opportunity to revitalize global commitment to education and lifelong learning opportunities. Georgia stays committed to implement ambitious goals outlined in our National Statement of Commitment to Transform Education.

Distinguished colleagues,

We recognize 'the transformative role of education for sustainable social and economic development and the fulfilment of all the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, Georgia has declared the education as a top strategic priority of the country.

The Government adopted the National Strategy of Education and Science of Georgia for 2022-2030, which is adjusted to the Georgian realities, synchronized with the long-term policy vision of the Government of Georgia and dwelled on three main pillars of Quality, Equity and Good governance in Education.

Guided by the principle of "Leaving No One Behind", Georgia continues to invest in improving education infrastructure, learning environments and materials, which support and meet the needs of all learners, including those from vulnerable groups. The Government supports and encourages creation of favorable inclusive learning-teaching environment at all education institutions and develops policy tools for reducing social, cultural or financial barriers enabling students to access to quality education at all levels without any hindrance.

Regrettably, people living in the Russia's occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia Georgia are left behind the development progress and continue to be daily subjected to the grave violations of their fundamental rights, including but not limited to infringements of the right to life, the right to health and right to education in native language, as the Government is prevented from the possibility to implement the above-mentioned measures therein.

Excellencies,

In conclusion, let me mention once again that halfway to 2030, in the midst of unprecedented challenges, the joint solidarity, effective cooperation and multilateralism is the only way left for achieving the vision of the “Cairo Programme of Action” and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank you!