

U.S. Statement: UN Commission on Population and Development, 52nd Session

Ambassador Cherith Norman Chalet
U.S. Representative for UN Management and Reform
U.S. Mission to the United Nations
New York City
April 4, 2019

AS DELIVERED

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the United States, I thank you and the Bureau for your efforts in preparing us for the work of this year's Commission on the theme of "Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

We wish to join with other delegations to commemorate the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ICPD. The Programme of Action and the Conference's report helped reframe the discussion of population and development issues, and has provided us with an updated view of global health, women's equality and sustainable development, and contributed to the development of goals linked to these important issues.

The United States is the largest bilateral donor of foreign assistance to many programs that support the objectives set forth in the 1994 Programme of Action. We are proud of our contributions to expanding access to basic health care and promoting women's health, including efforts to improve maternal and child health.

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report to the Commission, over the past quarter century the world has seen an increase in life expectancy, improved access to education, and advancements in the empowerment of women and girls. However, we also know that progress has been uneven -- particularly in the area of reducing maternal morbidity and mortality.

Identifying and addressing critical gaps in health care and education requires robust data-collection systems; therefore, my government strongly supports efforts to increase the availability of, and access to, high-quality disaggregated data, which is essential for measuring progress toward achieving our shared development goals.

My government is committed to helping women, their families and their communities thrive, and to promoting and preserving human life and dignity. Our bilateral maternal and child health programs focus on 25 high priority countries that account for two-thirds of maternal and child deaths worldwide. In the past 10 years, U.S. investments have helped save the lives of more than five million children and 200,000 women. Investing in the health of women and girls is essential to transforming communities and supporting each of our partner countries on their "Journey to Self-Reliance," a

new U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) program designed to strengthen each country's ability to fund, manage, and solve its own development challenges. We continue to insist that references to "sexual and reproductive health services" in the ICPD Programme of Action not include abortion or the promotion of abortion as a method of family planning.

When women and girls have access to education, health care, and economic opportunities, they are better able to fulfill their potential and contribute to the well-being of their families, communities, and nations, as well as to sustainable development efforts. When women do better, families do better, communities do better, and nations do better.

To promote prosperity and peace for all members of society, my Government continues to actively engage with the private sector, public sector, faith-based organizations and civil society partners. Through this, we can also help ensure women and girls have the opportunity to reach their full potential, both in the United States and around the world.

In conclusion, we look forward to productive discussions with the bureau and other delegations on these issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.