



**Statement by the  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Suriname**

**His Excellency Sunil Sitaldin**

**At the General discussion of the 56th Session of the  
Commission on Population and Development**

**New York, 11 April 2023**

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Mr. Chair,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset I congratulate you Chair, and members of the Bureau on your appointment, and wish you the very best during your tenure.

Mr. Chair, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of its review conferences are significant to the lives of multitudes, especially vulnerable groups, who look to the United Nations and to this Commission to help improve their lives and livelihoods.

The ICPD Plan of Action emphasizes the crucial role of universal access to quality education in achieving sustainable development and realizing human rights.

Education is key to unlocking developmental potential and it provides the condition to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty!

We live in uncertain times with many interlocked crises: food insecurity, inflation, high energy costs, the climate crisis, and the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In these very uncertain times, we have to take firm and bold steps to modernize our educational systems to create better citizens, in a knowledge-based and ICT- driven society.

We must improve our education, to deliver expertise and skills that fit the needs of our citizens.

Based on our commitments arising from the UN 2030 agenda including SDG 4, it is important that beyond the traditional way of teaching – within formal education – emphasis is also placed on creating opportunities for tailor-made low-threshold and affordable training courses and education programs, for small entrepreneurs, working people (including civil servants), the unemployed, school drop outs, people with a disability, in short, every citizen who needs further education, re- and further training, development of talents and 'lifelong learning'.

Optimal use and development of talent is important for the well-being of citizens and social cohesion in the community. It also serves to stimulate business activity, especially in view of growing income inequality due to weak small and medium-sized enterprises.

It is worth mentioning that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing in my country offers low threshold courses and training where boys and girls can acquire immediately applicable knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, Suriname is making efforts to improve maternal and newborn health, by reinforcing universal access to quality care during preconception, pregnancy, delivery, and the postnatal period for all women, with emphasis on vulnerable groups.

Mr. Chair,

Suriname is currently facing several financial and economic challenges. The effects of the many crises in the world have exacerbated the macroeconomic situation and affected the socio-economic conditions in the country. Nevertheless, the government of Suriname remains committed to accelerated implementation of the ICPD plan of action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and we continue striving to fulfill that promise.

With the support of the UNFPA, the Surinamese government has worked on developing a population policy, a gender vision policy, a maternal health strategy, an adolescent health strategy and thus created a good policy environment for acceleration towards the goals. However, the impact of COVID-19 and the economic crisis has made implementation of the respective policy documents and their action plans more difficult.

We anticipate the continued support of the United Nations regarding the implementation of the above-mentioned policy plans that have been made.

The Government of Suriname would like to express its sincere appreciation to our partners within the UN- System who continue to support us in the fight against COVID-19 and the process of further implementation of the Programme of Action.

In closing Mr. Chair,

Suriname reaffirms its commitment to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the key actions for its further implementation and the outcomes of its reviews. We look forward to the national and regional review processes of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ICPD, and the support of the UN system in that regard.

We emphasize that the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation are essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you.