



Commission on Population and Development - 56th Session

Population, Education and Sustainable Development

Israel's Statement at the General Debate

Mr. Chair,

We wish to thank you and the Bureau for your efforts in guiding the Commission's 56th session. Israel aligns itself with the cross-regional joint statement delivered by Argentina, and would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

The ICPD Program of Action was a defining moment for women and girls, realizing a rights-based approach to human health and reproductive issues with the goal of promoting prosperous and sustainable societies and ensuring the fundamental human rights of every person. This Commission plays an important role in the follow-up, assessment and revision, and assessment of its implementation. Acknowledging its essential role, we have faith that we can reach a consensual resolution.

Mr. Chair,

As the world continues to grapple with multiple and interlinked challenges, ensuring quality education for all and a healthy and prosperous population become ever-more challenging.

Quality education is a precondition for development and for a healthy population, and it is central to the promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities for all. Unfortunately, women and girls continue to face unequal access to education, limiting their potential participation in the social, political, and economic spheres, as well as their empowerment and independence. To that end, our efforts to transform our education systems must be gender-responsive. We must invest in resilient, inclusive and quality education at all levels and promote lifelong learning opportunities, digital inclusion and literacy and STEM education. We must ensure that all people, irrespective of gender and age, including persons with disabilities, can acquire the knowledge and skills needed to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and to participate fully in society.



In addition, women and girls, and especially those experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, are those most impacted by global challenges. Their access to sexual and reproductive health services, including for family planning, information and education, which are central to the realization of social justice and to the achievement of the SDGs, is limited. They continue to face sexual and gender-based violence and other harmful practices while important lifelines of social support are cut and civil society organizations are attacked. We must therefore reinforce our commitment to respect the bodily integrity, autonomy and agency of all women and girls and ensure that they have the ability to make their own choices about their bodies and their future, free of violence, coercion and discrimination.

Mr. Chair,

Israel has been addressing many of these challenges for decades. Israel's population is growing rapidly, and it is expected to double by 2050. If this trend continues, Israel is on track to become the most crowded developed country on the planet.

Israeli society is highly diverse, and comprised of different cultures, religions and beliefs. For this reason, we provide a quality education that is adaptable to the unique context of each person and the rapidly changing world. We believe that quality education must be delivered to all, and that it is a central building block for a healthy population. Taking into account the different cultural contexts in our society, we have an adaptable comprehensive sexuality education programme, aimed at providing children, adolescents and youth with the knowledge needed to protect their health and safety. We teach youth, women, adolescents and girls about their rights and their safety, and provide them with tools to ensure that they are equal and protected. They then go on to play leading roles in Israeli society and the economy.

Mr. Chair,

We are one year away from the 30th anniversary of the ICPD, which provides us with a valuable opportunity to reflect on our achievements, but also on what remains to be accomplished. In the process of adapting to new and challenging realities, we must not lose sight of our long-standing goals. Quality education is an important cornerstone of a healthy, fair and equal society. Israel will continue to promote quality education and the values it supports through the important work of this Commission.

Thank you.