

COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2023

ORAL STATEMENT

Distinguished chair,

The International Federation for Family Development is present in 70 countries on all continents and our main activity is centered on parenting education with skill-building programmes to help societies to face the tremendous changes that affect families.

In this regard, our Federation has been fully involved with the Preparations for the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The commitment aims at turning the Anniversary into a substantial and enriching discussion to bring the role of the family unit and policies towards social development into reality. Recently, we have been working together with other non-governmental organizations on a Civil Society Declaration. The Declaration tries to integrate family needs into the various Megatrends proposed by the Secretary General.

The Megatrend that we are focusing on this year, together with UN-DESA, is Demographic Shifts. We have been promoting Regional Expert Group Meetings in Africa, Europe, America and Asia. The experts' recommendations will help to design and implement family-friendly policies for better population outcomes.

In recent years, the United Nations system has witnessed substantial progress when addressing constructive topics for better population outcomes related to informal education and skill-building programs, such as parenting support and education. Recommendations from the Secretary General's Report and program implementation from ILO, UNICEF, WHO and UNESCO have shown a direct impact on mental health for all family members, child well-being, family cohesion and breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. In this regard, the ICPD Programme of Action, Chapter 2, Principle 10 reads: "The best interests of the child shall be the guiding

principle of those responsible for his or her education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with the parents.” Or paragraph 5.9 – “Governments [...] should support educational programmes concerning parental roles, parental skills and child development”.

Following up on the Commission’s theme; the impact of new technologies and families in achieving SDG4; and the latest resolution on the Preparations of the International Year of the Family in 2024, investing in parenting education has policy implications and so it should rightly be perceived as an effective and useful strategy for enabling parents to improve their skills to face the challenges of child-rearing. Furthermore, parenting education constitutes a strategy for preventing negative behaviors, such as corporal punishment, and should be an integral component of a set of methods for the creation of an infrastructure for parents. Moreover, parenting education constitutes a strategy towards realizing several of the Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets, especially those related to health and education.

Thank you, chair.