

*1. Given that the Commission is the only intergovernmental forum focused on the implementation of the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in the United Nations, how can we improve its work to better assist Member States and the international community at large in advancing the ICPD agenda while contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?*

- The normative role of the CPD needs to be upheld and strengthened. Technical discussions should remain a priority. We would welcome a further strengthening of the accountability role of the CPD.
- The reports of the commission should be action-oriented and have clear evidence-based recommendations to address the gaps in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action.
- The conference would benefit from interactive sessions with insights from local, national and regional contexts. A broader stakeholder group should be considered for inputs and participation, in particular civil society, but also the private sector (as seen at Nairobi Summit 2019).

*2. Population and development issues and trends, including drivers and impacts, have important implications for the further implementation of the Programme of Action and the achievement of the SDGs. What role can the Commission play in guiding Member States and the international community in responding to these issues and trends?*

- The CPD would benefit from being linked more strongly to the General Assembly and the HLPF. Ideas include: showcasing ICPD relevant aspects of voluntary national reviews (HLPF segment) of some countries at CPD; bringing the ICPD to the General Assembly every four years (special session), given its relevance for the achievement of sustainable development.
- Aspects of the ICPD should be looked at in a more balanced and holistic manner to address interlinkages (e.g. the relationship between education, girl's empowerment and SRHR). This includes reports and the resolution on the special theme. The most relevant trends, however, should be the focus. We furthermore see a danger in picking topics that are on the brink of being outside of the commission's mandate (e.g. food security). Instead, the different aspects of demographic development and its connection with and effects on the above mentioned and other topics of the ICPD should be addressed in greater detail.

*3. In order to address the above questions and issues, would it be desirable or feasible for the Commission to adjust its methods of work (organizational aspects, substantive elements, outcome)? If so, could the practices and experiences of other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) provide any guidance?*

- The methods of work should be updated in order to facilitate technical debates and to strengthen the normative role of the commission. We regret, in particular, that consensus on the thematic resolution have failed in recent years.
- A more interactive approach to the annual session should be considered.

1. Organizational aspects:

- Term of office of the Bureau: We are open for the length of membership to be extended to up to two years (in line with CSW, UNSC and CSocD)

- Multiannual work programme: In favour of a four-year cycle to decide annual themes. Where appropriate, they should be streamlined with themes of the HLPF but should stay focused on unique and emerging areas of the ICPD PoA and refer to its regional review conferences.
- Length of the session: The current two weeks are of appropriate length.
- Participation from member states' capitals should be facilitated for the resolution of the special theme.
- The Commission could consider facilitating a more transparent mode of the informal consultations by opening them up for civil society (as observers), as seen at the Human Rights Council and Open Working Groups (SDG process).
- Secretariat support should remain as is (UN Population Division and UNFPA in their respective roles).

## 2. Substantive aspects:

- Annual theme: The most relevant issues of the ICPD PoA and its linkages to current developments and realities should be considered as annual themes. We are open to introduction of an "emerging theme" at the session, where appropriate. One should be careful, as stated above, to remain in line with the Commission's mandate, in order to not duplicate discussions.
- Panel discussions: We would welcome interactive session and the inclusion of diverse voices from different stakeholder groups, in particular from civil society. A combination of high-level, multi-stakeholder and expert panels for each year is welcome.
- Reviews and realities (evidence and experience) from regional perspectives should be integrated into the annual sessions. Recommendations for policy changes and implementation thereof should be made at different levels (global, regional, national, local).
- Civil society should be included in the preparations and expert inputs. Their questions and inputs should receive more space during the sessions.
- Discussions could take place in parallel and prior to the session in innovative ways, e.g. in online consultations or in a platform for ongoing expert dialogues throughout the year.
- National statements could be uploaded prior and during the annual sessions as part of the documentation. They could be presented in a more concise and targeted manner, in order to not overwhelm the annual session.
- Preparatory expert meetings on the special theme should continue to be organized by the Secretariat. They should be guided, where applicable, by ongoing expert discussions of a broader group of experts and based on scientific evidence and experiences from the local level.

## 3. Outcome

- We are in favor of a yearly negotiated outcome. The outcome serves as an important document for the advancement of the ICPD PoA, guiding its implementation on the ground.
- A consensual document continues to be preferred; the option of adopting the resolution by vote should be considered and explored carefully (as outlined in the preparatory document).