

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava,
Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations
and Vice-President, Economic and Social Council**

**to the forty-ninth session of the
Commission on Population and Development**

New York, 14 April 2016

**Madame Chairperson, your Excellency, Dr. Mwaba Patricia Kasese-Bota
Mr. John Wilmoth, Director of the Population Division of DESA
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is my pleasure to address the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Population and Development, on behalf of the President of the Economic and Social Council, H.E. Mr. Oh Joon, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations.

Let me begin by saying a few words about the topic of this agenda item, which is on the contribution of population and development issues to the theme of the Economic and Social Council in 2016, “Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results”.

The Commission on Population and Development plays a key role in providing policy guidance with respect to the implementation and review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. The deliberations of this Commission have important links to the discussions and outcomes of other functional commissions of ECOSOC,

in particular the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Statistical Commission. For example, the Statistical Commission decided last month on a framework of 230 indicators for use in reviewing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Population trends are reflected, either directly or indirectly, in several of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular those related to poverty, hunger, health, education, gender, employment, inequality and cities. The SDGs include some aspects of population trends that were not addressed by the Millennium Development Goals, most notably migration.

In your current session, the first after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, it is quite fitting that the Commission is focusing on the task of strengthening the demographic evidence base. Reliable, timely, and disaggregated demographic data will be needed both to make plans for implementation, and to assess progress toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, strengthening the demographic evidence base will be a critical element in the process of “moving from commitments to results”.

Madame Chairperson,

I am also pleased that the Commission has been making progress during the present session in reviewing its methods of work. As you will recall, ECOSOC decision 2015/252 specified that this review was for the purpose of “further enhancing the impact of the work of the Commission and its contribution to the Economic and Social Council”.

This framing of the review is consistent also with the decision by the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/1, that the Council should invite the functional commissions to contribute to its work in keeping with its agreed theme for a given year. In September of 2015, in resolution 70/1, the Assembly decided, further, that the reviews of progress on the SDGs taking place in the high-level political forum would be supported by reviews taking place in the functional commissions. It specified that the reviews in the functional commissions should, where possible, feed into and be aligned with the cycle of the high-level political forum.

Thus, it is now more important than ever for the Commission on Population and Development to contribute its expertise and provide policy guidance in the substantive areas that fall within its mandate. At the same time, the Council is aware of the challenges presented to the functional commissions by the decisions contained in these GA resolutions, which have enriched but also complicated the activities of the functional commissions.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Let me give just one example of an area where this Commission can make an important contribution. In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States of the United Nations committed to reducing inequality and leaving no one behind. The reduction of inequality was incorporated into the Agenda both as a specific goal (Goal 10) and as a cross-cutting aspiration that spans the entire Agenda.

Just two weeks ago, ECOSOC held a Special Meeting to grapple with the question of how to address inequality in a systematic fashion across the 2030 Agenda. For this purpose, inequalities across population groups – defined by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts – need to be documented, analysed and understood. Where the appropriate data are available, demographic evidence on trends for these various groups can make a crucial contribution to planning programmes and reviewing progress toward the reduction of inequalities.

Excellency, Distinguished delegates,

This commission has a long and distinguished record in addressing these sorts of issues in relation to its core mandate to follow-up the Cairo Programme of Action. As in the past, the Commission on Population and Development is well positioned to make specific contributions in its areas of expertise to the broader development agenda in the years to come.

In closing, I wish to convey the appreciation of the entire Bureau of the Economic and Social Council for your dedicated work and leadership in this area. I look forward to learning about the outcomes of this sessions. To increase the impact of the work, I encourage this Commission to submit substantive recommendations requiring further attention by the Council.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson