



**STATEMENT
ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA**

BY

**MR. FARUKH AMIL
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 9 April 2007

Chairperson

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of G77 and China.

The Group wishes to congratulate you on your election to the Chair. We are confident that under your stewardship and guidance this session of the Commission will have a constructive outcome. We also extend our felicitations to other members of the bureau and assure them of our full cooperation during the proceedings of this session.

Chairperson

The theme for the fortieth session "changing age structures of populations and their implications for development" is particularly relevant in the wake of the first global review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action to be concluded early next year.

We thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive reports on the various aspects of follow-up action to the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Key Actions for its Further Implementation which provides important guidance for our national and international policies with regard to population and development.

Chairperson

The Group of 77 and China takes note of the fact that the world population is in the midst of an unprecedented transformation. As observed by the Secretary General, the current demographic situation is unique in a way that it encompasses both the largest population of young people and the largest population of persons aged 60 and above. While the growth of the younger populations has been a steady trend, the rapid increase in the numbers of older persons is a relatively new phenomena caused by the transition from a regime of high mortality and high fertility to gradual decline in fertility and low mortality. Consequently, all countries are experiencing some change in their age structures according to their respective stages of the demographic transition.

This changing age structure of populations has significant social and economic implications at the individual, family, community and societal levels. It also has important implications for a country's development and, to some extent, has repercussions for regional and global patterns of growth.

The Group of 77 and China are mindful that this demographic transition has obvious and multiple implications for the developing countries. Most of these countries are on the verge of second stage of transition where larger proportion of populations are entering the working age and can thus contribute in reaping the benefits from this 'demographic window of opportunity'. Achieving the benefits from this demographic dividend, however, depends on developing sound macro-economic policies that promote savings and productive investment, increase employment opportunities and ensure stable social and economic environment that is propitious for sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

It is therefore imperative that countries are prepared to respond to the new realities of ageing societies with appropriate policies and programmes to meet the needs of all age groups. This will require changes in approaches to education, employment and health care. It will also involve to keep a balance in the needs of both young and old, especially education and health for young people and social, medical and financial support for the elderly and thus to maintain an intergenerational equity at the policy level. Assessing these challenges and making serious efforts to prolong the demographic dividends linked with the second stage of demographic transition would require a holistic approach at the national level with the support and assistance of the international community.

The G-77 and China would emphasize the following points in this regard:

First and foremost, there is a need to recognize the important nexus between changing age structures of population with development. Poverty and underdevelopment remain the major threat to the well being of the elderly. Enhancing the well-being and quality of life of older persons depends on targeted intervention in areas of ensuring economic security, promoting active and self reliant ageing, ensuring equal access to basic health and social services and eliminating discrimination of the elderly. Hence any specific measures in this regard are inextricably linked with strategies of poverty eradication.

Secondly, creation of sustained financial resources for the developing countries through increased ODA and debt cancellation would remain crucial to enable them pursue various targeted policy interventions to realize benefits from demographic transition.

Third, pursuing policies for sustained international migration which may have a lasting effect on the age structure of some countries both in the developing and the developed world.

Fourth, investing in health and education of young populations is a key measure for reaping the potential benefits of favourable age structure especially during the

demographic window of opportunity. The high levels of unemployment prevalent among young persons in all major areas indicate that much remains to be done in this regard

Chairperson

The G77 and China has noted with concern in the report of the SG that the projection of resources directed towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will not be sufficient to meet the current needs which have grown dramatically since 1994. To address this concern, the G77 and China would like to appeal to donors, UN organisations and other international organisations to enhance their financial and technical support to developing countries, including in the field of capacity building. As the report concludes, it is particularly important to reach the ODA target of 0.7% of the gross national product. Without a firm commitment to population, reproductive health and gender issues, it is unlikely that the goals and targets of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Summit will be met.

I thank you.