



**Statement by
Her Excellency Ismat Jahan
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN
at the 42nd session of the Commission on Population and Development
under agenda item #3 (contribution of the Programme of Action of the
International Conference on Population and Development to the
internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs.
Conference Room 4, 10:00am – 1:00pm, New York, 30 March 2009**

Madam Chairperson,

Bangladesh delegation most warmly appreciates you and other members of the bureau upon your well-deserved elections. We believe your stewardship would lead to an effective conclusion of this session. We thank the Secretariat for its comprehensive documentation. Bangladesh associates with the statement of Sudan on behalf of the G77 and China.

The Programme of Action (PoA) of the ICPD provides a comprehensive set of objectives and recommendations to promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the well-being of the population. The PoA contains a number of important qualitative and quantitative goals that are mutually supportive for population and development. These objectives and goals include among others, education, especially for girls; gender equity and equality; infant, child and maternal mortality reduction; and the provision of universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health. The full implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

Rapid population growth is associated with a number of social and economic impacts. It entails increased responsibility on the part of the individual family as well as on the treasury to meet the basic human needs of the additional population. It has been found that low-income groups of the society generally have much higher fertility than high-income groups. The high fertility is therefore associated with the persistence of poverty and contributes to the intergenerational reproduction of poverty. The decline in fertility can increase national savings and economic growth by reducing the proportion of dependent children and increasing working age peoples. This results in a "demographic dividend".

Since ICPD in 1994, the fertility continues to decline. Today the global population growth rate is estimated to be 1.17 percent annually from 1.54 percent in 1994. The population explosion was averted globally to some extent, because international community could decline the global fertility rate rapidly. Accelerating the implementation of the Programme of Action would therefore have a major role achieving the internationally agreed development goals.

Since the ICPD, health-care costs have increased significantly. As a result, the Conference targets are not sufficient to meet the current needs. This calls for a review and update of the resource requirements to finance population and reproductive health programmes in developing countries. The lack of resources in developing countries, particularly in LDCs, is a major impediment to the achievement of the goals of the Conference. Developing countries continued to make progress in mobilizing resources domestically. External support is however, not adequate. Donor support is also concentrated in few specific areas, neglecting other crucial areas. Equitable allocation of resources is therefore important.

Madam Chairperson,

Despite some progresses at the global level, the LDCs are increasingly marginalized and far from achieving the goals and targets of the Programme of Action. Their population growth rate is 2.37 percent and the fertility rate is as high as 4.6 children per woman. We also subscribe to the SG's report that "the least developed countries have the lowest average per capita income and the fastest rate of population growth among development groups". High population growth resulting from sustained high fertility imposes increasing demands on existing resources. The new and emerging challenges, such as deepening economic recession, food and energy crisis and crises posed by climate change, will affect the LDCs disproportionately. The LDCs are least likely to afford large outlays for population activities. They have been facing with many competing development priorities and cannot afford to make the necessary investments in population. It hinders progress in the achievement of important development goals, including the MDGs.

Mobilization of resources, particularly through full market access of goods and services of LDCs, 0.2 percent ODA, full debt relief, increased FDI, technology transfer and capacity building is urgently needed to achieve the goals and targets of the ICPD. Market access for LDCs semi-skilled persons can address their unemployment problems and increase resources for health and education needs for migrants' families. The UN and other international organizations should also enhance their support to developing countries, particularly LDCs to fully implement the Programme of Action.

In conclusion, as the ICPD Programme of Action has reached its fifteen, the challenge before the international community is to scale up its support to the achievement of the Cairo goals. Mobilization of resources, required in all areas of the population package of the ICPD, is critically important. The world has the resources, know-how and power to reach the target established in the ICPD programme. We must seize on that.

I thank you Madam Chair.