



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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(Translation)

Statement by H. E. Dr. LI Bin

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On Item 4 General Debate on National Experience

at the 42nd Session of the UN Commission on Population and

Development

New York March 31st, 2009

Madam Chair,

First of all, allow me to extend, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, our warm congratulations to your election to be Chair of this conference. We are confident that this conference will harvest rich fruits. The Chinese delegation highly appreciates the report that the Secretary General has submitted to this conference, which is of great importance to national governments' achievement of population and development goals. Availing ourselves of this opportunity, the Chinese delegation would like to introduce to you our efforts in these regards.

Madam Chair,

The Chinese government has earnestly performed its commitments to the

ICPD PoA and the MDGs, held on to the unique Chinese path of comprehensively addressing population issues, adhered to integrated decision making on population and development, and endeavored to realize long-term balanced population development and holistic coordinated sustainable human development. Based on a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between population, economy, society, resources and the environment, we proactively promote the transformation of development patterns and the transformation of China from a country with a huge population to a country competitive in human resources. Through interest orientation, service care and communication/advocacy, we focus on incorporating population and family planning into the overall deployment for improvement of people's livelihood, enhancing departmental and regional coordination and facilitating innovations in work mechanisms and methodologies. To enhance innovation of science and technology in family planning and reproductive health, we encourage different localities to explore new models of service provision and management that are tailored to their local conditions. After over 30 years' relentless efforts, China has made the great achievement of rapid economic growth and holistic population development in a developing populous country, thereby making positive contribution to stabilizing world population.

1. Persevere in the reform and opening up and contribute positively to global poverty eradication

Since the initiation of reform and opening up in 1978, China has maintained a rapid growth rate of 9.8% per annum on average in 30 years,

laying an important material foundation for improving people's livelihood. Integrating its poverty reduction strategy with its population development strategy, China implements a holistic development-oriented poverty reduction policy that features whole-village development, labor transfer training, support to industrialization and poverty reduction for immigrants. Between 1978 and 2007, disposable income of urban residents went up from RMB343 to RMB13, 786 while per capita net income of farmers rose from RMB134 to RMB4, 140. A historical leap from poverty to basic subsistence to overall well-off is witnessed in people's livelihood. Reducing rural poverty population from 250million to 40.07million, China has achieved the MDG goal ahead of time, helping accelerate the global poverty alleviation process.

2. Adhere to the fundamental national policy of family planning and comprehensively address population issues

An excessive population is China's primary problem. Thanks to 30 years' family planning, total fertility rate (TFR) of Chinese women has declined from 5.8 in 1970 to below replacement level in 1991 and is now stabilized at around 1.8. At present, China has a total population of 1.328billion. Without the implementation of the family planning policy, total population in China would have exceeded 1.7 billion in 2008. The proportion of those aged 65 and above in total population in China went up from 5.6% in 1990 to 8.3% in 2008, making China a country with a large elderly population and accelerated population aging. In rural areas, China has speeded up the development of a new system for old-age support with wide coverage and government subsidy, and raised the

standard of social support to some rural families practicing family planning from RMB600 to RMB720 per capita per year. Public service facilities in rural China are further enhanced for gradual quality improvement of the life of the seniors. In urban areas, efforts are made to expand the coverage of basic old-age support and develop an old-age service system that is based on aging at home, supported by community services and supplemented by institutional care. 814 million farmers are subsidized to participate in the new rural cooperative medical care system, a participation rate of 91.5%. Improvement is also seen in the state-assisted education system which provides financial support to over 20million students. In the following three years, the government will input RMB850billion to construct a basic medical-care system that covers all urban and rural areas and enables universal access to basic medical care services.

China has achieved relevant MDGs ahead of time, i.e., raising average life expectancy from 68 at the beginning of the reform and opening up to 73 at present, reducing infant mortality rate and mortality rate of children under 5 to 14.9‰ and 24‰ respectively, reducing maternal mortality rate to 34.2/100,000, increasing average per capita education attainment of the population aged 15 and above from 4.5 years to 8.5 years in 2007 and achieving a 99.3% coverage rate nationwide with regard to universal access to 9-year compulsory education. China has achieved the MDG goal ahead of time. China's rank on Human Development Index (HDI) rose from No.105 in 1990 to No.81 in 2007.

3. Practice gender equality and continuously meet public demands

for family planning and reproductive health

The Chinese government has incorporated the women's development cause into its overall national program for socioeconomic development. To safeguard women's rights for development, earnest efforts are exerted to implement the National Program for Development of Women, and execute relevant initiatives such as "Promotion of Female Employment", "Safeguarding the Rights and Interests of Women and Children", "Development of Harmonious Families" and "Support Women towards Success". With the "Care for Girls" programme going on nationwide, socioeconomic policies in favor of gender equality and growth of girls are developed and implemented while integrated measures such as strict prohibition of gender identification of fetus for non-medical purposes are adopted to address the abnormal sex ratio at birth.

At the same time, reproductive health and promotion of gender equality are introduced into population and family planning programs. Through quality of care family planning and reproductive health services, the government provides the public with free-of-charge family planning services and modern contraceptives and promotes informed choice of contraceptives. Community-based birth-defect intervention is carried out widely; prenatal care and post-delivery visits are conducted regularly for pregnant women and women in/after childbirth; regular gynecological checkups are provided for rural women; subsidies for hospital delivery are implemented in rural China; young children under 3 are checked for growth. The Chinese government attaches great attention to the prevention of HIV/AIDS, with HIV/AIDS prevention and control funds

amounting to RMB3.55 billion and a series of supporting policy documents already in existence. Focus is also placed on adolescent sexual and RH education and creation of the right conditions to help adolescent's access corresponding RH services, e.g., out-patient health-care services and counseling services for adolescents. All these effective efforts have further increased self-consciousness of the public in practicing family planning and increasingly enhanced public satisfaction with our efforts to improve reproductive health.

4. Promote orderly movement and rational distribution of the population and provide equal services to migrants

China is undergoing the largest population migration in human history. According to 1% national population sample survey in 2005, there were 147 million migrants in China. Localities with concentration of migrants have set up effective forms of regional cooperation, extensively implemented initiatives that advocate care for migrant workers, continuously expanded the coverage of free-of-charge family planning services to migrants, and effectively protected legitimate rights and interests of migrants. In the coming 20-30 years, population migration in China will speed up even further. The Chinese government will coordinate various efforts to implement programs for functional zones of population and development, research and develop policies and measures for orderly transfer of population and balanced urban/rural development, and accelerate the development of a new system for uniform management of migrants and provision of quality services to migrants.

5. Persist in the strategy of sustainable development and promote coordinated development of population, resources and the environment

In its pursuit of harmonious development between humankind and nature & between humankind and society, the Chinese government regards long-term balanced population development and coordinated development of population, economy, society, resources and the environment as an important goal in constructing an all-round well-off society. With its efforts to develop a resource-conserving and environment-friendly society and promote energy saving and emission reduction, China works enthusiastically to respond to global climate change. The practice of family planning in China has reduced its population size by 22%, which mitigates population pressure on global resources and population impact on the environment, and thus contributes positively to sustainable human development. China is more than happy to join the international community for continuous and persistent efforts in responding to climate change on the basis of technological progress.

Madam Chair,

Despite such remarkable achievements in the population and development areas, China is still confronted with many difficulties and challenges. The first half of the 21st century will witness peak values in total population, working-age population and elderly population as well as continuous increase in migrants. In the overall sense, China will be exposed to growing constraints of population, resources and the environment while population quantity will remain a key issue impacting

on socioeconomic development in the long run. From a longer-term perspective, health and education level, structure and distribution of population will gradually become important elements influencing coordinated and sustainable development of economy and society. These plus adolescents, migrants and the inadequate coverage of family planning and reproductive health services (not yet covering the economically underdeveloped areas) makes it an arduous task for China to comprehensively address population issues.

Madam Chair,

As a developing country that boasts a population of 1.3 billion, 19.5% of the world's total, China has great difficulty in keeping the population equilibrium, achieving economic development, increasing employment opportunities, improving people's livelihood. As such, the endeavor to effectively manage our own affairs itself is the greatest contribution to the realization of MDGs for all human beings. Hereby, we hope that the international community will view China's population and social development cause from the development perspective. The Chinese government will, as always, earnestly perform its international commitments, prioritize effective management of its own affairs, further enhance South-South cooperation, boost international exchanges and cooperation in the areas of population and development on the principles of "equality, mutual benefits, practicality, long-term cooperation and common development", and thereby endeavor towards better human well-being and a beautiful world of harmony and prosperity!

Thank You!