



INDIA भारत

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STATEMENT

BY

**AMBASSADOR MANJEEV SINGH PURI
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

On

**AGENDA ITEM 4: GENERAL DEBATE ON NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN
POPULATION MATTERS: HEALTH, MORBIDITY, MORTALITY AND
DEVELOPMENT**

**AT THE 43RD SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON POPULATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

New York

April 13, 2010

Mr Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election and assure you of our full support and cooperation in the deliberations of the Commission.

We would like thank the Secretary General for all his reports under various agenda items of the Commission. I would also like to express our appreciation to all the distinguished keynote speakers who have made excellent and insightful presentations during this session.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Yemen, on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr Chairman,

Last year, we commemorated the 15th anniversary of International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994 to mark unprecedented global consensus and integration of diverse aspects of population, development and human rights.

This Programme of Action laid a comprehensive 20 year roadmap, recognizing the complex interplay amongst economic and sustainable development with population, gender equality and empowerment of women, urbanization and migration. This, in fact, provided the necessary impetus for the formulation of the MDGs.

Mr Chairman,

This year's special theme of the Commission, 'health, morbidity, mortality and development', is particularly timely as we look forward to the high level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the MDGs in September, later this year.

Health indicators account for 3 out of the 8 MDGs. Moreover, health has direct implication on the realization of rest of the MDGs. Last year's ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration rightly brought forward this issue succinctly and clearly.

The fact that implementation of ICPD Programme of Action has a direct implication on the realization of the MDGs cannot be overemphasis. The international community needs to be seized of this priority and further deepen its efforts in order to achieve the targets which it has set forth itself.

While there are indications that some of the health related MDGs may not be achieved by 2015; that should not deter us from reinforcing political will as well as national, regional and global efforts to attain them.

Mr Chairman,

India is committed to the realization of the ICPD's Programme of Action as well as the MDGs. Our progress has been steady. The Government of India continues to attach highest importance to the realization of these goals, by a strong inclusive growth philosophy, i.e., promoting development with social justice. There has been a steady increase in budgetary allocation to health, along with other related sectors.

Mr Chairman,

Let me highlight some of our major programmes and achievements in the field of health.

Since its launch in 2005, our flagship National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has been one of the biggest interventions of its kind in the health sector in the world.

With the aim to cover more than 600 million people, especially women and children in rural areas, this Mission has successfully provided equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary healthcare to them.

One of its main components - the Reproductive and Child Health Programme, includes an ambitious Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), a safe motherhood intervention programme, to promote institutional delivery with specific focus on poor pregnant women.

Our comprehensive programme for child development, namely, the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is today the worlds' largest early child development programme covering over 78 million children as well as pregnant and lactating mothers.

So far, NRHM has benefited more than 10 million women and has emerged as a major successful intervention in reducing maternal and infant mortality. Reports of the latest survey have shown that Infant Mortality Rate has reduced to 55 per 1000 live births in 2007 and Maternal Mortality Ratio has declined from 437 in 1992-93 to 254 in 2004-06.

Despite all progress, we remain acutely cognizant of the challenges we face in realizing the health MDGs by 2015.

Mr Chairman,

International cooperation has not been forthcoming when we speak about achieving the health related goals. Provision of financial resources, transfer of technology, technical assistance, access to medicines or capacity building especially to the developing countries has not reach optimum level. We must not forget that success of MDGs in each and every country is an imperative for the international community as a whole.

International community must continue to play its cooperative and mutually supportive role. In this regard, India has been proactive in sharing its development experience, including in the health and related sectors, with fellow developing countries.

One significant example has been the linking major hospitals in Africa with super-specialty hospitals in India through a pan-African e-network project for providing quality tele-medicine.

India is also uniquely positioned as a source of cost-effective generic medicines, which are critical to public health strategies in many developing countries by ensuring easy and ready availability of affordable vaccines and medicines to vulnerable people. We call on all countries to support rather than hinder or create barrier to such legitimate efforts.

Mr Chairman,

21st century is seeing a gradual shift of burden of disease from communicable to non-communicable diseases. As we continue our efforts to tackle communicable diseases, the prevalence of preventable non-communicable disease is proportionately increasing.

While focusing on these new challenges, we should not dilute our ongoing efforts in the fight against communicable disease, till it is eliminated. We should particularly be wary of any diversion of scare resource from the efforts towards achieving MDGs; instead we should devise and encourage new, additional and innovative financing to tackle non-communicable diseases.

Mr Chairman,

Let us continue our efforts in sustaining and strengthening our national health systems in a comprehensive manner, with primary health care at its core.

Investment in the health of the society is investment in the overall well being of the society. Development will not be sustainable if it is not created by a health population. Mahatma Gandhi has once said, "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver". After all, prosperity will follow the healthy.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.
