

44th session of Commission on Population and Development
STATEMENT BY ESTONIA

Agenda item 3

Mr. Chairman,

Estonia aligns itself with the statement made by Hungary on behalf of the European Union, and would like to make some short additional remarks.

For the outset, Estonia commends the ongoing work of UNFPA and its Executive Director Mr. Babatunde Osotimehin in the field of population and development. This is the first time when the CPD discusses the theme “**Fertility, reproductive health and development**”, which is indeed timely. The commission has some vital issues in front of it this year.

Estonia affirms its strong support to the full implementation of the **ICPD Program of Action**, and we are satisfied with the decision in December to extend it beyond 2014. Firm commitment by all countries is needed in order to fully meet the Program of Action’s goals and objectives.

Population dynamics are directly linked to global sustainable development. **Sexual and reproductive health and rights** is a crucial element of population policy. 16 years ago at the ICPD Cairo conference we confirmed that states should ensure universal access to reproductive health care services. All couples and individuals should have the right to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children. In this regard it is critical to **educate** the youth and provide access to sexual and reproductive health information, services and commodities.

Finally, Estonia reaffirms its strong support to the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The adoption of the Platform for Action was a remarkable achievement 16 years ago, and we all should continue working towards meeting its goals. The **empowerment of women** is key to development in every country.

Thank you.