



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT

BY

**MR. MUYAMBO SIPANGULE
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

TO THE

**FORTY FOURTH (44TH) SESSION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM 4: GENERAL DEBATE ON NATIONAL EXPERIENCE
IN POPULATION MATTERS:**

FERTILITY, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ZAMBIA

New York

13 April 2011

Chairperson,

Despite these challenges resulting from the high fertility levels and rapid population growth, the Government of the Republic of Zambia with the support of the United Nations and other partners has been working hard to address the situation. Modern family planning use has increased gradually from 8.9 percent of married women of reproductive age in 1992 to 26.5 percent in 2007. Further effort and support is required to increase access and use of family planning services, especially among women in rural areas in order to reduce the high unmet need for contraceptives.

The Government's health vision is to provide health services as close to the family as possible, and has since embarked on building infrastructure and strengthening health systems, including capacity building and training for the provision of long term family planning methods alongside strengthening commodity security, especially for rural populations.

To ensure a steady and adequate flow of reproductive health commodities, including family planning, the Government of the Republic of Zambia set up a Reproductive Health Commodity Security (RHCS) Committee, comprising officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance and National Planning, NGOs and Cooperating Partners, including UNFPA. This has resulted in an uninterrupted flow of reproductive health commodities and services for the past two years.

Chairperson,

Zambia has also embarked on the use of community based agents such as Safe Motherhood Action Groups to provide information on the importance of pregnant women delivering in health facilities and utilisation of family planning services. In some rural areas, family planning services are distributed through Community Based Distributors (CBDs) in line with the framework of Family Planning Policy and Guidelines.

Chairperson,

From the outset, I wish to congratulate you and your Bureau on your election and the able manner in which you are presiding over the deliberations of the 44th session of the CPD.

Chairperson,

Zambia's national vision as espoused in the Vision 2030 is to become a prosperous middle income nation by the year 2030. To attain this goal, the country has taken stock and incorporated population factors in its social and economic programmes under both the Fifth National Development Plan (2005-2010) and the Sixth National Development Plan (2010-2015). This has been done with full cognisance of the impact that the population has on development.

Chairperson,

Zambia has rapid population growth due to high levels of fertility. The country's population has grown from 5.6 million in 1980 to 13 million as at October 2010. This growth in population stems from the high Total Fertility Rates (TFR) of 6.2 in 2007.

Given the high fertility rates, Zambia has a young population. The young age structure has significant implications for population and development as there is increased pressure on the Government to provide social services such as schools, health centers and employment opportunities for young people. The population age structure has also created a high child dependency ratio that has placed a heavy burden on the working population.

The continuous increase in population size has put pressure on an already overburdened socio-economic resource base, particularly in core development sectors, such as education, health and food security.

Chairperson,

Zambia recently carried out a situation analysis on reproductive health services for the adolescents and young people in the country which identified the gaps, such as high teenage pregnancies, inadequate access to Reproductive Health Services and information. A strategy to address the gaps identified is being developed.

Zambia has also recently revised its National Population Policy and is developing an implementation framework. This will greatly contribute to ensuring that population issues are at the center of national development programmes at all levels.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, Zambia is confident that a lower fertility rate in future, is attainable and this will help sustain economic development, improve family nutrition, reduce environmental degradation, and make progress on all MDGs. Lower population growth rates will allow for more funding for the social sector, greater disposable family income for education and health, lower youth unemployment and create prosperity. We, therefore, call upon the United Nations and the international community at large to partner with us to enable us realise our aspirations.

I thank you.