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BRAZIL

COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Statement by

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Madam Chair,

We thank the Secretary General, the UNFPA and DESA for the comprehensive reports provided for this session.

During the last 12 months as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of both the Cairo and Beijing Conferences, we have discussed much about the past, but made insufficient progress as regards the establishment of common understandings towards future endeavors.

Our capitals were encouraged by reports coming in from New York on the constructive engagement during the informals of last week, under the leadership of El Salvador. This has raised expectations that this year's session could end on a more positive note than in previous years for all delegations. However, more work remains to be done this week, as not all elements in the working text have been held up to the same standard.

In particular, we would wish to name all vulnerable groups, including through a specific reference to sexual orientation and gender identity. We consider it essential to refer to indigenous peoples and persons of African descent.

It is reasonable to expect that in the 21st century we continue to advance on the subject of families under their various forms.

The moment has come to recognize sexual rights as a universal aspiration. At the very least, we must be capable of recognizing them as a factual reality in some countries.

We hope to find consensus on themes that are closely related to population and development, such as inequality and comprehensive sexuality education, among others.

Notwithstanding these critical remaining challenges, Madam Chair, Brazil considers the current efforts to be sufficiently anchored in Cairo and in Rio+20 to reinvigorate the Program of Action of the ICPD as a platform beyond 2014.

More so because it is the expression of the common interests and aspirations of the international community as a whole, in particular of a group of developing countries to which my country belongs.

A consensual agreement is a required step to turn the ideas into concrete cooperation. It will be our duty and responsibility, as members of this Commission, to translate this renewed breath of consensus from the United Nations system to our regions, countries and local communities.

Brazil welcomes the integration of population issues into the sustainable development agenda. We reaffirm our understanding that the report of the Open Working Group is the basis for integrating the SDGs into the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The outcome of the OWG represents a consensus produced by a democratic and participatory process, and leading to SDGs deeply rooted in population and development themes.

We welcome reaffirmation of the commitment to sexual and reproductive health and the full realization of reproductive rights.

We also welcome the commitment to continuing to promote efforts with a view to ending or substantially reducing maternal and infant mortality.

We will tackle international migration and the human rights of migrants.

We will improve the situation of women, children, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls are not only a stand-alone goal, but also a crosscutting issue throughout the agenda. This will ensure that the Post-2015 process will support implementation of the Cairo agenda in both its letter and spirit.

As we are all aware, the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda is one of universal applicability. In this regard, the UNFPA is well positioned to continue to provide assistance through its expertise, given its experience in looking at population and development from a global perspective

Madam Chair,

Last February, in Brasilia, we held the first BRICS Meeting of Ministers responsible for Population Issues.

Five large nations from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe gathered to examine their achievements and challenges on population and development issues, exploring possibilities to exchange best practices and to learn from each other's experiences.

By means of a constructive dialogue, we found commonalities that enabled us to elaborate a comprehensive agenda of cooperation for the next five years. We will leave to our colleagues from the Russian Federation - currently occupying the BRICS pro tempore chairmanship - to explain in more details what the next steps will be.

We thank South Africa for its leadership in incorporating this theme into the BRICS agenda in 2014. We note with satisfaction that the ensuing program of work contemplates policies on youth and social inclusion, ageing and the elimination of violence against women, HIV/AIDS and international migration, and demographic dividend and urbanization.

Initiatives like these showcase the vitality and importance of international cooperation in the field of population and development, building upon the UN platform.

The implementation of Cairo's Program of Action remains a common endeavor full of vitality, and we will do our utmost to ensure its strong projection into the future.

Persevering to overcome unresolved challenges, making progress through open participatory consensus-building, and taking stock of initiatives that have multiplier effects - such as the BRICS agenda- give us reason to celebrate one more anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development.

At 21, the Cairo agenda remains young.

Thank you very much.