



Permanent Mission
of Germany
to the United Nations
New York

Statement

by

Ambassador Heiko Thoms

**Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany
to the United Nations**

at the

48th Session of the

Commission on Population and Development

on

**General Debate on national experience in population
matters: realizing the future we want – integrating
population issues into sustainable development, including in
the post-2015 development agenda (Item 4)**

15 April 2015

(check against delivery)

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Madam Chair,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first of all align myself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Latvia on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

In addition, I would like to share some of our experiences both regarding German development cooperation and demographic developments in Germany:

First, on German development cooperation:

Germany remains committed to contributing to the full implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action adopted in 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development, the Key Actions prepared five years later, the recommendations of the Operational Review as well as the outcomes of the review conferences.

Over the past twenty years we have worked together with our partner countries to make the great vision of Cairo of a better world for all come true. Since then, Germany has spent over 4.3 billion US Dollars on population assistance, including sexual and reproductive health, through bilateral and multilateral aid.

Realizing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for all, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups is one of the priorities of German development cooperation. In this context, let me highlight some important initiatives in the area of health and population policy:

First, we are pleased to announce that we will extend our successful “initiative on rights-based family planning and maternal health”. Through this initiative, we are committed to ensuring that more women can exercise their human right to decide when, with whom and how many children they wish to have. This will have a positive impact on children’s health and education, on the economic prospects of the whole family and on the partner countries’ overall development.

Moreover, Germany supports the initiative to promote comprehensive sexuality education and health services for young people in Eastern and Southern Africa, the ESA initiative, to

which 20 countries of the region have affirmed their commitment. Comprehensive sexuality education is essential to enable young people to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy, HIV, and sexually transmitted infections.

German development cooperation is also committed to linking measures for HIV/AIDS prevention and sexual and reproductive health and rights in its health and development efforts to make beneficial use of synergies. Linkages between these two topics are the integration of HIV/AIDS related consultation, tests and treatment into sexual and reproductive health services, as well as vice versa, the supply of information, services and products concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights into the counseling and treatment services of HIV/AIDS programs.

Madam Chair,

Second, on demographic developments in Germany:

Taking population issues into consideration when planning for the future is a challenge all countries are facing, whether they are preparing policies for populations still young and growing or already ageing and shrinking in size, as it is the case in Germany. In order to pursue a sustainable future in the face of ongoing demographic change, governments should seize the opportunities for future development inherent in these population dynamics and to prepare for upcoming challenges.

Building upon the successes of the demographic strategy „Every Age Counts“, launched in 2012, Germany has further developed its approach to demographic change through continued collaboration with regional and local policy makers and governments, as well as other relevant stakeholders. The strategy aims at harnessing societal changes in a way that increases both prosperity and the quality of life for people of all generations in an ageing society – most importantly, living longer will mean more years to enjoy a fulfilled life.

With Europe’s oldest population, and approximately 1.5 Million Germans suffering from dementia, Germany has initiated the “Alliance for People with Dementia” as a cross-cutting and inclusive societal response to the illness. In light of this challenge, there is a need for action to improve the quality of life of patients and their families, and preserve their prospects for the future. Bringing together public agencies and civil society organizations for the common cause of supporting self-determination and aging with dignity has proven to be empowering for people both with and without impairments.

Germany’s demographic strategy also includes an effort to meaningfully consult with the countries’ youth. As any balanced demographic agenda relies on the young members of societies, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge them as key stakeholders and engage them in policy development through a variety of participatory platforms.

Moreover, Germany has also institutionalized a “demographic check” as a means of regulatory impact analysis for proposed laws, meaning all bills must be assessed in light of Germany’s ongoing and future demographic change. A catalogue of 24 questions aims at enabling legislators to craft policies sensitive to Germany’s future population dynamics.

Madam Chair,

Finally, let me again reaffirm Germany’s commitment to the principles of the ICPD and the further implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action which are guiding criteria of our work in the field of population dynamics and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The Commission of Population and Development (CPD) has proven to be a successful platform for sharing vital information and deliberations to implement this important agenda.

With view to the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda it is important to also discuss the role of the CPD in the “Post-2015 Era”. Therefore, the Population Division and the German Permanent Mission are organizing a joint side event on Thursday as a contribution to the ongoing process of shaping the work of the Commission and its significance to promoting population and development issues.

Thank you for your attention.