

# ISRAEL

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Check Against Delivery

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Statement by

Ambassador Ron Prosor

Permanent Representative

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Agenda item 4: General debate on national experience in population matters

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Mr. Chairman,

The Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, sang: “R-E-S-P-E-C-T, Find out what it means to me!”

This song is an anthem for anyone who has ever felt marginalized or minimized. Every human being craves respect – the opportunity to earn a decent living, raise his family, and contribute to his community.

When we empower individuals, we strengthen entire societies. There can be no peace, no progress, and no parity unless all people everywhere are afforded equal rights and participation.

Mr. Chairman,

Women all over the world continue to be denied the opportunity to make the most basic decisions about their lives. Almost 39,000 girls – some as young as eight or nine years-old - become child brides every single day. That’s one girl every two seconds. By the time I finish my speech, 150 more girls will have been married.

These girls are at greater risk of experiencing dangerous complications in pregnancy and childbirth, becoming infected with HIV/sAIDS and suffering domestic violence. Ensuring women’s sexual and reproductive rights is a fundamental precondition of sustainable development.

Access to sexual and reproductive health services and education must be universal as it promotes healthy, informed, and responsible behavior. This is a matter of empowering women to make decisions about their bodies and their lives.

The tragedy is that when women are denied equal opportunities and face barriers to achieving their potential, entire societies suffer and the cycle of poverty is perpetuated.

Israel believes that no nation should face the overwhelming challenges of development alone. For over 50 years, Israeli scientists, doctors, engineers, teachers, and irrigation experts have shared their expertise with other nations.

Since its establishment, MASHAV - Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation - has trained close to 270,000 professionals from 132 countries.

One of MASHAV’s programs in Ghana is called Tipat Chalav, which is Hebrew for “drop of milk.” The Tipat Chalav clinics were first developed for mothers and children in Israel and provide free health and medical services for pregnant women, infants and children. They have proven highly effective in reducing child mortality and improving maternal health.

Israel is a powerhouse in medical innovation. The medical discoveries made in Israel are improving the lives of millions of people around the world. We lead the world in medical device patents per capita, and life expectancy in Israel is ranked fourth highest among OECD countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Israel is committed to sharing its expertise in innovation and entrepreneurship to assist people living at the margins of society. We are expanding the field of venture philanthropy - businesses that turn a profit while providing opportunities and skills to disadvantaged populations, from high school dropouts to disabled adults.

One example is the Liliyot restaurant in Tel Aviv. Considered one of the city's best dining spots, patrons get more than a good steak - they get a good investment and a good deed. Funded by the Dualis Social Investment Fund, the restaurant employs at-risk youth and trains them to be chefs.

Dualis also funds a program called 'Abilities Solution' which employs persons with disabilities in Israel's booming high-tech industry. Thanks to programs like this, along with awareness campaigns, progressive public policies and engaged civil society organizations, Israel is empowering persons with disabilities to fully participate in their communities.

We are taking people out of institutions and helping them adjust to living in communities. We are ensuring that persons with disabilities receive a fair wage and decent benefits. And we are providing access to education and training programs that allow persons with disabilities to contribute to society.

Mr. Chairman,

In September, leaders from all over the world will convene in these very halls to adopt the Post-2015 development agenda. As we approach the last leg of this journey, we must ensure our ambitions translate into a truly people-centered agenda. We must deliver on the promise for sustainable development with an agenda that leaves no one behind.

There is an old African proverb that says, "A family is like a forest, when you are outside it is dense, when you are inside you see that each tree has its place." By shining a light on every segment of society, every person will be able to take his rightful place as a valued member of families, our communities, and our nations.

CPD is about respect. It's about respecting every man, woman, and child. Let us recommit to building a world of understanding; a world that provides equal opportunities for every single person; and a world in which every person gets the 'R-E-S-P-E-C-T' he or she deserves.

Thank you.