

**Statement delivered by Nauru on behalf of  
Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa and Solomon Islands**

**Commission on Population and Development  
Forty-eighth session  
13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

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

Madam Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Federated States of Micronesia, Samoa, Solomon Islands and my own country Nauru. At the outset, allow me to offer our congratulations on your assumption to the chairmanship of the Forty-eighth session of the Commission on Population and Development. Let me assure you of our support as you lead our work during this important session.

We welcome the theme of this session, “Realizing the future we want: integrating population issues into sustainable development, including the post-2015 development agenda.” In light of the anticipated adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we find this year’s theme to be fitting.

Madam Chair, we express our continued support for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action of ICPD held in Cairo. We applaud the Programme of Action’s holistic approach toward a very complex and politically sensitive issue.

Over the past two decades some of our countries have achieved significant progress with regard to the objectives of the Programme of Action in the areas of: reducing instances of child mortality, increasing access to quality healthcare services and increasing access to primary education. It is clear, however, that there remains great room for further implementation.

In this respect, the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including the SDGs, is central in our efforts to achieve the ICPD objectives. For small island developing states, it is also important that the SAMOA Pathway is fully implemented.

The SAMOA Pathway adopted last year by the international community is both comprehensive – as it seeks to address the varied and deeply ingrained obstacles to development – and universal – as it represents a global partnership. Most importantly it was crafted to take into consideration the unique and particular vulnerabilities of SIDS. It was a country-driven document that reflects our national priorities and respects our sovereignty.

Too often, we have been presented with short-sighted, and often controversial, solutions to population and development challenges. In particular, it is often said that population-reduction policies are the solution to achieving sustainable development. We recognize that some of our countries are facing development challenges related to population growth, and we affirm holistic approaches to overcoming these challenges. Such approaches include ensuring access to quality education for boys and girls, including age-appropriate education related to family planning, taking measures to strengthen family structures and reduce the number of teenage pregnancies, ensuring access to safe and legal contraceptives, and providing meaningful employment opportunities for women.

A narrow focus on just population-reducing policies misses the reality that human beings are the solution, rather than the impediment, to the achievement of sustainable development. When addressing population in relation to sustainable development, our primary focus must be with empowering and equipping populations with the ideas and resources that will prepare women and men to work with innovation and diligence to increase the quality of life for all people. Specifically, it is imperative for the achievement of sustainable development that emphasis is placed on promoting quality education, healthcare, job opportunities, and healthy environments for all ages and abilities. These priorities are reflected in the SAMOA Pathway.

Focusing only on population-reducing policies also presents difficulties when the preferred options of some are not consistent with nationally determined priorities. Promoting abortion as a preferred method of family planning is contrary to the ICPD. It is also a great departure from long established societal norms in some of our countries, and this dynamic should be respected. Country-driven approaches are more likely to be successful and facilitate progress on a broader range of priorities, as opposed to pushing one above all others. Such steps include; education, access to safe and legal contraceptives, quality pre-and post-natal care and social structures that provide support for single mothers.

Finally, Madam Chair, we would like to touch on the critical importance of the means of implementation and partnerships. In the absence of cooperation and assistance from the international community, and without securing access to finances, trade, capacity building, and technology, our success in achieving sustainable development will remain limited.

We acknowledge the primary responsibility of our States for their own sustainable development. However, we recognize that the persistent development challenges of SIDS require enhanced global partnership and easy access to the means of implementation. So too must the developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development and we encourage our partners to continue to improve their efforts to promote sustained economic growth and to narrow imbalances in a manner that can benefit all countries.

Thank you.