

Pakistan' Statement at the 49th session of CPD
(11-15 April 2016)

Madam Chair,

We would like to congratulate you and your team on election to the Bureau of the 49th CPD.

We welcome the special theme for the 49th Session, which is both timely and relevant. At the dawn of the new development era, there is strong realization in Pakistan that the sustainable development goals cannot be fully achieved without a sound demographic evidence base, necessary to guide policy planning and resource allocation at all levels. Furthermore, data must be timely and reliable and should be disaggregated by income, sex, age, marital status, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and any other criteria relevant in the national context.

The Government of Pakistan is aware of the crucial need to strengthen the demographic evidence base for a comprehensive response at all levels of policy making and development planning. To this end, the Government carried out Economic survey 2014-

2015, Demographic and Health Survey (2012- 2013), and Multiple Indicator Cluster surveys (2014) to generate various data.

As the next vital step in this regard, the present Government has decided to conduct the 6th national census in 2016 and has lined up all requisite resources for this purpose.

Madam Chair,

Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with a total population of around 191 million. Our population is projected to increase to over 227 million by 2025. This population will comprise a much larger proportion of younger people, with nearly 63% of total inhabitants below the age of 30. This youth bulge constitutes a huge potential for a rich demographic dividend, which in turn would depend on sound demographic planning and judicious management of resources.

At the London Summit on Family Planning, Pakistan had committed to four major targets: Framing a national population policy, Achieving universal access to reproductive health, Reducing the unmet need to 5%, and Raising CPR to 50%. In order to realize these targets, the provincial governments have drawn up

detailed roadmaps and prepared 5-year Costed Implementation Plans on family planning. As agreed at the follow-up meeting in Bali, the government of Pakistan has constituted Country Engagement Working Group to oversee the implementation of these roadmaps. With a view to ensuring compliance with international commitments, the Government has adopted a 23 points national priority agenda for implementation at all levels. This agenda inter-alia includes the incorporation of reproductive health and gender equality issues in curricula, as well as the provision of reproductive health education to young people, including awareness on safe and legal birth control techniques.

In order to muster the much needed political and social support for population programmes, the Government held a high level open dialogue with parliamentarians from major political parties, prominent religious scholars, as well as representatives of media houses and civil society organizations. The consensus statement emerging from the conference acknowledged that population planning was a basic pre-requisite for healthy, productive and socioeconomically prosperous citizens, which in turn required supportive government policies and a conducive social

environment. Subsequently, the Government organized a National Population Summit, which endorsed the consensus statement of the conference and produced a National Plan of Action on population issues, besides identifying broad strategic direction for the next five years.

Madam Chair,

As we discuss ways and means to strengthen the demographic evidence base for sustainable development, I would like to take the opportunity of this august forum to convey the following commitments in the context of family planning and population development:

First and foremost, the Government of Pakistan is determined to hold the 6th national census in 2016 to pave the way for targeted implementation of the 2030 agenda.

Second, we are determined to avail new research and employ new techniques to generate high quality data disaggregated by all relevant denominators.

Third, and more importantly, we are committed to better manage our burgeoning population in the context of 2030 agenda

and to meet the basic needs of all our citizens, in particular their access to essential services such as health, education, water and sanitation.

Fourth we are committed to improve maternal and new born health by scaling up family planning in all health interventions, empower women and achieve gender equality.

Last but not the least, the Government is committed to ensure sustained economic growth to generate the required jobs for young people, and to eradicate poverty with special focus on the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of the society.

I thank you Madam Chair.