



SURINAME

**Statement by H.E. Mrs. Kitty Sweeb, Deputy Permanent Representative, at the 49th Session of the Commission on Population and Development –
Item 4: *General debate on national experience in population matters:
Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda, 13 April 2016***

Madame Chair,

At the outset, we congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election, and thank the Secretary General, UNFPA and UN DESA for their important preparatory work.

Suriname aligns itself with the statement of CELAC.

Strengthening the demographic evidence for the 2030 Agenda is critical in realizing the ambitious goals and targets that we set for achieving sustainable development, and for fulfilling our promise to put the primary focus on those that are left behind.

The global review of ICPD, the framework of action for ICPD beyond 2014, the Montevideo Consensus and its operational guide, all emphasize the need for transformation — one that is people centered and all-inclusive.

Suriname's government realizes that progress has been uneven, slow and fragmented, which is also confirmed by our national data. To really get everyone in the national picture, to hear all voices and increase participation in national development, the availability of both quantitative and qualitative data is crucial.

In our Development Plan, we acknowledge the need to strengthen our data systems, and enable the registration and identification of all, in particular those who have not been reached, so far, and who belong to the most vulnerable groups, taking into account principles of confidentiality and privacy.

Key issues identified in the PoA — such as gender inequality, youth unemployment, displacement of migrants and violations of sexual and reproductive health and rights — cannot be fully understood without the collection and analysis of data that will enable identification of population groups that are most impacted by these issues.

We realize that collection of quantitative data through national census, civil registration and other quantitative data systems is not sufficient. Putting people at the center of development, is not only about counting, but also to know about their needs, perceptions and real life experiences. Obtained information should also provide detailed insights in persistent barriers for the development of effective interventions that are adjusted to specific needs and circumstances.

Important gains have been achieved in strengthening the national data collection systems, with the digitalization of databases and the strengthening of surveillance systems in key ministries. These improvements have resulted in increased and expanded availability of reliable national data on health and the educational status of our population, disaggregated by sex, age, geographical area and other relevant variables.

Offices for civil registration have been expanded, to ensure collection of civil registry and vital statistics nationwide, including in remote areas. Although Suriname already has a birth registration of 97%, all efforts are made to achieve full coverage in accordance with CRC. From age 16, everybody has easy access to an identification card, which is widely promoted by the government.

We finalized our 2010 Census round, are preparing our fifth Multiple Indicator Survey, while our annual household survey has just started. Dissemination and open access to

census and other statistical data has been enhanced through websites of the government, non-government institutions and online platforms.

Various studies are conducted on the situation of vulnerable groups, including children and adolescents, women in all their diversity, indigenous populations, migrants, people living with HIV and the elderly. In line with the National Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, several community studies have been conducted to construct baseline databases and enable the monitoring of various SRHR issues.

To support and strengthen the process of decentralization, the Human Development Atlas was developed, which measures the human development and the gender equality index on both the national and the District level. Since 2002, we published 7 editions of 'Selected Gender Statistics'. During the past years, significant capacity was built in the compiling and use of this gender data for policy purposes.

Timely availability of harmonized and integrated data remains a significant **challenge** to formulate and implement policies and strategies that are all-inclusive, equity-focused and gender-sensitive. Not all ministries are sufficiently equipped yet — either in terms of human resource capacity, or equipment and infrastructure — to conduct the data collection needed to measure a comprehensive set of appropriate and nationally agreed indicators for monitoring of national policies and international agreements, including the 2030 Agenda.

On The Way Forward

Strengthening the demographic evidence requires collection of disaggregated data, in different forms and from different sources, such that it ensures reflection of the realities and the needs of diverse population groups. In this way, we will be able to develop policy and programs, and build a future in which everybody is able to unleash their full potential.

Together with our partners, the Government of Suriname will continue strengthening the capacity of national institutions towards the building of data and information sources,

and raise awareness on the use of data for the effective development and implementation of policies and programs.

In closing, we reaffirm our commitment to both the PoA of ICPD and the 2030 Agenda, and the common recognition that development should be human rights based and therefore inclusive of all.

Thank you.