



UAE Statement in the 51st Session of the Commission on Population and Development

Delivered by: Ms. Hessa AlAteibi, 3rd Secretary

Mr. President,

We would like to congratulate you on the chairmanship of the Commission on Population and Development and wish you success.

The UAE values this year's theme and believes our discussions can contribute to a stronger understanding of the intersections between different sectors and UN processes.

We would like to align with the statements of the Group of 77 and China, and the Arab Group, as well as make two additional points in our national capacity.

First, migration and urbanization are critical factors in driving development. The UAE's own development would not have been possible without the tremendous contributions of people from other countries, largely concentrated in our cities. Similarly, these residents have used their time in the UAE to contribute to their home countries' development through skill acquisition, remittances, and entrepreneurship, among other activities. Since independence in 1971, the UAE has peacefully managed a change in its demographic make-up that would be considered unimaginable in many parts of the world.

We accordingly envision that the task of the UN should be to identify the policies and frameworks that countries can use to maximize development benefits for countries of destination, origin, and transit. We are confident that The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration can be a vehicle for realizing the opportunities identified by this Commission.



Second, and with this in mind, we would especially stress the importance of this Commission in supporting national policies and approaches around the issues of long-term urban planning and of tolerance.

The UAE has experienced over 300% population growth in the last 15 years, almost all of it from expatriates who reside in our cities. This has been an engine for social and economic development because our government focused both on the physical and spatial requirements of growth, and on the inclusion of newcomers. Urban authorities in the UAE are required to produce development plans for multiple time horizons, based on stakeholder consultations. They estimate expected population growth, economic growth, and environmental impacts, and then identify the infrastructure requirements – from water to education – to meet these needs. This puts our urban residents in a position to make even greater contributions to national development.

At the same time, our government is deeply committed to diversity. People should feel that they belong to the community and can be proud of who they are and where they come from. Such inclusion is critical to making people productive, happy, and personally invested in their community in the UAE. To that end, we have a cabinet position dedicated to the policy mainstreaming of tolerance, using tools including educational and awareness campaigns to underscore that migration, and good policy underpinning it, is a cause for celebration.

We stand ready to share our experiences and look forward to learning from others during the course of this CPD session.

Thank you ...