



**STATEMENT BY**

**THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE 54<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**NEW YORK**

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**Mr. Chairman**

First and foremost, let me join the previous speakers in congratulating you for assuming the Chairmanship of this 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development and all Members of the Bureau. I wish to assure you of my delegation's cooperation and constructive engagement for the successful conclusion of this session. I also wish to thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive report which will inform and guide our deliberations.

Malawi aligns herself with the statement made by the Republic of Congo on behalf of the African Group.

**Mr. Chairman,**

This year's theme provides an opportunity to highlight the interlinkages between population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development since a growing population exerts pressure on natural resources and compromises food security. This is true for Malawi which has one of the world's highest population growth rates at 3% per year. It's current population size of almost 19 million is expected to double by the year 2060.

Malawi relies on agriculture to sustain both its people and support its economy. Accounting for almost 30% of the GDP and 64% of the country's labour force. Continued increase in population is estimated to reduce our

arable land per capita by 57% by 2050. Thus, the impact of high population growth rate on food security and nutrition cannot be over-emphasized.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Government of Malawi attaches great importance to this year's theme, particularly as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to reverse decades of hard earned socio-economic progress across the global. The pandemic has disrupted public health service delivery, food systems, increased poverty and undermined major nutrition provision such as school feeding programmes. It has heavily impacted women and girls, resulting in an increase of school dropouts, teenage pregnancies and gender-based violence.

Food security, nutrition and adequate public health service delivery are integral to healthy pregnancy, maternal health, and sexual reproductive health that are crucial for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. Ensuring continuity of maternal and neonatal care and continued provision of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) services and information including those related to family planning remains a priority.

With the support of the various partners, including the United Nations Population Fund, the Government of Malawi continues to strive towards achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women and young people. For instance, in 2020, we

provided services to over 385,000 young people; procured and deployed six mobile vans for promotion of access to Youth Friendly Health Services in hard to reach areas; and developed the first ever Comprehensive Sexuality Education digital application for school going children.

All these interventions are in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III and the Malawi Agenda 2063, which recognises population and health as one of the five key priority areas for sustainable and inclusive development.

**Mr Chairman,**

In conclusion let me point out that Malawi remains committed to the goals and objectives set out in the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and other outcomes of the major United Nations Conferences and Summits.

**I thank you for your attention.**