

Date: 19 April 2021

**Delivered by: Minister for Development Cooperation and Minister for
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Joint Nordic Statement

CPD54 pre-recorded

I am proud to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries - Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

The Nordic countries attach great importance to the Commission on Population and Development. It is the only intergovernmental forum tasked to follow-up on the implementation of the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

The ICPD was a landmark moment. We promised women and girls that they would have the right to decide for themselves if, when, with whom, and how many children they wanted.

For the Nordic countries, it remains a transformative agenda. Highly relevant in all corners of the world – no matter the specific country or context.

This year, the CPD focuses on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development. A theme that is essential to the health and well-being of each one of us. The COVID-19 pandemic is putting more people at risk of

hunger and pushing the world even further off track to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by 2030.

Allow me to highlight a few key priorities for the Nordic countries.

First, the achievement of food and nutrition security and sustainable food systems largely depends on today's rural youth.

It is essential that they are empowered. Through increased and equal access to productive resources, including land, capital, technology, markets, entrepreneurship, and education, as well as rural-based youth organizations.

Second, rural areas must be revitalized by creating decent jobs for all. The crucial contribution of rural women to our economies and to food production must be recognized. Women-headed households prioritize the well-being of their families and communities. Yet, women and girls are the most affected by hunger and food insecurity. We need to reverse this reality.

Third, we need to recognize the links between food security, nutrition and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Good nutrition is particularly critical for women during pregnancy and the adolescent years.

When mothers are malnourished, it increases the risk of low birth weight, child and maternal mortality. The cycle of malnutrition between generations is vicious, and must be broken. Ensuring women and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights is essential for reducing these risks.

Fourth, climate change is a key driver of food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition. People in vulnerable situations, especially women and girls, are the most impacted by the effects of climate change. We must build sustainable food systems, resilience and invest in their capacity to adapt to climate change.

In 2019, we marked the 25th anniversary of the ICPD Programme of Action. More than 8,000 people gathered to celebrate progress.

But also to commit to set things right. To finally and fully deliver on the promise, the world gave 25 years ago.

The CPD is key for delivering on that promise. The normative standards that we set here matter in very real ways for the lives of millions of women and girls.

Let's not let them down.

Thank you for your attention.