

It is a pleasure for the Government of the Dominican Republic to participate in this general debate of the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Conference on Population and Development.

The issue that brings us together is of enormous importance for sustained and inclusive growth. We value the presented resolution very positively—the objective of this intervention is to emphasize some elements of the proposed resolution.

As in many other countries, in the Dominican Republic, we expect that the boost to economic growth offered by the so-called demographic bonus will begin to show signs of exhaustion, most likely in this decade.

The implications regarding this issue are threefold.

First, we expect the demand for services in health and social security systems to grow significantly as the population grows older. However, we recognize that these systems are inadequately prepared and funded to meet that growth in demand.

Second, we expect an increase in fiscal stress associated with two effects. First to less growth in public revenue. Second to an increase in the demand for social services. We recognize that the current context is one of fiscal fragility due to the difficulties of reaching a fiscal pact for the sustainability of public accounts and the financing of essential services, especially for the unprotected and vulnerable population.

Third, although there will be less growth in the labor force, immigration could at least partially offset this. However, this population has lower qualifications and productivity, receives lower wages, and often works in precarious and unacceptable conditions. This exacerbates inequity.

On the other hand, the education system, which is called upon to support efforts to increase productivity by strengthening knowledge, skills, and competencies, has proven ineffective in this task.

Finally, demographic changes will probably increase the demand for care services. This work is carried out almost exclusively by women and has been little recognized because women from the same households carry it out, and when it is carried out under contract, it is very often deployed in conditions of precarious work, low levels of protection, and low remuneration. In addition, there is presumably growing participation of migrant women in providing these services, which could be facing adverse working conditions.

COVID-19 highlighted the enormous burden of care work on women and the disadvantageous conditions it is carried out.

Due to the above, at least four challenges we face in the Dominican Republic.

The first is to redouble efforts for a productive transformation that accelerates economic growth, counteracts the partial adverse effects of demographic change, and creates higher-quality jobs, less precarious, more stable, better paid, and more protected. It is necessary to stimulate investment, implement effective development policies and promote education, training, and job skills.

Secondly, to strengthen health and social protection and labor protection systems, supporting them with adequate financing.

Third, expand the tax base and achieve more progressive tax systems that, in addition to making public finances sustainable, mobilize sufficient resources to finance health, protection, and social security.

Finally, recognize and dignify the care work carried out mainly by women and institutionalize the care system to ensure quality services and decent working conditions.