

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT THE 55TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

25 APRIL 2022

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

**Thank you for this opportunity to address the
Commission on Population and Development.**

**Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the issues
under consideration have become even more urgent.**

**COVID-19 has caused more than 6 million deaths
worldwide. Excess mortality figures suggest that millions
more have been killed by the disease or indirectly by its
impacts.**

**The pandemic has kept boys and girls out of school,
increased the burden of care work, especially for women,
and exacerbated gender-based violence.**

**The world is far off track to eliminate hunger and
malnutrition by 2030. Indeed, the numbers of people affected
by hunger are projected to increase by tens of millions, as
the war in Ukraine is causing food and energy prices to
skyrocket.**

In response to the triple emergency of food, energy and finance faced by many developing countries, the Secretary-General created a Global Crisis Response Group to propose innovative solutions.

The Response Group task team released its first brief a week ago. Preliminary analysis indicates that at least 107 developing economies, home to 1.7 billion people, are severely exposed to at least one of the three crises, while sixty-nine countries are severely exposed to all three.

Meanwhile, recent reports by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change show that the world is on a fast track to climate disaster, with governments and corporations failing to deliver on their climate promises.

In the face of this gathering storm of adversity, we must come together as an international community.

The Commission on Population and Development has an important role to play.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

During this session of the Commission on Population and Development, we need to renew our commitment to ensuring that population and macroeconomic policies support sustained and inclusive economic growth, and provide people with opportunities to fulfil their potential.

We urgently need to renew the social contract to rebuild trust and social cohesion. A renewed social contract should enable young people to live in dignity, ensure women have the same prospects and opportunities as men, and protect the sick, the vulnerable, and minorities of all kinds.

Most countries are experiencing progressive population ageing and facing corresponding fiscal pressures. In response, governments need to prioritize investment in the care economy, lifelong learning and decent work, and healthy lifestyles across the age range.

At the same time, we are presented with a unique, global opportunity: the largest youth population in human history. It is paramount that we make use of the population dividend, and that we invest in young people to unlock their full potential. It is for this reason that the Secretary-General will convene the Transforming Education Summit, which will take place this September in New York, to mobilize action,

ambition, solidarity and solutions with a view to transforming education between now and 2030.

We have no choice but to do so while also addressing the climate crisis and rebuilding economies ravaged by the pandemic and armed conflict.

We must continue to uphold the vision and values of the Cairo Programme of Action, embracing the full range of its objectives, including sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development; making education available to all, especially for girls; achieving gender equity and equality; reducing infant, child and maternal mortality; and providing universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning.

I wish you all the best as you review these issues during your deliberations this week.

Thank you.