

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**MS. MARIA-FRANCESCA SPATOLISANO
ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLICY COORDINATION
AND INTER-AGENCY AFFAIRS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

**REMARKS FOR THE CLOSING OF THE 56TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

14 APRIL 2023

Your Excellency Ambassador Gheorghe Leucă, Chair of the 56th session of the Commission on Population and Development,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

I am delivering the following remarks on behalf of Mr. LI Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, who unfortunately is unable to join us here today.

First, allow me to thank the Chair of the 56th session, Ambassador Leucă of the Republic of Moldova. Mr. Chair, we commend you for your exemplary leadership throughout the session, and for your tireless efforts to build consensus. Allow me also to thank you and the four vice-Chairs for the excellent collaboration with the Bureau over the past year.

While the absence of a consensus outcome on this year's special theme is regrettable, the session has been rich in content and substantively engaging, with many insightful presentations and frank and thoughtful discussions.

Throughout the week, we heard from experts, Member States, and civil society representatives about the crucial importance of education for all three components of population dynamics, namely fertility, mortality and migration. We also learned about how the demographic transition from high to low levels of fertility and population growth has facilitated investments in human capital across the life course, which is central to the full, accelerated and effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The multi-stakeholder panel on Tuesday morning helped identify complementarities with other functional commissions of ECOSOC, as well as contributions that the Commission can make to the discussions of the main theme of the 2023 ECOSOC and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), “Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”.

We will reflect on the lessons learned from this year’s session to prepare for next year, when the Commission will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Programme of Action of the ICPD and will assess its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to sincerely thank our UN system partners for their substantive contributions to this session, including UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF, IOM and the United Nations Regional Commissions, that contributed through their participation in this week’s session or in the preparatory expert group meeting held in September of last year.

The expert advice and hard work of our colleagues from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, on procedural matters, the preparation of documents, the organization of virtual and in-person participation of speakers in the plenary meetings and interpretation, allowed us to smoothly run the meetings this week.

I would like to express our gratitude to our close collaborator and ally, Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, and her team for their collaboration in the preparations of the annual session.

In closing, let me again thank the Chair, the other member of the Bureau, and the Commission as a whole for their tireless efforts and continued commitment to fully implementing the ICPD Programme of Action, accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and beyond.

Thank you.
