

Mr. Chair

Excellencies

Distinguished speakers and guests

I would like to start by thanking you, Mr. Chair, for inviting me to participate in the commemoration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ICPD as a youth representative. I would also like to thank Dr. Kanem and her colleagues at UNFPA for their unwavering support for young people.

Much has been achieved since the Program of Action was originally adopted by 179 member states in 1994 and that is a reason for celebration.

\*Clap\*

And while we celebrate the achievements of the past 30 years, we know there is still work to be done. Since the Program of Action was

drafted and adopted, the world has changed and continues to do so.

Despite the many challenges we are currently facing, ranging from conflict to climate change and an increase in poverty since COVID, I am here to bring you good news.

The good news is that we have all the pieces of the puzzle within reach - including creativity, knowledge, innovation, and technology - to build a better world. The question now is to figure out how best we assemble these puzzle pieces and how do we create an inclusive and enabling environment for the assembly process.

Last month, over 300 young people from 130 countries participated in the ICPD30 Global

Youth Dialogue with the theme: “A new generation’s vision for the future.”

From this dialogue, 5 priority areas emerged, reflecting youth’s collective desire and urgency for change.

These priority areas are:

1. My Body, my life: Sexual & reproductive health and rights, and well-being.
2. Protecting human rights & advancing gender equality for youth in all their diversities.
3. Transforming education, transforming lives: expanding opportunities for young people.
4. Adapting, thriving and inspiring: crafting resilient futures in a world in crisis.
5. Rising Voices: The power of 1.9 billion (that number is in reference to the size of the world’s youth population today).

For each priority area there are specific recommendations and calls to action. In the interest of time, I will not read each of them.

However, I encourage you to get a copy from UNFPA, read them and hope you will honor the request made by a fellow youth representative from the Philippines to “carry them forward in your heart and mind” as you prepare for the Summit of the Future in September.

Please know there is an army of young people both within the UN network - and beyond - that is ready to work in partnership to further the ICPD Program of Action, which - as we know - is crucial for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I have had the honor to work alongside Malala Yousafzai, youngest Nobel Laureate and UN Messenger for Peace and have seen firsthand the tremendous impact one young person can have on the world. Since standing up to the Taliban for her right to an education, Malala has created an organization that empowers Education Champions around the world to challenge the policies and practices that prevent girls from going to school in their communities.

By investing in their work and professional development, and by connecting local Education Champions on a national, regional, and global level, Malala's organization, the Malala Fund, is fueling broader change that makes it easier for all girls to learn and choose their future.

Let us use this model, powered by technology, as one that will allow us to reach even the most remote corners of the world so that every young person can exercise their full rights and agency when it comes to their body and mind.

I am confident that if you place your trust in young people and that if we work together, we can build a resilient, equitable, peaceful, and environmentally sustainable world for all.

Thank you!