



Draft Statement of the National Delegation of the Republic of Albania at the 57th Session of the Commission on Population and Development

Distinguished Chair Your Excellency Ms. Noemí Espinoza Madrid,

[Ambassador (Honduras) and Chair of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD),]

Your Excellencies,

Dear esteemed Delegates of the Commission on Population and Development,

It is both an honour and a privilege to stand before you today and represent the Albanian Delegation, as we delve on one of the most pressing issues of our time: the intersection of population dynamics and sustainable development.

As representatives of nations united under the auspices of the United Nations, we are tasked with navigating the complex terrain of population growth, demographic shifts, and their profound implications for global progress. The challenges we face are multifaceted, requiring innovative solutions and unwavering commitment to the principles of equity, human rights, and sustainability. As we gather here to discuss the progress and challenges faced by our populations and our strive for inclusive development within our countries and through our shared international actions, I believe it is important to underline, in such times of global unrests and crises in values, that my country's commitment and alignment to the ICPD's principles, is unwavering, and Albania's development over the past decades is the living example of such approach.

Speaking of concrete progress, I am happy to inform the esteemed delegates in this session that Albania has achieved most of its commitments to the Nairobi ICPD25's. The National Youth Strategy, co-authored with youth and civil society, has as a pillar the promotion of active, healthy, physical, social, and mental wellbeing among young people, and it provides a clear and well defined action plan for accomplishing this goal in the following years. Each day we strive for the successful implementation of the strategy, which requires the commitment, contribution and partnership among state institutions, networks and youth representation structures, civil society, and young people themselves. The NYS, the first in Albania, was created thanks to a crucial contribution and support provided by UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP.

On a strategic level, Albania has a strong legal basis, promoting equity, inclusiveness, access to services and a strong focus on digitalization and green agenda highlighted in the National Strategy



for Development and Integration. To name but a few: National Youth Strategy, National Strategies for Health, Agenda for Children, National Youth Strategy, Strategy for Social Care, Social Inclusion, Education, Gender Equality, National Action Plans for Sexual and Reproductive Health, Older Persons and many more. These documents present policy objectives and actions to make significant progress by 2030 towards Young and Old, People with Disabilities, Key Population in all the spheres of public, social and economic life. Albania has made significant amendments to its Gender-Based Violence (GBV) law, providing greater protection for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups within its territory and the National Sex Offender Registry Act was passed on July 2022 after a unanimous vote.

Throughout these years, our comprehensive education curriculum has been successfully integrated into the education system, addressing sexual health, reproduction, substance abuse, and fosters holistic well-being.

While the median age in Albania has increased from 33 in 2011 to 38, and from high fertility rates to lower ones like the rest of Western Balkans, Europe and the world, we are committed to make and build a better life for our people where their universal human rights are ensured and no one is left behind. In response to anxieties about demographic changes, we are looking into solutions that are long-term, sustainable and support acceleration of women's rights to reproductive decision-making and bodily autonomy. This in the case of Albania has meant investment to provide universal access to quality reproductive health services, including contraception and infertility services, and actions to address the many other issues that determine choices about child bearing. Examples include paid leave, providing child benefit as a universal policy, flexible working hours. Additionally, we must redouble our efforts to promote universal access to quality healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services, as a fundamental human right. By investing in family planning programs and comprehensive sexuality education, we can empower individuals to make informed decisions about their reproductive lives, thereby reducing unintended pregnancies, maternal mortality, and the spread of sexually transmitted infections. Through targeted policies and incentives, we can promote more sustainable lifestyles and economic models that prioritize the well-being of both people and the planet.

In the end, I want to relish once again this great opportunity for sharing our experiences and discussing our common challenges today, because as the past years have shown us that progress is possible when we work together with dedication for a shared vision, to build a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable world for all us. As we embark on this crucial journey together, let us rise to the challenge of our time by ensuring that children and youth inherit a world of peace, prosperity, and dignity for all.



Thank you.