

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Rokeya Sultana, M.P., Hon'ble State Minister for
Health and Family Welfare, Bangladesh at the 57th Session of the Commission
on Population and Development (CPD57), New York,
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Madam Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates

We welcome the adoption of the Political Declaration on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of ICPD programme of Action.

We believe, implementation of ICPD programme of action is essential for achieving sustainable development goals. To reinforce this message on the occasion of ICPD-30, we are hosting the global dialogue on demographic diversity and sustainable development in Dhaka from 15-16 May.

Madame Chair

The Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman dreamt of a society where all people will enjoy a healthy and prosperous life. This is why the constitution made medical care and public health improvement as the primary duties of the State.

The Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has been working relentlessly to fulfill this duty. And we consider ICPD programme of Action as an important accelerator for that. Our national development policies and strategies have been aligned with the ICPD framework.

Allow me to share some good examples:

- To implement ICPD PoA, we adopted a Population Policy in 2012.
- We have taken initiatives to increase number of midwives, skilled birth attendants, nurses and doctors, so that no woman gives birth without medical help. By 2030, we aim to reduce the maternal mortality rate from 136 to 70 per 100,000 live births.
- We have adopted National Adolescent Health Strategy for 2017-2030 and implementing a National Plan of Action for the Strategy. We have taken an initiative to provide free sanitary napkins to 5 million girls from 6th to 12th grade.
- We have ensured accessible and affordable safe, modern contraceptives for all. Unmet needs for family planning stand at 10 percent only.
- Our labor laws mandate childcare facilities and healthcare services in all ready-made garments factories, where female workers make up 60-70% of the workforce.
- Legal and policy measures have been taken to prevent child marriage and end sexual and gender-based violence.
- 14,000 community health clinics, known as Sheikh Hasina initiative provide maternal, neonatal and other primary health care at the grassroot people.
- To reach every mother and child of our country we have established 5500 Union-level health and family welfare centers. To provide 24/7 services, we are planning to deploy 4 midwives in each of those centers.

- Health education has been prioritized. Currently we have 5 medical universities, 104 medical colleges, 451 nursing institutes, among others.
- We have established a quality health management information system under the leadership of Ministry of Health and family and Family Welfare.
- Awareness raising on sexual and reproductive issues are provided at all levels, including by courtyard meetings, 30,000 satellite clinics and involvement of community leaders and civil society partners.

Madam Chair

While we rejoice our achievements, we are also concerned with existing and new challenges. We need greater international collaboration and solidarity to tackle this.

Allow me to share some thoughts:

First, We need effective and meaningful partnerships with all stakeholders at national and global level and involve civil society, private sector and international community to realize the objectives of ICPD PoA.

Second, building resilient health systems that can deliver high-quality, equitable services to all. We need support in research, training, data management and use of technology and innovation in improving healthcare infrastructure.

Third, Youth empowerment and their meaningful participation in decision-making processes must be ensured across reproductive health, education, and skills development, and overall development policies at all levels.

Finally, we must promote **South-South** and Triangular Cooperation to accelerate the progress on achieving ICPD and SDGs in developing countries.

Madam Chair

Ahead of this year's Summit of the Future, Bangladesh remains committed to empowering people and preparing them to face the challenge of the future. Our Vision 2041 and the Smart Bangladesh campaign of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina are meant to guide us towards that goal.

I thank you.

Joi Bangla Joi Bangabandhu