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**STATEMENT BY MS. MANDKHAI BATSUREN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL,
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Agenda item 3. General Debate

Madame Chair,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by extending warm congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election.

Mongolia finds this year's theme on "Assessing the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" very important and timely.

We have no doubt that under your able leadership, the 57th session will have fruitful deliberations on actions for the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action at the global, regional, and national levels.

Madame Chair,

During the three decades since the ICPD, held in Cairo in 1994, the world's population has grown by nearly 2.5 billion and among them Asia is the most populous region with 4.7 billion people making 60 percent of the global population.

The rapid population growth brings both opportunities and challenges for countries. It is challenging especially for developing countries with persistent high levels of fertility due to continuing and emerging needs to build and invest in health, education, decent employment, and other socio-economic structures leading to sustainable development. Those challenges have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and digital transformations.

In this regard, Mongolia actively participated in the historic conference dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the first Asian Population Conference and 10th anniversary of the adoption of the 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development that took place 15-17 November 2023 in Bangkok.

At the Seventh Asia Pacific Population Development Conference, despite significant socioeconomic progress in the region, we agreed to work together to overcome emerging challenges, including shrinking workforces, population ageing,

environmental degradation, increased immigration, persistent inequalities, ageism, and governance problems.

Madame Chair,

In the three decades of the implementation of the ICPD, the Government of Mongolia has made a substantial progress through implementation of the National Policy on Population Development, as well as the National Program on Reproductive Health.

Since 2000s, Mongolia's population has been growing constantly by 1-2 percent with the average age of 27.5 years, and about 59 percent of Mongolians are under age 30 while over a quarter of that population is under age of 14. The population is also becoming more educated and urbanized with nearly half of people living in the capital or other provincial centers and settlements.

The most recent Mongolia's long-term development policy "Vision 2050" supports sustainable population growth and fosters active and creative citizens and families. The policy has been implemented through a family-friendly policy, promotion of sustainable population growth and human development and establishment of an evidence-based, family-friendly, efficient social security policy which reaches citizens in the form of social insurance and social welfare.

Madame Chair,

On the other hand, we are not exception to multifaceted challenges and transitions in population and development across regions and worldwide. For instance, the relatively young and growing population has placed both opportunities and challenges on Mongolia's economy.

According to the second Voluntary National Review of Mongolia presented to the United Nations in July 2023, the most backward households and the population include people with disabilities, children, young adults, the elderly, internal migrants, homeless vagrants, rural households, households with a low standard of living (the lowest 40 percent), and men with low education. In Mongolia, basic social services are not equally available to households and the population, and development opportunities are uneven mostly due remoteness, location, education, and the living standards of households and the population.

Thus, Mongolia is working to implement policies aimed at reducing regional social development disparities, poverty, and inequality at the regional and local levels, promoting the rational distribution of labor resources, and protecting rural communities, vulnerable social groups, and key economic sectors from the impacts of climate change.

Madame Chair,

The Government of Mongolia has been closely cooperating with UN agencies, particularly with UNFPA, on advancing our social development goals.

The UNFPA Country Programme Document on Mongolia for the period 2023-2027 is well aligned with Mongolia's Vision 2050 and the Government of Mongolia's

10-year development plan “New Recovery Policy”, as well as the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mongolia, 2023-2027. We are pleased that the new CPD seeks to support national efforts to accelerate the achievement of SDGs, in particular youth development as well as maternal and child health.

Madame Chair,

We believe that population development is the driving force of any development.

Hence, we would like to reiterate our government’s strong commitment to achieve unfinished agenda of the ICPD as well as Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and cooperate with bilateral and multilateral partners, civil society, and other stakeholders toward these goals.

Thank you.