



*Permanent Mission
of Barbados to
the United Nations*



Statement delivered by

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Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Investment**

at the

**58th Session of the Commission on Population and Development
at the United Nations Headquarters, New York**

April 7- 11, 2025

United Nations Headquarters

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Excellencies

It is my pleasure on behalf of the Government of Barbados, to join with you at this 58th Session of the Commission on Population and Development.

This forum provides us with an excellent opportunity, to take stock of the progress in the attainment of favorable health and welfare outcomes for all, as outlined within the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; and as one of the critical goals which underpins the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

Substantial progress has been made in efforts to ensure universal coverage and access to quality preventative and curative care and services.

For Barbados:

- Maternal health rates have shown significant improvement, with 100% coverage on births attended by skilled staff.
- One out of four children (0- 5 months) in Barbados are exclusively breastfed.

- The adolescent fertility rate has decreased from 33.5 in 2017 to 26.29 in 2020; and
- Barbados boasts of a consistent childhood immunization and vaccination programme.

However:

- The high incidences of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), remain a concern. NCDs are the leading cause of death in Barbados.
- Over 100% increase in the number of persons seeking out mental health services. In context of the above, Barbados looks forward to significant outcomes from the 4th High level meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs and the Promotion of Mental Health and Wellbeing slated for September 2025.
- Additionally, Barbados, like many other territories is experiencing declining population growth and fertility rates.

Barbados continues to pursue a number of strategic interventions which encourage favorable healthcare outcomes for all segments of society. For example:

- **The Barbados Population Policy,**
- **The National Strategic Plan for NCDs,**
- Additionally, a **National Cancer Control Plan (NCCP)** has

been developed.

Barbados recognizes that efforts to implement the SDGs in several countries have been eroded, with the occurrence of the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic exposed the fragility of our healthcare systems and international cooperation to address the emerging challenges and deal with global health issues.

Particularly in Middle Income countries, human development is at risk of further degradation, if urgent solutions are not identified to address the current population trends and adverse healthcare outcomes. These countries, such as Barbados face barriers of access to affordable financing to address these concerns.

Consequently, the Government of Barbados calls on the global community:

- To Promote investment and partnerships at national and global levels in health infrastructure, which also give recognition to the unique vulnerabilities and fiscal constraints of small island developing states.
- As well as, to focus on the development conducive financing mechanisms in accordance with Bridgetown initiative.

Furthermore, these interventions should be targeted towards the fortification of our health care systems to adequately respond to the next pandemic.