

STATEMENT

By Ms. Krassimira Beshkova,

Chargé d’Affaires, a.i., Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations

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Thank you, Madam Chair!

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and the cross-regional statement on behalf of group of countries and I would like to make few points in my national capacity.

In the interest of time the full version of this Statement will be submitted in written form.

Bulgaria confirms today its unwavering commitment to the joint efforts for Peace and Sustainable development in a period of multiple crisis. We call for united efforts to accelerate the full implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the ICPD PoA which put the human rights of all at the very heart of development. We recognize the transformative effect and lasting impact the ICPD PoA has had on human life for already 30 years and its continued relevance today.

Madame Chair,

We are witnessing unprecedented demographic shift. Populations are becoming more diverse than ever before. This presents both challenges and opportunities. To be able to overcome the challenges and embrace the opportunities we must recognize that demographic diversity can and does bring positive outcomes for the development of the societies. Every individual must be empowered to have full control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion and violence.

Bulgaria welcomes the Secretary-General’s report on the special theme this year and the recommendations contained therein.

Health is essential for sustainable social and economic development and to enable everyone to exercise their rights thus fulfilling their potential. Enjoying the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being across their life cycle.

We must prioritize investments in key areas such as health. It is important to expand access to comprehensive reproductive health services, including family planning and safe childbirth; to ensure the well-being of mothers and children; to champion sexual and reproductive health and rights; to foster informed decision-making and to promote gender equality; to reduce maternal mortality rates through improved healthcare systems and awareness campaigns. While delivering on those needs, we also need to make sure that privacy and data confidentiality are protected and measures to counter misinformation and disinformation are in place.

Nationally, Bulgaria is ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of life, including in the five priority areas embedded in the National gender equality strategy (2021-2030): *promoting gender equality in the labour market and equal economic independence; reducing gender pay and income disparities; promoting gender equality in decision-making processes; combating violence and protection and support of victims; and overcoming gender stereotypes and sexism.*

In conclusion, Madame Chair, let me emphasise how crucial the mandate of the UNFPA is to end preventable maternal deaths, unmet needs for family planning, gender based violence and harmful practices. Bulgaria will continue to partner with the UNFPA to advance the full implementation of the ICPD PoA and to deliver transformative results in both development and humanitarian settings.