

CPD58 – Closing remarks CPD Chair

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Ms. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, from UNFPA

Mr. Bjørg Sandkjaer, Assistant Secretary-General for
Policy and Coordination, from UNDESA

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

It has been an absolute honour for the Kingdom of the Netherlands to serve as the Chair of the 58th Session of the Commission on Population and Development on the important theme of “Ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages”.

Let me start by thanking my fellow-bureau Members, who have shown staunch commitment throughout to make the CPD forum a success:

- Galina Nipomici, Moldova
- Stefany Remoreo Veiga, Uruguay
- Norma Abi Karam, Lebanon
- Josélyne Kwishaka, Burundi

Also a particular thanks to the co-facilitators, Norma and Jessica from Lebanon and Colombia. You went above and beyond to accommodate all the delegations in the room. And despite the limitations of the liquidity crisis, you have managed to lead a constructive and inclusive process. I have only received positive feedback from participating delegates.

The same goes for Stefany from Uruguay, who did a stellar job of getting consensus on the theme, despite the unexpected challenges that came her way [a round of applause please for these fantastic women!]

Thank you as well to the colleagues from the Secretariat of the UNDESA Population Division, and to the UNFPA colleagues for their critical support.

Dear delegates, it has been heartwarming to get to know you. It has been a joy for me to lead this process and to learn so much along the way. I have seen how you have pushed for maximum flexibility from your capitals and built coalitions across regions. In my bilateral exchanges with you, I could truly feel an overwhelming sense of commitment to this forum and

dedication to work towards a consensus outcome document.

It is a big achievement for the CPD process that the atmosphere has been constructive throughout – I think you can all congratulate yourselves for that.

After the intense and at times exhausting process that the CPD has been, let's take a moment to zoom out and reflect upon what this forum is truly about. The topic of health is critical to all of us, and part of our daily lives. And as the 2030 deadline is approaching rapidly, the urgency to act as United Nations is becoming more and more apparent.

We still have a long road to travel to truly achieve "healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages". Participating in this forum and listening to the voices of civil society, health workers, women and youth really made it clear to me who we are fighting for: women and girls, often living in rural areas, sometimes in dangerous conflict settings, lacking access to basic health-care services, not having the basic necessities to live a life of dignity.

Your political support to this cause and this forum has been very visible this year, with a record number (116) of Member States speaking in the General Debate – including about 60 high-level speakers – and more than 30 side events. This shows that the ICPD Programme of Action and the CPD forum is very much alive and kicking. Countless examples of positive steps that have been made to implement the ICPD Programme of Action featured in the vibrant panel discussions. We should celebrate and cherish them, and not take them for granted.

Colleagues, when it is increasingly challenging to find agreement, it is even the more important to continue the dialogue. Listening to each other, including to views that are different from your own, without judgement. We can learn from each other's successes and challenges – they will inspire us to do better. The CPD forum offers a house to do so – under the roof of the United Nations in New York.

This year's theme reminded us of something important: we need to act together across generations. Younger and older generations are not opposites. While

their health needs may differ – they have the same rights. And they should be allies, while taking into account the generations of the future. As the impressive youth representatives in this forum have shown: they stand ready to take the ICPD Programme of Action forward and to champion it in their countries.

Let's be inspired by them. It is my sincere wish that you will continue to show the leadership that you have shown in this process to carry the ICPD agenda forward, in your own families, countries, regions and upcoming UN fora.

I thank you.