

AUSTRIA



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development

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Statement by
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Commission.

Austria fully endorses the statement made yesterday by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. We seize this occasion to add some national experiences on the topic.

As we reaffirm the comprehensive implementation of the entire agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development, the ICPD +5 and the MDGs, we would like to highlight Austrian policies with regard to this year's topic as well as Austrian efforts in this regard within the framework of the Austrian Development Cooperation. The basis for all our population policies is of course consistency with human rights, including with the rights of women.

As described in the reports of the Secretary General, urbanization can bring about many positive aspects, including facilitating social change and a better access to a variety of services such as education, health and transportation. However, rapid urbanization still poses challenges, to which we have to respond. We therefore welcome the thorough study of the subject in UNFPA's State of World Population Report, which highlights misconceptions about causes for urban poverty.

Mr. Chairman,

With the aim of overcoming those challenges the Austrian Development Cooperation supports the work of UN Habitat. Regarding our bilateral cooperation we focus on water and sanitation as well as on decentralization which are important aspects to deal with in this context. In this respect, we also value UNCDF's important work in local development programmes, which support national decentralization efforts in LDCs.

Urbanization also poses challenges in industrialized countries. Let me just name a few: long-term care for the elderly, reconciliation of family and work, access to health services as well as assuring reproductive and sexual health and rights. As urbanization undoubtedly puts also a burden on our environment, change in patterns of production and consumption has to be fostered. Austria also puts emphasis on gender mainstreaming in residential building, safety in public spaces and gender-sensitive transport planning. We are very happy to share our experience and highly welcome this opportunity to learn about experiences in other Member States.

Thank you