



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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**STATEMENT BY H:E. RODRIGO MALMIERCA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS.**

**41ST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT.
ITEMS 3 AND 4: MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT,
GENERAL DEBATE ON THE NATIONAL EXPERIENCES ON POPULATION:
DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, URBANIZATION, INTERNAL MIGRATION AND
DEVELOPMENT.**

NEW YORK, 8 APRIL 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the Cuban delegation, to commend you for your election to lead the works of this Commission, since this is the first time we speak at the general debate of agenda items 3 and 4, on the measures to carry out the recommendations of the International Conference on Population and Development and the national experiences on population: distribution of population, urbanization, internal migration and development.

My delegation would further like to endorse the statement made by the distinguished permanent representative of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the issues we are addressing, I would like to contextualize with some information. Currently, the Cuban population has grown to 11 million 237 thousand inhabitants, which are demographic variables similar to those of developed countries.

The country's population is decreasing. Its fertility rate has been below replacement level for 30 years now, and it was of 1.4 children per woman in 2007. That same year, mortality continued its tendency to decline. Life expectancy at birth is over 77 years, child mortality rate was barely 5.3 for every 1000 live births and under-five mortality rate was 7 for every 1000 live births. The maternal mortality rate reached 31 for every 1000 live births.

The abovementioned rates are achieved in a prioritized context of interrelations between population and development, whereupon the basic dimensions of the latter, such as the education, healthcare, sexual and reproductive health, employment, social security and assistance, *inter alia*, have had a decisive impact.

The same impacts are recorded in internal migratory movements, spatial distribution and urbanization. It is worth mentioning that the volume of internal migrations has

declined, which is in accordance with the recommendation of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994, on the advisability that the governments adopt sustainable development strategies at the regional level of rural areas and small and medium-size cities.

In the first half of the 1990s, the volume of internal migrants ranged between 170 and 190 thousand persons per year. There was a decline later, a trend that continues today and which in 2007 reached its lowest level, with around 66 thousand internal migrants. The capital's population is decreasing and the relative incidence of its population in the total number of inhabitants of the country has decreased compared to previous decades.

Moreover, small and middle-size cities continue to grow, although the country's urbanization level is not growing, while the rural population is, which has a larger natural growth.

However, there are some unwanted internal migration trends, towards areas requiring less labour force and not towards those which do require it, specifically farming areas.

Overcoming these trends requires the organization and conciliation of social needs and individual decisions, which has been done and should continue to occur.

Lastly Mr. Chairman, allow me to make a comment on the main population challenge facing my country: aging.

The over-sixty population group reaches 16.6% of the total population of the country. This trend is most marked in rural areas and it demands special attention because of its significance, along with recovering the country's demographic trends, which is strategic for our development's sustainability.

Cuba will continue to uphold the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its follow-up processes.

Thank you very much