



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY H. E. CLAUDIA PEÑA, MINISTER OF AUTONOMIES OF THE
PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA, AT THE FORTY-
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION
AND DEVELOPMENT (New York, April 7, 2014)**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China takes this opportunity to record its emphatic support to the principles, goals and objectives set out in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, as well as in other outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. The Group again highlights that the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014 is crucial for the eradication of poverty as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; in this regard, the Group urges that population issues must continue to be addressed in a comprehensive manner, as an integral part of the economic, social and cultural development, as outlined in the ICPD Programme of Action and placed more securely into the discussion of the post-2015 development agenda. The Group also underlines that sustainable development requires that the interrelationships between population, resources, the environment and development be fully recognized and properly managed and brought into harmonious, dynamic balance.

Mr. President,

Twenty years ago, the world came together at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo and agreed by consensus on a 20-year Programme of Action that integrated a comprehensive range of population, social, development and human rights issues, necessary for ensuring that each person lives a healthy and dignified life. On the occasion, 179 states agreed to make a collective effort to achieve, among others, universal access to education, to reduce infant child and maternal mortality. Notwithstanding that the conference had a positive impact on poverty eradication and economic development, considerable challenges and gaps still remain, including those that are a result of the systemic, economic and financial crisis, that have to be addressed in order to attain the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) along with the path to attaining the own Conference's goals. This is why today's meeting is an important and timely event in order to recommit ourselves to the attainments of the objectives embodied in ICPD.

While some regions in the developing countries witnessed a substantial decline in maternal death, others made little improvement, and women in these regions face the greatest lifetime risk of dying as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. The number of people newly infected with HIV peaked in some regions in 1996 and has declined worldwide. Unfortunately, in some areas in the least developed countries, the number of HIV prevalence has almost doubled since 2001 and two-thirds of those living with HIV in certain other areas are women.

A fully functional, efficient and quality health system with universal coverage is essential for the realization of the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014 and the MDG health-related goals. Many countries have health care systems, which are deficient in infrastructure and human resources. We believe that the achievement of the MDG 8 regarding a global partnership for development is crucial for those countries to improve and strengthen the capacity of their health systems to ensure the availability, accessibility and quality of services, with the support of the international community. What we need is a real and strong will to enhance adequate financing and effective delivery to the agreed principles, as well as streamlining and harmonizing aid operations.

Greater access to education for young girls in developing countries has a strong correlation with a reduction of the number of teenage and unwanted pregnancies. Priority attention must be given to the problems faced by the young people, such as unemployment, their access to affordable quality education and a quality health system. Increasing literacy and computing skills among women has shown to be effective in improving individual household finances, creating innovative and creative entrepreneurial activities. In the same light, attention needs to be paid to the elderly, ethnic minorities, migrants and people with disabilities. Their inclusion in society needs to be assured through the provision of social protection instruments.

The Group of 77 and China calls upon the international community to give priority attention to the plight of people living under foreign occupation, forced displacement and armed conflict and put an end to their suffering, including by removing obstacles facing the development of their health system, by ensuring protection of their human rights, access to health care and services, education and development and by enhancing technical and financial assistance; in particular for the people of the occupied State of Palestine, who continue to be victims of forced displacement, home demolitions and land confiscations for the construction of illegal settlements and the annexation Wall.

The Group further reaffirms the call for the elimination of laws with political objectives that discriminate against migrants due to their nationality and stimulate the trafficking of persons, unsafe and unregulated migration causing the loss of people's lives.

Therefore, at the twentieth anniversary of the ICPD, it is vital for the United Nations Member and Observer States to recognize gaps and challenges, to consolidate lessons learned, and to reaffirm their commitments, along with redoubling their efforts, while

sustaining the achievements and increasing resources to accelerate progress towards the fulfillment of the Programme of Action and the MDGs. The Group emphasizes the importance that donors, United Nations organizations, and other international organizations must work together to enhance financial and technical support to developing countries, including in the field of capacity building towards achievement of ICPD principles and goals.

Finally, Mr. President, the Group of 77 and China wants to express its concern on the fact that the two facilitators appointed by you for the consultations on the drafts, belong to the north, which challenges the long established practice of having balance in this appointments. Even though we fully acknowledge the explanation given by you, the group's concern remains on the fact that the decision could be considered by some member states as a precedent for the future. Therefore, the Group would like clearly to stress that this arrangement constitutes a unique situation and therefore is not a precedent. Such understanding must be clearly reflected in the report of this session.

I thank you, Mr. President.