



## **CANZ and Australia statement 58th Commission on Population and Development**

7 April 2025

**Remarks by H.E. James Larsen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative,  
Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations**

Chair, colleagues,

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of Canada, New Zealand, and my own country, Australia.

CANZ recognises the important role of this Commission in tracking country, regional and global progress on the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

We take this opportunity to thank the Chair, and the team of co-facilitators, for working tirelessly to find a way forward for this year's theme "Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages".

CANZ continues to constructively engage in the Commission, and we call on all delegations to renew their commitment to dialogue at the Commission of Population and Development.



Every human being has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and we must continue to recognise this fact across a range of demographic situations and prospects.

CANZ therefore strongly supports the efforts of the United Nations, governments, and civil society in advancing the Programme of Action, human rights, and gender equality for strengthened global health policy and programming.

Let me now briefly take the floor to speak in my own national capacity for Australia.

The Australian Government has called a national election for 3 May. As such, the government is currently operating under caretaker conventions.

Australia is committed to advancing the full and effective implementation of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, since its adoption in 1994. We underscore the importance of the universal realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights.



The realisation of these rights – to make informed decisions regarding one’s own health and to access quality, comprehensive services, information and education – saves lives and sits at the heart of human rights, equality and justice.

It also helps enable all people, particularly women and girls, to participate equally in economic and social activity, and helps propel inclusive development and prosperity.

UNFPA estimates that allocating an additional \$79 billion by 2030 to expand maternal health and family planning services could yield \$660 billion in economic benefits by 2050—preventing 400 million unplanned pregnancies, one million maternal deaths, six million stillbirths, and four million newborn deaths, while also enhancing workforce participation and economic productivity.

Domestically, Australia is focussed on universal, accessible health, including a focus on sexual and reproductive health and reaching those most left behind.

There must be no going back. Recognition, across the world, of the extraordinary and transformative contributions made by improved health, including sexual and reproductive health, will ensure progress continues.



Since 1994 the global commitment to improving health, particularly sexual and reproductive health has reduced global maternal mortality rates by nearly 40 per cent, lowered adolescent birth rates by more than 40 per cent and nearly halved the number of infant deaths in the first month of life.

Collectively, we have made important strides but must renew our commitment to reach the SDG targets on health and gender equality.

We hope that in 2026, members of the Commission can come together to reach a positive outcome and to build the momentum and commitment required to make the SDGs a reality.

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