



**Permanent Mission of
The Republic of Angola to the United Nations**

STATEMENT BY

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THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF THE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
COMMUNITY (SADC)**

**AT THE FORTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) namely; Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe and my own country Angola.

SADC aligns itself with the statement of the African Group.

Allow me first to congratulate you and your bureau for the election as Chair and Bureau members of the 45th session of the Commission on Population and Development and SADC Group wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation towards a successful conclusion of this important gathering.

Mr. Chairperson,

The issues under discussion at this meeting illustrate the international community's concern with the challenges faced by youth, and require our special and critical attention to ensure the sustainable wellbeing of adolescents and youth. We therefore believe that this meeting will afford us the opportunity to discuss ways of addressing these challenges.

Youth development issues are a top priority for the SADC region. To this end, national youth policies, legislation and programmes exist at different levels to promote youth development in general.

Our common efforts have allowed us to achieve some important and laudable progress. SADC has adopted common plans and actions for the Region that will help accelerate the delivery of basic services and needs for children and youth such as the provision of safe drinking water, health care, education and skills that enable youth to create jobs for themselves as well as the provision of housing and family care.

With the realisation that challenges facing children and youth are common across the region, and therefore could not be addressed by individual countries working alone, regional activities were approved for implementation by SADC member states for the 2012-2014 period.

As part of the African Union, SADC Member States continue to commit ourselves to 2009 -2019 Decade for Youth Empowerment and Sustainable Development that was declared by the African Union. At the SADC level, a programme has been established to commonly address the growing challenges of vulnerable youth in the region.

Mr. Chairperson,

The attainment of Sexual Reproductive Health outcomes is a key determinant to the realisation of all the MDG targets for the African Continent and in particular, the SADC Region.

In this regard, a Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Strategy for the SADC Region 2006-2015 has been developed, with efforts already underway to implement. Significant strides in the areas of developing and implementing policies, programmes and guidelines for promoting SRH have been made.

With regard to expediting the implementation of global and continental policy commitments, the African Union had launched the Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) to guide Member States. At the national level, the majority of SADC Member States have domesticated CARMMA or are at the advanced stages of doing so.

Mr. Chairperson,

Despite these achievements, many daunting challenges still remain, the biggest being youth unemployment. A substantial number of youth lack productive and self-employment opportunities, and many are either unemployed or under employed. In addition, the region continues to face challenges related to diseases such as HIV and AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis among others; poverty; hunger and malnutrition; disability among children and youth; and the growing problems of pregnancy among teenagers, pose a serious threat to the development and well being of children and youth in the region.

In this regard, we recognize the need for strengthening regional efforts to collectively address these challenges as a matter of urgency.

Mr. Chairperson,

Studies conducted by the SADC also suggest that there are challenges in the way existing policies, strategies and service delivery efforts being implemented to address the problems facing young people in some cases.

Existing structures to empower youth to effectively contribute to national and regional development, in some areas, are weak and grossly underfunded at national and regional levels.

In addition, the understanding of the concept of youth participation and empowerment often varies between Member States and organisations working across the region, creating a lack of regional comparability. This situation makes coordinating youth development also a major challenge.

Mr. Chairperson,

SADC remains concerned with the fact that although there has been progress in reducing poverty, this progress has been uneven and has not impeded the increase in the numbers of people living in poverty. In this connection, SADC stresses that the ongoing negative effects of the world financial and economic crisis, the volatile food and energy prices, food insecurity, as well as the challenges posed by climate change, have negative implications for social development and prosperity of young people.

Such difficulties are also an obstacle for the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the other regional programmes which requests health education and employment for the youth.

SADC recognizes that youth often have limited access to adequate health care, education and training, productive employment and broader socio-economic development opportunities. Investment in education, vocational training, health and youth are essential to achieve their full potential and contribute to sustainable development.

In this regard, we call for strengthened international co-operation on adolescents and youth through the fulfilment of all commitments on official development assistance, including the transfer of appropriate technology for capacity building.

Mr. Chairperson,

As for the Decade of youth in the Continent, SADC believes that we must accelerate the training of youth for sustainable development and the promotion of youth volunteering. Africa is devising ways to ensure its active participation in fighting poverty, endemic diseases, as well as the promotion of lasting peace, and therefore, the empowerment of youth. The United Nations should be sharper and more relevant in the treatment of matters related to youth by incorporating priority results for youth into specific agencies programmes.

Mr. Chairperson,

Finally, I would like to emphasize the need to understand and safeguard the importance that young people have as key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. In this regard, priority attention needs to be given to the promotion of youth and their interests as well as addressing the challenges that hinder their socio-economic development.

It is our hope that the draft resolution, that is to be adopted at the end of this session will help advance the agenda of the wellbeing of the youth.

I thank you.