



*Item 5*

**Commission on Population and Development**

**45<sup>th</sup> Session**

**General debate on the contribution of population and development  
issues to the theme of the annual ministerial review in 2012**

**New York, 25 April 2012**

**Statement by Minister Plenipotentiary Sérgio Rodrigues dos Santos  
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations**

(Check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to thank you once again for chairing our work and for giving us the opportunity to address the Commission on the contribution of population and development issues to this year's theme of the annual ministerial review of ECOSOC.

Even in the most favorable economic context, adolescents and young people are the group facing the most serious difficulties to obtain and maintain jobs. While trying to join the labor market, they must also reconcile education and work requirements as well as their family and social lives.

The CPD can play an important role in contributing to the ECOSOC in 2012, especially when addressing the issue of promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Brazil has decided to participate in the National Voluntary Presentation during the High Level Segment of the Substantive Session of the Council. We will share with other Member States, international organization, representatives of the private sector, unions and civil society groups our national experiences, challenges and accomplishments in our efforts to improve employment and decent work opportunities for all.

We wish therefore to take this opportunity to highlight some of the actions the Brazilian Government is undertaking with a view to addressing the specific needs and aspirations of adolescents and youth in relation to vocational training, provision of livelihood skills and creation of job opportunities and decent work.

Mr. Chairman,

Economic and social development cannot be addressed without considering the challenge of sustainability. Sustainable development depends on balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of human activities, as well as on the capacity to generate decent work opportunities for all.

With fertility rates falling below the replacement level, Brazil is putting in place national programs in order to ensure that the country can benefit from the so-called "demographic dividend". The successful inclusion of young people in our labor market is crucial for the sustainability of the current period of social and economic development in Brazil.

Despite a general improvement in the conditions of young people in the labor market in the last decade, this segment of the population is still among those who are more likely to experience unemployment and informal employment. In Brazil, 55% of those working in informal jobs and 39% of self-employed workers are adolescents and young people between 16-24 years of age. In low-income families, the conditions of poor job placement tend to be aggravated by increased incidence of unpaid family work or inactivity, depriving young people of opportunities to generate income and complete their education.

Although young women attain higher levels of education than young men, they tend to face more difficulties to find better quality jobs. The challenge in this regard is not only to ensure decent job opportunities for women, but also to preserve and expand their access to labor rights and social security coverage, including maternity leave of absence, mandatory job stability for 5 months after child-birth, and obligatory breaks for

breastfeeding.

Decent work can be considered both as a means and as an end for the promotion of sustainable development. Due to its role in extending social protection and contributing to protecting and promoting human and labor rights as well as participative citizenship, decent work is also an important factor for improving democratic governance.

Mr. Chairman,

In Brazil, decent work is seen as an essential element for the promotion of productive capacity and the viability of sustainable businesses. Sustainable businesses are a major source of growth, wealth creation and decent work. More than 60% of family income in Brazil derives from labor, which highlights the key role played by employment and work opportunities in our overall standard of living and wealth generation.

In 2003 the Brazilian government and ILO signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of a national agenda for decent work, which resulted in the National Plan for Employment and Decent Work. The Plan was built on the basis of a broad national dialogue that involved different federal agencies and representatives of employers and workers. Its overall goal is to strengthen the linkages between social and macroeconomic policies, monitor their impact on employment creation, improve social protection, eradicate child and slave labor and strengthen social dialogue. It also provides a cross-cutting approach to issues such as gender, race and youth.

The national decent work agenda for youth, derived from the National Plan, aims at providing more and better education, reconciling education, work and family lives, promoting active inclusion in the labor market with equal treatment and opportunities; and stimulating social dialogue on youth, work and education.

Improving education, especially through vocational training and provision of livelihood skills is key to address the challenges faced by adolescents and young people as well as to enable them to profit from the opportunities of employment and decent work.

Through the National Programme of Access to Technical Education (PRONATEC), the Brazilian Government provides vocational training to 1 million people between 18 and 59 years of age, especially to those who benefit from our national conditional cash transfer programs, such as the "Bolsa Familia" and the Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC). The Program University for All (PROUNI) has granted full or partial scholarships to almost 1 million undergraduate and graduate students in private institutions. In addition, the "Thousand Women" Programme focuses on the provision of general education and vocational training to 100.000 women in vulnerable situations.

Mr. Chairman,

Brazil is convinced that science and academic research are central elements to promoting sustained economic growth. We are determined to increase the number of PhD's, to enhance the interaction between academia and the business sector and civil society, to promote international collaboration in scientific publications, and to improve the number of patent applications both nationally and internationally.

By launching the "Science without borders" programme, the Brazilian Government prioritizes the consolidation and expansion of science, technology and innovation through improved international exchange. The programme aims at increasing the presence of

Brazilian students, scientists and business representatives in international education institutions of excellence. It also encourages young people and highly qualified researchers from abroad to work with their local counterparts, contributing to human capacity development. Other goals of the programme include promoting the return of Brazilian scientists working overseas and inducing the internationalization of universities and research centers in Brazil.

The Brazilian Government is also striving to promote the formal economy through initiatives such as the Individual Micro-Entrepreneur, which focuses on helping workers in the informal sector to formalize their businesses as well as to increase access to credit and microcredit, enabling enterprises to grow and create more job opportunities. We also promote solidarity economy enterprises and associations created by youth groups in areas such as arts and culture, sports and tourism, in both rural and urban areas.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, Brazil strongly believes that investing in adolescents and youth is central to achieving sustainable development and promoting inclusive growth. Adolescents and youth are the custodians of our hopes in a better, more equitable and democratic future. It is our duty to recognize their role and to enable them to fulfill their full potential.

Thank you