STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MS. BİLGE KOÇYİĞİT, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY

AT THE

FIFTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

(10 July 2020, New York)

Mr. Chair,

I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Chair and the Bureau of the fifty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development. Their efforts have been invaluable to ensure that the role and work of the Commission remain relevant in the face of complex challenges we face today, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

As we grapple with the health, humanitarian and socio-economic implications of the Covid-19 crisis, the theme of this year's session "Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development" has become all the more pertinent.

The Covid-19 has reminded us that pandemics are not simply health emergencies. They are major threats to our social systems and have multifaceted effects on our economies, the functioning of global supply chains and the flow of essential goods, especially food and agricultural products.

These problems threaten global food security and hinder our efforts to fight against poverty and hunger. We need to ensure that everyone, including the migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, have access to adequate, safe, affordable and nutritious food.

Turkey supported the Secretary-General's call to facilitate the global supply chain response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, we granted exemptions from Covid-19 related restrictions to road transport vehicles and cargo planes traveling in and out of the country to ensure the unimpeded flow of food and medical equipment supplies. We also removed tariffs on essential medical equipments including masks, ventilators and respiratory devices from certain countries to secure the continuity of supply chains.

Mr. Chair,

Climate change poses a complex development challenge, risking all dimensions of food security as well as distribution channels and market flows. Its adverse effects are increasingly felt in every aspect of social and economic life, and risk reversing the hard-won development gains of the developing countries. Climate change mostly affects the most vulnerable around the world: the least developed countries (LDCs), small island developing States (SIDS), urban poor, rural people, women, children and immigrants.

In an effort to protect the vulnerable countries and groups, including agriculture-based livelihood systems, we must redouble our efforts to improve the resilience of the agriculture sector against droughts and floods through storage and infrastructure management as well as integrated management of water resources.

Turkey's "Climate Change Strategy for 2010-2023" provides important measures to reduce the risks of environmental disasters on vulnerable groups, including families who are heavily dependent on crops. We are also revisiting our strategies and implementation plans to increase the resilience of the urban poor to climatic risks.

Mr. Chair,

Covid-19 pandemic has further deteriorated the situation in humanitarian settings, with possible social, political and economic repercussions. It is estimated that an additional 8 million people in the region will become poor as a result of the crisis. The need for a reinforced development-humanitarian nexus has become more pressing than ever. We need coordinated action and more collaboration on the ground and strengthened political will at the global level, including commitments from national governments, international financial institutions and NGOs.

As we mark the 26th anniversary of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), we underline that ensuring human rights for all, including for women and girls, and ending discrimination in all its forms, is a necessity for achieving the sustainable development goals. The implementation of the ICPD, together with the 2030 Agenda is our shared responsibility, and this should also remain at the heart of our response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thank you.