

**Statement of the Mission of South Africa to the United Nations after
the adoption of the resolution on the**

**“Assessment of the Status of Implementation of the Programme of Action of the
International Conference on Population and Development”**

**47th session of the Commission on Population and Development of the United
Nations Economic and Social Council**

New York, 12 April 2014

Mr Chairman,

The South African delegation would like to express its appreciation for your tireless efforts along with your able Bureau. A lot of hard work has gone into the document we have before us, and I am not just referring to the past two weeks.

In terms of process, South Africa has negotiated in part with the G77, in part with the Africa Group and in some areas we negotiated in our national capacity. Paragraphs Op 10 and OP 11, which the Africa Group has registered reservations against, are two of those paragraphs where we negotiated in our national capacities are therefore not party to the Africa Group's reservations in those areas.

While there are some areas in the outcome that are clearly useful and we are happy to be part of the consensus, we are not convinced that we have done justice to the 20-year review, especially, if one takes into account the richness of the regional outcome documents. The South African delegation, would have liked to see an outcome document that was bolder in its intent on tackling the gaps identified in the review documents.

Mr Chairman,

The South African delegation believes that in order to do justice to 20 years of population and development in the context of the ICPD we needed to set our sights higher than we did.

We recently laid to rest our icon former President Nelson Mandela. In celebrating the life of our icon Nelson Mandela, we are reminded of some of his words on protecting the rights of others. This includes the following quotes - "To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity", and "For to be free is not to merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. "

Nelson Mandela always reminded South Africans that we needed to remember the experience of being oppressed before we dare to discriminate and justify discrimination against others. These are the values that informed the principles underpinning the South African constitution and these are the values we are

enjoined to promote in our domestic and international relations. While we are mindful of the concerns of many delegations, it is indeed concerning that we could not agree on more robust language seeking to act against discrimination and violence, including for people based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gendered identities.

That being said, guided by the optimism and spirit of Nelson Mandela, we know that over the next few years, with respectful discourse amongst all of us, that we will be able to arrive on agreements that all people deserve to live their lives free from discrimination, oppression, dispossession and violence.

Mr Chairman,

We are optimistic that over the next 20 years we will, collectively work towards building better and more inclusive societies.