



Permanent Mission  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the United Nations  
New York

## **Statement**

**by Ursula Müller**

**Director-General for Policy Issues and Political  
Governance of Bilateral Development Cooperation,  
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation  
and Development**

**at the**

**47<sup>th</sup> Session**

**of the**

**Commission on Population and Development**

**Assessment of the status of implementation of the  
Programme of Action of the International Conference on  
Population and Development  
(agenda item 3)**

**07 April 2014**

*(check against delivery)*

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Germany very much welcomes the theme of this year's debate. The assessment of the status of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) twenty years after the landmark conference in Cairo marks a milestone in the international community's dedication to population and development.

In this context, let me first of all thank the Secretary-General as well as UNFPA for the very comprehensive and insightful reports to the Commission.

The Global Review Report provides strong evidence of the continued relevance of the Cairo Programme of Action (PoA). The Report documents the achievements as well as the gaps and challenges ahead in the implementation of the Programme of Action. It is therefore valid and important input to draw upon for the further implementation in the coming years.

Mr. Chairman,

Germany reaffirms its strong support for and commitment to the Programme of Action, as well as to the Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action of the ICPD. With these two forward-looking documents, the international community committed itself to promoting and protecting sexual and reproductive

health and rights more strongly. All Member States were encouraged to ensure education about population and health issues, including sexual and reproductive health issues, in order to promote the well-being of adolescents, enhance gender equality and equity as well as responsible sexual behaviour. Nowadays, the protection of young people from early and unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual abuse and violence should be a priority to all of us.

As the Global Review Report has shown, the improvements in maternal mortality and access to contraceptives have only been modest. Approximately 800 women still die in childbirth every day. Maternal mortality is especially high among young women, with pregnancy and childbirth being the leading cause of death amongst adolescent girls in developing countries. Furthermore, an approximate number of 222 million women still don't have access to modern contraceptives, 90% of these live in developing countries.

Consequently, the Report underlines that member states shall accelerate progress towards achieving universal access to quality sexual and reproductive health services and likewise protecting and fulfilling the rights of adolescents and youth to accurate information and comprehensive sexuality education.

Realizing sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups is one of the priorities of German development cooperation in the area of health and population policy. We consider sexual and reproductive health and rights a prerequisite for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Therefore, we strongly advocate for a rights-based and gender sensitive approach in family planning, comprehensive sexuality education as well as linking HIV/AIDS to sexual and reproductive health strategies. Women and girls, like men and boys, must have full and affordable access to sexual and reproductive health information, services and supplies, comprehensive sexuality information and education and be able to freely and responsibly decide on matters related to their sexuality free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

Mr. Chairman,

Moreover, the Report has shown that the capacity to collect, monitor and project population dynamics continues to be weak in many countries. In some of the poorest countries of the world, only about one third of births are registered.

Germany would like to stress the importance and necessity of regular collection and analysis of population data. It is important to ensure that demographic data, analyses and projections are used for sustainable development planning. When governments have access to comprehensive reliable population statistics and analyses, they can plan their national strategies more precisely and they can adjust their priorities and policies on the basis of an accurate assessment of people's needs.

Therefore, we support our partner countries in collecting and analyzing the demographic data they require for the design of their health, education, and labour market policies. This allows them to make better use of available resources, to address risks and to seize the opportunities that demographic trends provide.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, Germany believes that population dynamics and sexual and reproductive health and rights need to be reflected as important issues in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The current demographic changes will have a huge impact on future poverty reduction and sustainability in every country of the world.

Together with our partners, we will work to ensure the preservation of the principles of the Cairo Conference and call upon all development partners to support the further implementation of the Cairo Plan of Action and the preservation of the ICPD beyond 2014.

Thank you for your kind attention.