

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Coordination and Management Meeting

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Item 18: Economic and environmental questions

(f) Population and development

Presentation on the 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development

([E/2016/26](#))

Ms. Nadine Skale, Vice-Chair

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Distinguished representatives of the Secretariat and of the
United Nations Population Fund,
Colleagues and friends,

- It gives me great pleasure to present to you the outcome of the 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development, contained in document E/2016/26.
- The 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development was held at United Nations Headquarters on 17 April 2015 and from 11 to 15 April 2016, with a special theme of “Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda”.
- This theme provided an occasion for the Commission to focus, for the first time in its history, on Chapter XII of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, or ICPD. That chapter, entitled “Technology, Research and Development”, emphasized the importance of having a factual basis for understanding and anticipating the interrelationships between population and social, economic and environmental trends, as well as the need to strengthen national capacities in the area of data and research.
- In addition, this year’s session presented an important opportunity for Member States and other stakeholders to review the Commission’s methods of work. It was the first time that such a review had occurred in the past decade.

- During its 49th session, the Commission had the honour of welcoming the Secretary-General, whose inspiring remarks in the opening helped to set the tone for what proved to be a productive and successful session.
- This year's session of the Commission was well attended. Participants included delegations from all 46 elected members of the Commission and observers from over 60 other Member States, two non-Member States, and several intergovernmental organizations and United Nations entities. Roughly 160 representatives of more than 60 non-governmental organizations participated as well.
- Many delegations took the floor to make statements, and there was an active and engaging discussion, enhanced by the substantive contributions of keynote speakers and an expert panel. An overview of this discussion, and the content of the substantive documents that helped to inform the debate, are contained in the summary of the report on the 49th session, which has been prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/1 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council.
- The Commission on Population and Development recommends to the Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:
 - First, a decision to take note of the report on its 49th session;
 - Second, a decision to approve the provisional agenda for its 50th session.
- The Commission also recommends to the Council the adoption of the draft resolution entitled "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on Population and Development".
- Furthermore, I would like to call the Council's attention to one resolution and two decisions of the Commission:
 - The resolution on "Strengthening the demographic evidence base for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" has reiterated that the availability of high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable demographic data, disaggregated by age, sex and other characteristics, is essential for planning and implementing policies and programmes to achieve the goals and objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda;

- The decision on the special theme of the Commission in 2017 identified “Changing population age structures and sustainable development” as the theme of next year’s session. It also postponed the decision on the special theme for 2018 until the Commission’s 50th session in 2017, pending decisions by the Economic and Social Council on its annual theme for 2018 and by the high-level political forum on the cycle of review of the 2030 Agenda;
- A decision on the documents considered by the Commission took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation in 2015 of the work programme of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It also took note of the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed strategic framework for the Population Division during 2018-2019.

Distinguished delegates,

- The 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development was in many ways a forward-looking and important session.
- We engaged in insightful and stimulating discussions on the importance of population data and research in supporting the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. The importance of the 2020 round of population censuses was highlighted, and governments were urged to make special efforts to strengthen civil registration, vital statistics and health information systems, and to adopt open-data policies.
- National authorities were advised to leverage new data sources and technology. The Secretary-General was called upon to continue his substantive work on population and development and to pursue further improvements in the accessibility and timeliness of disaggregated population data. UNFPA was asked to continue its work on assisting countries in strengthening the demographic evidence base.
- Regarding the review of the Commission’s methods of work, Member States reaffirmed the Commission’s mandate to monitor, review and assess the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and affirmed that the Commission would contribute to the review of the 2030 Agenda within its existing mandate. Member States also decided that the Commission might further review its methods of work as more information becomes available about the process of follow-up and review for the 2030 Agenda.

- Importantly, Member States affirmed that the resolutions and decisions of the Commission would be negotiated. With a view on the discussions and outcomes of the 47th and 48th sessions, Member States sent a clear signal that they value a negotiated outcome, calling on future delegations to work hard to find common ground and consensus.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- I would like to thank the Economic and Social Council for supporting the work of the Commission on Population and Development by taking note of its report on the 49th session and, hopefully, by endorsing its recommendations, in particular with regard to the Commission's methods of work.
- I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the Chair of the 49th session, H.E. Dr. Mwaba Kasese-Bota, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations. Her leadership, vision, persistent outreach and skilled engagement with delegations were critical for achieving consensus and a successful outcome.
- I also would like to thank my other colleagues in the Bureau, my fellow Vice-Chairs: Mr. Ebrahim Alikhani of Iran, Ms. Patricia Chemor Ruiz of Mexico and Ms. Oana Rebedea of Romania.
- Because the Chair had tabled two resolutions, one on the special theme and another on the Commission's methods of work, the Bureau decided to form two teams of co-facilitators to lead the informal consultations on the outcome documents. The two teams included one Bureau member: myself for the negotiations on the special theme, and Ms. Rebedea of Romania on the methods of work.
- A special note of thanks goes to the two additional co-facilitators from outside the Bureau who also made important contributions to this work: Mr. Franklyn Fawundu of Sierra Leone and Ms. Iara Beekma Reis of Bolivia. On behalf of all Bureau members, I wish to thank them for their hard work and spirit of collaboration.
- I would also like to thank our colleagues from the Secretariat, in both DGACM and DESA, and from UNFPA for their continuous support throughout the 49th session.
- In conclusion, I wish to extend my best wishes to the incoming Chair of the 50th session of the Commission on Population and Development, H.E. Ms.

Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations. I also welcome the incoming Vice-Chairs.

- I hope that the spirit of collaboration shown during the past session will inspire the new Bureau to carry forward the important work of the Commission on Population and Development. I also call on all members of the Commission, as well as Member States who are not currently members, to give the new Chair your full support throughout her tenure.

Thank you, and best wishes to the Council in your deliberations.