Statement by

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Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Cambodia to the United Nations

Forty-eighth Session of the Commission on
Population and Development

New York, 13-17 April 2015
Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, Heads of Delegations of the Member States,
Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Royal Government of Cambodia would like to thank the Secretary-General for scheduling the 48th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD). Cambodia considers this Session as an opportunity to share its national achievements and future direction in sustainable development since 1993, after 30 years of instability and internal conflict. We have made considerable progress since affirming our commitment to the ICPD Programme of Action, especially in the area of maternal and infant mortality reduction, fertility decline, gender equality and containment of the spread of HIV. Availing ourselves of this opportunity, Cambodia would like to confirm our resolve and our will to redouble our efforts to improve the lives of our people with equity and dignity in the years to come and to ensure sustained economic growth and inclusive sustainable development. We wish to thank the UN System which, through the leadership of the UNFPA, worked closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia on a review process through a global survey and a series of consultations and reviews in the Asia Pacific Region. The UNFPA also supported national consultations, including those with the civil society, to produce a “Framework of Actions for the follow-up to the ICPD beyond 2014”. We endorse the operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action which was based on the use of data of the highest-quality and their analysis for effective and efficient relief. We also welcome the fact that the Country Specific Report of the Royal Government of Cambodia on the status and progress of the ICPD implementation is recognized as being consistent with the GA Resolution 65/234 on the follow up to the implementation of the Programme of Action beyond 2014.

In this Country Specific Report, we have shown that Cambodia has made considerable progress in adopting and implementing national development policies and key sectorial strategies to achieve better development results, focusing on the following aspects:

(i) strengthening of human capital, guided by human rights standards and principles;
(ii) strengthening efforts to improve gender equality, equity and women’s empowerment;
(iii) addressing the issues of adolescent sexual reproductive health and rights;
(iv) forging new partnerships with the civil society and the private sector; and
(v) promoting integration of population dynamics and population trends into development planning and policymaking.

Consequently, due to substantial declines in fertility and mortality, Cambodia is going through a phase of rapid demographic transition. This has opened up a demographic window of opportunity characterized by a declining dependency ratio. The size of the labour force is expanding with the entry of a large number of working age youth. This, backed up by appropriate policies in all sectors, has a great potential to provide the country with a large demographic dividend through further economic development. Recognizing the impacts of population dynamics, reproductive health and gender on poverty, the Royal Government of Cambodia will strive further to improve the standard of living of its people. It will continue to reinforce the integration of the population and development agenda in a broad-based process of inclusive sustainable development.
The next five-year National Strategic Development Plan has been formulated to respond to new challenges by creating and managing sound policies and generating the political will to appropriately address the following priorities:

(i) increasing national wealth distribution and reducing income inequalities;
(ii) further strengthening institutional capacity and governance, at both national and sub-national levels, and ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of public services to better serve people;
(iii) building a strong human capital in the country, especially for young people;
(iv) strengthening the health system in both rural and urban areas;
(v) addressing unfulfilled gender equality and empowerment of women; and
(vi) addressing the inequalities in universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, especially for women and young people;

We note that, in spite of the progress made towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals, considerable gaps still exist in the implementation of different areas of the Programme of Action. While recognizing the importance of protecting the present achievements of the International Conference on Population and Development, which we confirmed in the Cambodia Country Specific Progress Report, we would also need to respond to new challenges relevant to population and development and to the changing development environment. We would therefore like to reaffirm our commitment at the highest political level to achieving the goals and the objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and development. To achieve these objectives, we recognise the need for a stronger partnership which is absolutely vital and, would accordingly call upon member states to recognize that the Programme of Action requires adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels for its implementation, as well as new and additional resources for countries from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources. This is absolutely essential for the indispensable human resource development required for the full implementation of the Programme of Action, which includes education job training, exchange of experiences and expertise, and technical assistance for capacity development, which entails strengthening institutional capacity, including planning, management and monitoring capacities.

To conclude, we would like to thank the Chairman for giving us the opportunity to make a statement at this session. The Royal Government of Cambodia supports a continuous and more effective implementation of the ICBD Programme of Action in the coming years. Recognizing the importance of the 48th Session of CDP, Cambodia further encourages all member states to not only recognize the overall progress in the Programme of Action made so far, but also to endorse the mandate of the key actions considering the synergies between population dynamics and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

Thank you for your attention