



Oral Statement of Scott Fischbach
Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life Education Fund
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Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the 200 chapters and 70,000 member families of MCCL and our Global Outreach program active in 47 countries, I appreciate this opportunity to speak.

Accurate population data is essential in order to understand demographic trends and challenges and effectively pursue development goals. Yet too often and in too much of the world the data is unreliable or incomplete. Nations must take positive steps to improve their data collection, especially in the developing world, and they should use this information for the purpose of protecting and improving human life.

The problem of maternal mortality continues to pose a difficult challenge. Quality data is crucial to correctly understand and combat maternal mortality and to accurately assess progress. In addition to improving data collection, however, the international community must better prioritize the measures that are known to save women's lives. Maternal health depends on the quality of medical care. It does *not* depend on the legality or availability of abortion. Developing nations can substantially reduce maternal deaths by ensuring adequate nutrition, prenatal care, skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric care, clean water, and sanitation.

Population data also help reveal the challenges that the world faces as it pursues the Sustainable Development Goals. These challenges include growing populations in sub-Saharan Africa and rapidly aging populations in much of the developed world.

Some regions of the world have utilized abortion as a means of population control. But rigid population control policies are responsible for tremendous abuses of human rights. Member States should pursue development goals without encouraging or legalizing abortion—no United Nations treaty or customary international law can accurately be interpreted as creating a right to abortion. Nor should Member States respond to economic and demographic changes by legalizing or promoting euthanasia or assisted suicide. No right to euthanasia or “right to die” has ever been established in international law.

Human beings are at the center of sustainable development. Respect for human life should remain at the center as the international community addresses population issues in the post-2015 agenda. Demographic data must be used to protect and foster human life. It should not be used for any other agenda.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity.