



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
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Statement
on behalf of the
Federal Republic of Germany

at the

50th Session
of the
Commission on Population and Development
on

4 April 2017

Changing Population Age Structures and Sustainable Development
(agenda item 3a)

Madame Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A country's development depends on the well-being of its citizens. This fact was recognized by 179 countries 23 years ago at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo.

And this commitment to well-being was confirmed again two years ago when the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda. The agenda is a pact for the future: it seeks to ensure that everyone can live a life in dignity. The success of the agenda ultimately depends on people enjoying the benefits of sustainable development.

Since the adoption of the Cairo Programme of Action, we have made a great deal of progress around the world: maternal mortality and under-five mortality rates have decreased, the number of new HIV infections has dropped and more girls are attending schools.

But much work remains to be done: 225 million women still lack access to modern forms of contraception and therefore the ability to decide for themselves whether and when they would like to become mothers. Every day, approximately 800 women die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Maternal mortality is especially high among young women and adolescent girls. Complications during pregnancy and

childbirth are a leading cause of death among adolescent girls in developing countries.

It is clear that health, education and gender equality need to stay at the center of development policy.

Germany reaffirms its strong support for and commitment to the Programme of Action and to the Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action of the ICPD. Ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights for all—with a focus on the most vulnerable groups—is a top priority of German development cooperation in the area of health and population policy.

We strongly advocate for a rights-based and gender-sensitive approach to family planning and comprehensive sexuality education. We also promote addressing HIV/AIDS as part of sexual and reproductive health strategies. We believe every person should have full and affordable access to sexual and reproductive health information, education, services and supplies. Every person should be able to freely and responsibly decide on matters related to their sexuality—free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

Germany is committed to the UN Secretary-General's initiative "Every Woman, Every Child." We contribute at least EUR 380 million annually to its implementation.

And through our own initiative on rights-based family planning and maternal health, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is taking action to ensure that high-quality family planning

services, including modern contraceptives, are socially acceptable and readily available.

Madame Chair,

Let me take this opportunity to say a few words on this year's CPD topic: "Changing population age structures and sustainable development." Ten years have passed since this topic was last on the Commission's agenda. Since then, the world's population has continued to grow and change. The current generation of youth is the largest in history to live on our planet. These young people want to live, learn, work and make a better life for themselves. We must do everything in our power to protect their rights, help them realize their full potential and develop into healthy, educated adults. These aims are not only important for their prosperity and development as individuals but also for the development and prosperity of our countries as a whole.

At the same time, people are also living longer. They are healthier, more active and more mobile than any generation before: this is good news. Many countries have witnessed a *decline* in mortality and a *rise* in life expectancy, both indicators of success. This news should encourage us in our efforts to raise life expectancies and the quality of life for all people. But increased life expectancies also mean aging populations. Germany, no exception, also faces this demographic challenge: it is one of the oldest countries by population in the world.

But this trend is no reason for despair. A recent evaluation of the German demographic strategy conducted by the Federal Government in 2012 found that every age group contributes to the prosperity and well-

being of society. Managing demographic change is a national task that demands effort at all levels of government and that harnesses all forces within society. In Germany, representatives at the federal, state and local level have worked together with social partners, trade associations, the private sector, academia and civil society to address the ongoing demographic change and turn it into a success. One lesson we have learned so far is that we are not helpless in the face of challenges posed by an aging population. By bringing together a wide range of interrelated policy fields, we can reap the benefits of a second and third demographic dividend, and ultimately safeguard our long-term growth and prosperity.

Since demographic development and sustainable development are so closely interrelated, we are working with partner countries to account for demographic trends in their national planning processes. We support them in collecting, analyzing and using disaggregated population data from routine systems and surveys to improve evidence-based development planning at all levels of decision-making. We are glad to share our national experiences with our partners.

Madame Chair,

Together with our partners, we will work to fully implement the Cairo Program of Action, and we call upon all development partners to support the preservation of the “ICPD Beyond 2014.”

Thank you for your attention.