



STATEMENT

TO BE DELIVERED BY

**AMBASSADOR NECTON MHURA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

**Agenda 3 (b) Special Theme of the fiftieth session of the
Commission *“Changing Population Age Structures and
Sustainable Development.”***

Monday 3rd April, 2017

UN HEADQUARTERS – NEW YORK

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Chairperson,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my delegation's warmest congratulations to you Chairperson and the entire membership of the bureau on your appointment to lead the Fiftieth Session of the Commission on Population and Development. The Malawian delegation would like to associate itself with the statements made by the distinguished Permanent Representatives of Ecuador and (TBC) on behalf of G77 and China and the African Group respectively.

Chairperson,

Malawi has as reflected in her constitution of 1994, and in the collaboration between her three branches of Government; Executive, Judiciary and Legislature, committed herself to the prosperity and wellbeing of the Malawian population as the primacy of her existence. In recognition of the critical role that multi-stakeholder collaboration plays in good governance and delivery of services that bring about prosperity and wellbeing. We emphasize inclusive policy and systems that work for all and in solidarity with the UN stance that no one is left behind, Malawi agreed to and is implementing the SDGs.

Chairperson,

The diverse spectrum of experience of demographics existing in the world today known as the demographic transition, signals that for the implementation of the SDGs to be successful, they must primarily respond to the local context, through initiatives of capacity development, awareness and education, which are essential to ensure that each person is met at their need and no one is left behind.

Chairperson,

Africa, sub-Saharan Africa in particular, is projected to host 19% of the global youth population by 2020, a figure extrapolated to rise to 34% by 2050. Malawi at present has a population of which over 50% are youth. In recognition of this context His Excellency Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi, and a UN Global Youth Champion, is championing youth empowerment, through introduction of Community Technical Colleges in rural areas and opening of new universities, in order to increase access to skills development and tertiary education, with the aim of ensuring access to paid, legitimate work for youth. Furthermore he championed the current theme of *“harnessing demographic dividend”* at continent level so that the continent in line with the Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda begins to lay the foundation for a prosperous and self-reliant Africa.

Chairperson,

The 2017 Statistical Commission, called for better data for better lives, it emphasized and reiterated the importance of data and data disaggregation as essential to responding to the needs of populations in the sustainable development agenda. The diverse population experiences reflect diverse circumstances and contexts, and in order to best tackle them data is essential.

Chairperson,

In the context of population and demography, one cannot overlook issues of health and education, as these are essential for the longevity and adaptation of any population. These two aspects are the backbone of effective productivity and the necessary growth that brings development.

In Malawi, National initiatives such as Beautify Malawi chaired by our First Lady Dr. Gertrude Mutharika, exemplify that knowledge is indeed power, by encouraging ownership across all demographic groups from youth, to local communities and leaders at all levels, as

the only way to a sanitary environment and a healthy and happy population. Furthermore, in recognition of the risk that girls face through early marriage, which contributes to the increase in maternal and child mortality, the Malawi legislature has now instituted a minimum marriage age of 18, to enable girls gain an education, skill, maturity and choice. Malawi recognizes that this legislation is only a first step, as such; we are looking for ways and partnerships to keep girls in school, so that through their empowerment, they become empowered women and mothers, who will in turn raise empowered girls and boys that value gender equality.

These actions are the work of collaboration between the three arms of government (Executive, legislature and Judiciary), working with civil society, private sector and traditional leaders. It proves that engaging the population to ensure that each member owns the process of development is a multi-sectoral endeavor and requires committed cooperation, finance and management.

Chairperson,

Malawi like the rest of the world continues to suffer the impacts of Climate Change, 2015 and 2016 saw alternating periods of flooding and drought respectively. These occurrences place the health, education and economic development of our population at risk. If Malawi and developing countries are to shake off poverty, attain growth and make optimal use of the demographic transition, we all need to make a strong commitment to mitigate climate change and to making the necessary adaptations.

In this regard Malawi joins the G77+China and the African Group, in calling for a committed and consistent collaboration, between the UNDS, at HQ, Regional and local level and development partners. Collaboration in the form of technical support, finance and capacity development, responding to context, to ensure that the SDGs are successfully and cross cuttingly achieved across populations.