

**Statement by Mr. Lok Bahadur Poudel Chhetri, Counsellor Permanent Mission of Nepal
to the UN, at the 51st Session of the Commission on Population and Development
on Agenda item 3
New York, 12 April 2018**

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Bureau on your unanimous election. I am confident that under your able leadership, we would be able to bring the Session to a successful conclusion. I pledge my delegation's full support to that end.

Nepal welcomes the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General under this agenda item. We also welcome the theme "Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration".

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

While migrants play an important role in the economic growth of host countries and countries of origin, it leaves behind many negative impacts, including loss of human capital, separation of families and other social and economic costs in their countries of origin. As Secretary-General highlights in his report, policies should be in place to address these issues as well as to reduce the transfer cost of remittances and promote financial literacy of migrants and their families.

As the world is facing alarmingly rapid urbanization and international migration, issues surrounding them have been well reflected in the theme. The work of the Commission should focus on how to contribute best to the ongoing processes across different tracks, including Global Compact for Migration as well as the review of SDG 11 by the High-Level Political Forum.

Mr. Chairman,

In recent decades, the world has seen an unprecedented growth in the population of cities and it seems to be increasing continuously in the future. While international migration has contributed to the growth of the cities of the developed countries, rural-urban migration are the major factor of urban growth in developing countries. Nepal is also experiencing a rapid pace of urbanization, driven primarily by the rural-to-urban migration. Since urbanization unleashes development potentials, this process is an opportunity for economic development.

Nepal believes that planned and strategic investments in urban infrastructures are not only important for the local residents but also instrumental in harnessing rural-urban linkages and reducing regional disparity. The Government of Nepal has prepared a National Urban Development Strategy (NUDS) to realize the vision of achieving balanced, prosperous and sustainable urban systems in accordance with the National Urban Policy 2007.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal remains steadfast in implementing its ICPD related commitments and has recorded noticeable progress in health and population sector as well as in the field of gender equality and women's

empowerment. Our first National Population Policy 2015 based on the post-ICPD framework is under implementation. The Policy focuses on integrating population issues into development agenda. It also aims to improve reproductive health and reproductive rights as fundamental human rights and promoting gender equality and inclusion.

In the context of new federal set-up and need for restructuring and expanding health services, the Government is working to review its existing National Health Policy, 2015 in line with the aspiration of the new Constitution. The new policy under draft envisions implementing family health and sexual and reproductive health as an integrated service. It also aims to ensure the reproductive health rights of people by enacting a new reproductive health rights act.

As country with almost 60 percent of population being working age (15-59 year), Nepal plans to benefit from the demographic dividend by involving youth and adolescents in development efforts. Nepal considers youth and adolescents as key stakeholders of Sustainable Development Goals. We also treat the issue of ageing with utmost importance ensuring that senior citizens achieve their fullest potentials.

Mr. Chair,

However, challenges continue to grapple the hard earned achievements. Nepal is a landlocked LDC that is emerging from conflict and natural disasters. Means of implementation is scarce, but it is estimated that Nepal needs USD 17.7 billion annually until 2030 for achieving SDGs. Goal 11 plays a catalytic role for achieving other goals, while sustainable cities can more create jobs, reduce inequalities and enhance disaster resilience, improving development trajectory.

Despite the challenges, Nepal has embarked on an era of political stability. We recently concluded elections for local, provincial and federal level parliaments. Socioeconomic transformation is in our prime agenda. On creating sustainable cities and harnessing human mobility for development, we are looking for even greater collaboration with the private sector, civil society and all stakeholders as well as the solidarity and support of international community including the UN system.

I conclude, Mr. Chairman, by reiterating that Nepal will continue to play constructive role at the UN and other multilateral forums in our collective interest towards creating sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration across the globe.

Thank you.