



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY**

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*Please Check Against Delivery*

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government of Jamaica, and congratulate you on being elected to the chair of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development at this the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. I also congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on successfully guiding negotiations that led to the consensus adoption of the Political Declaration yesterday.

Jamaica aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished delegate of the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Over these 25 years, Jamaica has experienced significant changes in its demographic profile. Population growth is currently bordering on zero with fertility at or near replacement level. Life expectancy at birth is around 74 years reflecting marked improvements in infant and child mortality. The combined effects of changes in fertility and mortality have resulted in a rapidly ageing population characterized by declining youth and increasing working age and elderly age groups. In reproductive health,

substantial reductions in deaths due to HIV/AIDS and mother to child transmission of HIV have been achieved. The use of modern contraceptive methods is also near universal.

Much of this success can be attributed to the early incorporation, in 1995, of the principles, objectives and strategic actions of the ICPD Programme of Action into our National Population Policy and subsequent Programme of Action on Population and Development.

Chair, the advent of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, and Jamaica's initiative to develop its first Long-Term National Development Plan: Vision 2030 Jamaica in 2007, provided the opportunity to ensure that population policy objectives and demographic dynamics were integrated into the plan at both the national and sectoral levels. A population sector plan 2009-2030 was also developed as an integral component of Vision 2030 Jamaica.

Chair, permit me to focus now on those areas of our national population and development programme that require accelerated action towards the full and effective implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

While we have made significant improvements to address issues related to sexual and reproductive health, family planning and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS, Jamaica is still steps behind in achieving a full and holistic integration of these areas in our primary health care system. This is particularly so as it relates to adolescents and youth. Fertility levels among adolescents and youth are still unacceptably high and are strongly correlated with the transmission of poverty from one generation to the next. We are, however, in the process of drafting a sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents and youth.

Progress has also been achieved in addressing infant, child and maternal mortality, but admittedly more needs to be done to reduce maternal mortality and bring the rates in line with the ICPD Programme of Action.

Jamaica is a country characterised by high rates of external migration with significant levels of highly educated and skilled human resources leaving the country each year. In response, we have developed a comprehensive policy on international migration and development. The focus of the policy is centred on making migration work for development. The policy is integrated

into our Vision 2030 Long-Term National Development Plan and in other national level policies, plans and programmes. However, the policy has not yet been operationalised into policies and programmes at the sub-national levels. Concerted efforts, strategies and resources are therefore needed to ensure effective implementation at those levels.

Chair, Jamaica is recognised as having one of the highest employment rates of women in managerial and technical jobs in the public sector globally. This attests to the superior performance of women and girls in our education system. Despite this, however, women are poorly represented in the highest decision-making positions in Government and the private sector. Current efforts to change this situation have borne little fruit. Concerted effort and innovative strategies are therefore needed in moving forward.

In closing, let me emphasise that all programmes of the United Nations must be reconfigured, integrated and aligned to Agenda 2030 at the national, regional and global levels as a matter of priority, in order that the best interest of the global community will be served.

Thank you, Chair.