



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Amrit Bahadur Rai, Permanent Representative of Nepal the
United Nations, at the 52st Session of the Commission on Population and Development
on Agenda item 3
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Please check against delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

I would first 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. As always, I pledge my delegation's full support to the discharge of your important responsibility.

Nepal welcomes the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General under this agenda item. It has rightly captured the essence of what needs to be done collectively.

While aligning my statement with the one delivered earlier by the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to make the following points in my national capacity:

As Secretary-General highlights in his report, considerable progress has been made in many key areas of the Programme of Action since 1994. The POA has strong interlinkages with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and has contributed to a great extent in achieving related goals and targets. However, progress has remained uneven both within and among countries, and the benefits of social and economic progress have shared inequitably. Our collective efforts should focus towards the correction of this aberration in development outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

Dynamics of the world population is in flux. Today, more people are on the move within and among countries, in some parts of the world fertility rate is low, at the same time life expectancy has increased, in many parts of the world access to family planning and reproductive health service has made remarkable progress.

As highlighted in our VNR presented during the 2017 HLPF, Nepal has also achieved significant declines in mortality rates, fertility rates, as well as rapid improvement in life

expectancy. In 2014, Nepali woman gave birth to an average of 2.3 children as against an average of 6 children in 1974. Life expectancy of Nepalis went up to 70 years in 2016, from 66.6 years in 2011. Maternal mortality and infant mortality have also gone down. We acknowledge these gains as outcome of the government's investment in health and education sectors over the last two decades.

Nepal is equally committed to reaping the benefits of a demographic dividend for an accelerated economic growth through building the human capital of young people with quality education, health care and decent work. The Constitution of Nepal 2015 recognises people as the center for sustainable development and has protected sexual and reproductive health rights, safe motherhood, gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

Mr. Chair,

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 National Population Policy 2015 based on the post-ICPD framework 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.

Nepal also presented its national mid-term review of 2013 Asia and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (APMD) which is a commitment of the Government to take mid-term stock of the progress and challenges in relation to advancing the ICPD agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

As the country has transformed from unitary into a federal structure, Nepal is making intensive efforts to strengthen coordination within the government tiers and other partners for the effective implementation of the ICPD Program of Action in synergy with the ambitious 2030 Agenda. Socio-economic transformation is our central priority since we achieved political stability through the 2015 Constitution.

I conclude, Mr. Chairman, by stressing the fact that the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development is an opportune time to evaluate the progresses and identify the challenges so that we would double-down specific global initiatives to further accelerate implementation.

I thank you.