



STATEMENT BY
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AT THE
52ND SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
3 APRIL 2019
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Republic of Seychelles, I would like to express my sincere congratulations on your election as the 52nd session of the Commission on Population and development.

It is a pleasure to note that the Government of Seychelles participated in the entire process of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Programme of action of the International Conference on population and development (ICPD in short), since Cairo in 1994 up to Accra in 2018, and during the review of the Addis Ababa declaration on population and development, five years after its adoption.

Throughout the twenty-five years of implementation of the ICPD agenda, it has been noted with satisfaction the strengthening of cooperation between the Government of Seychelles and the United Nations system, the UNFPA in particular. This partnership allowed Seychelles to achieve several objectives of the programme of action of the ICPD and to make progress in terms of sustainable development.

The demographic transition is relatively advanced in the Seychelles. The total fertility rate has been declining since the 1960s and is about replacement level, estimated at 2.3 children per woman in December 2017 while life expectancy increased to 74.3 years. The proportion of people over the age of 65 years is substantial, about 8.8%, compared to children and youth less than 20 years old which is relatively low, or 26.2 per cent. The Seychelles have a relatively high Human Development Index of 0.772, which placed it in a high development category and in the second place in Africa after Mauritius.

The basic needs in the field of education, health, family planning and maternal and neonatal health are being mostly met. The principles of gender equality is enshrined in all sectors of social and economic life and at all levels.

Mr. Chair,

Despite the favourable economic situation, the country faces many challenges that affect the living conditions of its population. The level of youth unemployment (22.5%) is high. The education system produces a large number of young people with academic skills and knowledge who do not always responds to the needs of the labour market. The country is facing a shortage of labour for less skilled jobs, forcing it to rely on foreign labour to fill the gap.

Adolescents and youth also face difficulties of access to reproductive health services adapted to their needs.

The system of social protection is focused on the elderly in view of the ageing of populations at the expense of young people who are unable to enter the job market. Professional mobility and the flexibility of the labour market are very limited.

The incidence of gender-based violence is significant. About 58 percent of women and 43% of men are victims of violence based on gender in their lifetime.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Seychelles fully agree with the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General on the review and assessment of the Programme of action of the ICPD and its contribution to the follow-up of the implementation of the Programme of sustainable development vision 2030

Our Government is committed to continue in its efforts to implement this program which is consistent with our national priorities.

Indeed, in terms of health, the existing strategy 2016-2020, major goal is universal coverage of health services, as well as the promotion of the well-being of the Seychellois. This plan aims to improve the life expectancy of the population at birth by preventing Non-Communicable diseases which is the main causes of the death. This plan also aims to reduce by 50% the fertility of females 15-19 years in providing answers to be adapted to the needs of adolescents and youth reproductive health.

The Government also has in place a national policy of Sexual Reproductive Health which the objective is to promote safe sex and to ensure the best time to start reproductive life and ideal spacing of births.

Mr. Chair,

The Seychelles Government just signed with the UN the first ever Strategic Partnership Framework which further accelerate the implementation of the Cairo's Programme of Action on Population and Development and indeed definitely contribute to the implementation of the SDG's。 The Republic of Seychelles remains convinced of the importance of international cooperation on issues of common interests, and will spare no effort to support the common agenda of development.

Thank you.