



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

STATEMENT BY

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Chairperson, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates

Africa adopted the Addis Ababa on Population and Development in 2013. The Declaration was then officially endorsed by our Heads of State and Government in 2014 – thereby consolidating, at the highest level, political commitment to population and development issues.

The Addis Ababa Declaration provides region-specific guidance for the full implementation of ICPD. It sets out a comprehensive framework for linking population and development concerns on the continent with the 2030 Agenda and also Africa's Agenda 2063.

In 2017, African member States further adopted an operational guide and monitoring framework for the Declaration. This was the main instrument employed by the region to undertake the 5-year review of the Addis Ababa Declaration and contribute to the 25-year review of ICPD.

As part of the review process, 48 out of 54 African member States submitted national reports. For us, this is an outstanding achievement reaffirming Africa's continued commitment to ICPD.

Distinguished delegates,

Drawing on evidence from the national reports, expert consultations, academic research, and the regional conference, Africa's review report shows we have made remarkable progress since 2013 and have reason to celebrate:

- there has been steady decline in infant and under-five mortality;

- we have had a gain in life expectancy of 10.7 years since the '90s;
- more children are enrolled in primary schools and the gender gap is narrowing at this level of education;
- maternal mortality is reducing and the prevalence of deaths from HIV/AIDS and malaria lowering.

As we embrace the theme for this year, at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, we are keen to shine the spotlight on three key issues where regional commitment is vital:

- First, we need to respond to the mega population dynamics the continent is currently experiencing. Africa has been facing a rapid population growth as compared to other regions in the world. It is also experiencing major changes in age structures associated with a rapidly increasing youth population, population ageing; migration and urbanization. In designing and implementing national development plans, it is crucial to account for these demographic changes and their implications for sustainable development.
- Second, there is clear evidence that the successes of the past 25 years cannot be sustained unless governments tackle the inequalities that hurt the poorest and most marginalized. Laws must be passed and implemented; budgets must be allocated to protect those who are affected by poverty and discrimination – including women, people living with disabilities, the youth and people in rural areas. Our continental report is another call for Africa to act in the face of inequality.

- Third, Africa needs to invest in the production of high quality statistical information and data. A data revolution would afford our continent to generate its own vibrant evidence to enable proper planning and better measurement of population and development outcomes.

ECA, stands ready to continue supporting member States achieve inclusive sustainable development.

Our work, will continue to be strengthened by the strong partnership we enjoy from the African Union Commission (AUC) and UNFPA.

Since Cairo, we have worked closely to spearhead the regional reviews and provide intergovernmental platforms to translate the ICPD aspirations into African realities.

We will support member States in implementing the recommendations of this review and we shall continue providing technical assistance to ensure that the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development achieves meaningful results for the people of Africa.

I thank you.