



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO
THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMEMORATION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF
ICPD (New York, 12 October 2009)**

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Fifteen years ago, the world came together at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo and agreed by consensus on a 20-year Programme of Action that integrated a comprehensive range of population, development and human rights issues, necessary for ensuring that each person lives a healthy and dignified life. This, 179 states agreed to make a collective effort to achieve, among others universal access to education, to reduce infant child and maternal mortality. Notwithstanding that the conference had a positive impact on poverty eradication and economic development, there remain considerable challenges and gaps, including as a result of the economic and financial crisis, that need to be addressed in order to attain the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) along with the path to attaining the conference goals. This is why today's meeting is an important and timely event in order to recommit ourselves to the attainments of the objective embodied in ICPD.

According to the MDGs Report 2009, which integrates many of the ICPD goals, least progress has been made towards MDG 3, 4, 5 and 6 which are identified in the Programme of Action adopted in 1994 as they relate to economic and social development. In this context, most developing countries have experienced a major reduction of donor funding for family planning on a per woman basis since the mid 90s. Gender parity in education has yet to be achieved in the developing countries. The report shows that the target of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 in developing countries was missed. The disadvantage for girls' enrollment persists at higher level of education. Regarding health, there has been little progress when it comes to reducing maternal mortality: 480 maternal deaths per 100,000 births registered in 1990 compared to 450 deaths in 2005.

While some regions in the developing countries witnessed a substantial decline in maternal death, others made little improvement, and women in these regions face the greatest lifetime risk of dying as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. The number of people newly infected with HIV peaked in some regions in 1996 and has declined to 2.7 millions in 2007 worldwide. Unfortunately, in some areas in the least developed countries, the number of HIV prevalence has almost doubled since 2001 and two-thirds of those living with HIV in certain other areas are women.

A fully functional, efficient and quality health system is essential for the realization of the ICPD Programme of Action and the MDG health-related goals. Many countries have health care systems which are deficient in infrastructure and human resources. We believe that the achievement of the MDG 8 regarding a global partnership for development is crucial for those countries to improve and strengthen the capacity of their health systems to ensure the availability, accessibility and quality of

services, with the support of the international community. What we need is a real and strong will to enhance adequate financing and effective delivery to the principles agreed, as well as streamlining and harmonizing aid operations.

The Group of 77 and China firmly believes that the principles, goals and objectives set out in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, as well as in other outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, provide the comprehensive framework for international development. The implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action is crucial for the eradication of extreme poverty as well as the achievement of the other Millennium Development Goals. The group believes that population issues must be addressed in a comprehensive manner as outlined in the ICPD Programme of Action.

The G77 and China notes with concern that the resources directed towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development has been consistently below target. To address this concern, donors, UN organizations and other international organizations must work together to enhance financial and technical support to developing countries, including in the field of capacity building towards achievement of ICPD principles and goals.

With only five years remaining until the end of the ICPD Programme of Action, and being past the mid-point of the MDGs, it is vital for the United Nations Member States to recognize gaps and challenges, to consolidate lessons learned, and to reaffirm their commitments, along with redoubling their efforts, while sustaining the achievements and increasing resources to accelerate progress towards the fulfillment of the Programme of Action and the MDGs.

In the conclusion I would like to thank you Mr. president for organizing this meeting and I would like to take this opportunity to express our group's appreciation to Ms. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund UNFPA, for her informative statement and her outstanding contribution.

I thank you, Mr. President.