



Check Against Delivery

STATEMENT

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR CRISPIN GREY-JOHNSON
CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

AT

**THE PANEL DISCUSSION ON “THE 10-YEAR REVIEWS OF
CAIRO, BEIJING AND COPENHAGEN CONFERENCES” DURING
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL COORDINATION
SEGMENT**

**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
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Mr. President,

As Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development, I am delighted to participate in this important panel discussion on the lessons of the 10-year reviews of major United Conferences. I shall be drawing from the experience of the review and appraisal of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in 1994, and situating it within the broader context of the United Nations Development Agenda.

The first review of the outcome of the ICPD was undertaken five years after the Conference, in a process that culminated in the adoption, by the 21st Special Session of the General Assembly in 1999, of a set of “Key Actions for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD”. By the time the preparations for the 10-year review began, the interest of the international community for large-scale review events, conducted periodically as stand alone special sessions, had diminished. Instead, the question of how best to ensure an integrated follow-up to the major United Nations development conferences and summits of the 1990s had become paramount. Thus, after extensive debate in the Commission on Population and Development and ECOSOC on the most appropriate modalities for an ICPD+10 event, it was agreed to carry out the exercise as a technical review, in the framework of a regular session of the Commission (the Thirty-Seventh session held in 2004). That decision was consistent with General Assembly resolution 57/270B, reaffirming the primary responsibility of the functional commissions for the review and assessment of progress made in implementing the outcomes of United Nations conferences. The debates of that session benefited from the heightened participation of numerous member and observer States, representatives from United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as representatives from accredited intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. This review resulted in the adoption of Resolution 2004/2 on the “Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development”.

Mr. President,

As is now widely recognized, population is at the very root of the development process. The components of population change — births, deaths and migration — encompass the most basic,

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and intimate, concerns of human life. For whole societies, these basic events produce rates of population increase or decrease, and shape the age structure of populations and the geographic patterns of human settlements. These patterns influences and are influenced by the social, economic, political and environmental processes that are the key concerns in the quest for sustainable development. They are central to our present well-being and central to our future prospects as societies, and as individuals and families within societies.

One of the achievements of the Programme of Action of the ICPD was that it framed population issues in a way that made them immediately recognizable as crucial for sustainable development. The Programme included recommendations regarding the young and the old, women and men, girls and boys, families, rural and urban groups, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, etc. It considered population in relation to the environment, and it emphasized the needs of the poor and actions that would lift them out of poverty. The Programme of Action dealt with issues that are now receiving heightened international attention, including international migration, population ageing, and the demographic and developmental dimension of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It identified qualitative and quantitative goals in a number of key areas, including, among others, universal access to the knowledge and means for achieving reproductive health; goals regarding education, especially for girls; gender equity and equality; mortality and health, stressing infant, child and maternal mortality; and also stressed the need to combat the emerging HIV epidemic. Thus, the Programme of Action remains a vibrant and inspiring document because it highlights the development dimensions of the critical population issues of our time.

The review and appraisal carried out in 2004 identified many signs of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action. However, it also noted that progress had often been marred by the emergence or increase of inequalities, as whole countries or particular population groups were not all uniformly lifted by the tide of progress. For instance:

- While the global rate of population growth had decreased, the least developed countries were generally still experiencing very high population growth rates. This was of great concern to most of the Governments in the less developed regions.

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- In the area of mortality, it was found that one hundred countries, representing nearly half of the world population, had met the Programme of Action goal of reaching a life expectancy at birth greater than 70 years by 2005. However, 36 countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, still had life expectancies below 50 years. Furthermore, many countries have experienced a stagnation of mortality and some have seen their life expectancy plummet mainly because of the impact of HIV/AIDS, the associated re-emergence of infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, and the effects of conflict.
- In the key area of reproductive health, the review showed that many countries had established reproductive health programmes, expanded access to them and improved their quality. Nevertheless, many millions continued to lack access to the means of achieving reproductive health; and the risk of maternal mortality remained unacceptably high in many countries.
- The increased levels of international migration, whereby the vast majority of migrants make a meaningful contribution to their host countries, was found also to entail the loss of human resources so vital for the development process of many of the countries of origin, and to give rise to political, economic or social tensions in a number of receiving countries.
- One area in which the Conference goals clearly had not been met was in mobilizing financial resources to implement the Programme of Action. The outcome document of the ICPD+10 review reflects a deep preoccupation with the shortfall of resources, urging donor countries to fulfill their commitments with regard to population assistance and calling upon both donors and developing countries to make every effort to fulfill their commitment to the funding of the Programme of Action.

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Mr. President,

The ICPD+10 review took place in the context of a development debate increasingly guided by the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The outcome of the review, Resolution 2004/2, not only reaffirmed the Millennium Declaration, but also stressed that the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions would make an essential contribution to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration”. The Resolution also reiterated that Governments should continue to commit themselves at the highest political level to achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action, inter alia, through the integration of the Programme of Action national policies and programmes of poverty education.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the ICPD+10 deeply underscored the continued relevance of the ICPD Programme of Action to the broader United Nations development agenda on which the entire international system is now focused.

Thank you for your attention.

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