

Statement by President Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad,
to the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the
Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on
Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014

New York, 22 September 2014

Heads of State and Government;
Mr. President of the General Assembly;
Mr. Secretary-General;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Chad is honoured to be invited to this special session, the culmination of an exciting process conducted over many months at country, sub-regional and continental level. In this context, I would like express my country's gratitude to the United Nations Population Fund for its support in carrying out the various assessments of Chad's implementation of the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Twenty years ago, in Cairo, we undertook a solemn commitment to work to ensure universal access to reproductive healthcare for our population, defend fundamental human rights, alleviate the burden of poverty, guarantee gender equality, prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and protect the environment.

At this time of review, it is clear that, like most of the countries which signed up to the historic agreement in Cairo, Chad has made considerable progress in implementing the ICPD Plan of Action. To quote just some of the achievements:

- (1) a consolidation of democracy;

- (2) a decline in the incidence of income poverty by 8.3 percentage points between 2003 and 2011;
- (3) the implementation of environmental protection programmes;
- (4) the adoption and implementation of several strategies to protect young people and adolescents;
- (5) a strengthening of legal, political and strategic systems promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- (6) the implementation of numerous measures in reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and the combating of violence towards women;
- (7) a quantitative and qualitative improvement in the education of young people, especially girls.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you will note, we have worked to reform the legal environment, making it more supportive of human rights for all sections of our society. Substantial work has been done in terms of access to education and health for our young people, and also in terms of the protection of girls and the advancement of women.

As a result of the Maternal Health Act passed in 2002, there is now full access to a wide range of sexual health and reproductive services for women and couples. The Chad government has worked to a steady increase in the budgets allocated to the two social sectors of education and health. In 2014, 13% of the State budget is allocated to health.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I mentioned earlier, it must be noted and recognized from the country level analysis that, in spite of our efforts, we have only partially met the targets we set ourselves in Cairo in 1994.

The tragedy of maternal mortality is still a reality in our communities, our women and girls still lose their babies in childbirth all too often, while our young people still lack full protection against the ravages of sexually transmitted infections and HIV. We have still not reached full employment and too many of our girls are still subjected to unacceptable violence in our towns and villages.

These concerns, acknowledged with full responsibility at national level by our respective governments and civil societies, led us to the common position we expressed in the Declaration adopted last January following the African Union summit on the future for the ICPD Plan of Action beyond 2014.

In the Addis Ababa Declaration, we reaffirmed our commitment to continue to work over the coming decades to assure our people of Dignity and Equality and improved access to healthcare, including reproductive healthcare and family planning, all within a framework of international cooperation and strengthened partnership.

We are particularly pleased to note the relevance of our views and to find we are completely in accord with the conclusions and recommendations of the global review reflected in the United Nations Secretary-General's Report A/69/62, "Framework of Actions for the Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014".

I would therefore like to formally express here the support of my country and of the Chad government for this new ICPD Framework of Actions beyond 2014, in the strong hope that these highly relevant concerns will also be reflected and integrated into the global Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Long live international cooperation,

Thank you for your kind attention.