

Special Session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014, 22 September 2014, New York

Statement of Sao Tome and Principe

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We take this opportunity to welcome the report of the Secretary-General, entitled “Framework of actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014” and the report on the interactive debate of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development.

We are happy to have contributed to the global survey for the review of the ICPD beyond 2014 and note that we have made considerable progress in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, including:

- The establishment of comprehensive services relating to sexual and reproductive health;
- The provision of information and education on sexuality for adolescents;
- Increasing demographic and economic data to aid planning;
- The creation of a legal framework able to deal with gender issues;
- Improvements to institutional and political frameworks to facilitate the participation of young people in the planning process.

Nevertheless, we are aware of the remaining challenges to be addressed to improve the quality of life of our population, ensure equality and equity and protect the environment for future generations.

We share the conclusions of the review which demonstrate that, despite significant progress in poverty reduction and economic growth since the International Conference on Population and Development, much remains to be done in order to satisfy basic needs and provide access to decent employment, social protection, health services and education; many people still face significant obstacles to their enjoyment of their human rights.

We are happy to note that human rights and equality were the basis for the report's analytical approach. We share the report's conclusion that investing in individual rights, capacities and dignity in the various sectors of the ICPD is the basis of sustainable development.

The emphasis on the increase in inequalities in wealth and income; the weak response to gender inequality and autonomy for women; the need for learning and building human capacities, particularly among young people; and removing inequalities in access to sexual and reproductive health care services, particularly by reinforcing health systems has significant impact on development policy.

The impact of population dynamics at the micro and macro levels also necessitates the inclusion of population matters in development planning.

We agree that the developmental challenges we are facing require the systematic participation of all stakeholders, particularly young people, who represent 38 per cent of our population, in the drawing up of responses to these challenges, as well as regional and global partnership and leadership.

In that regard, we are happy to reiterate our support expressed during the regional review of the implementation of the ICPD beyond 2014, where we signed up to the adoption of the regional action plan for the follow-up to the application of the Programme of Action of the ICPD.

We are fully committed to continuing efforts to apply the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development by taking into account the results of our regional review as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the review of the ICPD beyond 2014.

We call for the inclusion of the conclusions and recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General and the results of the regional review in the post-2015 development agenda.

My country is proud to join the international community by reaffirming its support for the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the comprehensive approach of the actions presented in the report of the Secretary- General.

Thank you for your attention.