

COLOMBIA

Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations

Intervention of the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia

Ms. Patti Londoño

Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations

New York, 22 September 2014

Please check against speech as delivered

Mr President,

Colombia is grateful for this opportunity to emphasize its commitment to the population and development agenda and its continuation beyond 2014.

In 1994 we undertook to implement the Cairo Action Plan, to guarantee to all a life that is free of discrimination, under conditions of fairness, free of poverty and with the full respect of all rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.

We established the objective of fully implementing the Action Plan by 2014, and since then we have made extensive and far-reaching progress benefiting all of our population groups. In the case of Colombia, this agenda played a fundamental role in guiding public policy in this area.

Colombia has made significant progress in the fight against poverty. More than 2.5 million people have escaped from poverty in the last 4 years, a statistic that is based not solely on a limited measurement of income but rather on a multi-dimensional assessment incorporating variables such as education, health and employment, among others. This multi-dimensional vision of poverty allows us to measure a real transformation in people's quality of life, one that is sustainable over time.

Our country also has a comprehensive human rights policy with a differentiated focus that incorporates the needs of children, young people and adolescents, women, the LGBTI population, indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, people with disabilities and the elderly. Our achievements include work designed to eradicate maternal mortality, to reduce infant mortality and to prevent adolescent pregnancy.

The population and development agenda has helped us to design and implement specific actions aimed at guaranteeing the sexual and reproductive rights of all, without discrimination, and at ensuring universal human rights. For this reason, Colombia has argued for a specific target to be set in this area within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The synergy between the population and development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is undeniable, and reflects the fact that development is a multi-dimensional issue that must focus on people.

In this General Assembly we have come together to discuss Sustainable Development Goals. It is important that we remember that these goals have the potential to transform the lives and realities of people, populations and States, and that they constitute a valuable tool in our efforts to meet the targets established at Cairo in 1994.

Thank you.