



Republic of Nicaragua

**H.E Maria E. Rubiales, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations
Special Session of the General Assembly on the Follow-Up to the Programme of Action of the
International Conference on Population and Development**

New York, September 22, 2014

(Please check against delivery)

Mr President,

Friends

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Bolivia on behalf of the G77 + China, and we would like to make additional comments in our own capacity at this important special event on the follow up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Mr President,

The Programme of Action adopted in Cairo in 1994 is an agreement that approved a 20-year strategy for maintaining the linkages between population and development. One of the most important aspects is that the document is focused on meeting the needs of individuals – particularly women – rather than achieving demographic targets.

Although these 20 years will be completed at the end of 2014, Nicaragua would like to renew its political support beyond 2014 for the measures necessary to fulfil the goals and objectives as set out in resolution A/RES/67/250, and we call on other governments to join us.

Mr President,

Since the Programme of Action was agreed, there are fewer people living in extreme poverty, gender equality has gained ground, and more people are living longer and healthier lives. However, the exclusion of some groups places these gains at risk. Today there is an urgent responsibility to create opportunities, above all for women and young people.

In Nicaragua we recognize that young people are a key axis of development and we promote the real and effective participation of young people in the process of economic, social, political and cultural transformation of the country. Nicaragua is a country of young people, and as a result it has developed the National Employment Plan for Dignified and Decent Work, designed a tool for creating and promoting quality employment and productive work for young people in Nicaragua. This affords dignity to young people, and respects their labour rights and social inclusion.

In our region of Latin America and the Caribbean, we welcomed the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, the final document which makes a call to facilitate the implementation and follow-up of the Cairo Programme of Action after 2014. However, much remains to be done: in our region maternal health has seen setbacks, gender-based wage inequality persists, and reproductive rights are not always available to vulnerable

women. Nevertheless, our governments are insisting on improving women's access to education, health, employment, social protection and economic empowerment.

Nicaragua values and promotes the participation of women as drivers of change and generators of development. This means the real and effective participation of women as direct actors. In order to promote the labour rights of Nicaraguan women, the government has created the Office of Equality and Non-Discrimination in Employment, part of the Ministry of Labour, and the Inter-Agency Network for Equality and Non-Discrimination in Employment. An example of the success of this effort by our government is that women hold 50 per cent of positions in all state institutions. In the case of the central government, of the 12 ministries it comprises, 6 are led by women.

Meanwhile, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2013, Nicaragua remains the most advanced country in the region in terms of gender equality, ranking number 10 in the global index, and number 5 in the area of political empowerment. This report measures countries' ability to close the gender gap in four key areas: health and survival; educational attainment; political empowerment, and economic participation and opportunity.

Mr President,

Now that we are agreeing an intergovernmental process to design the post-2015 calendar, this is the time to call for the implementation of the Programme of Action, integrating the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals, and suitably modifying and updating them so that, post-2015, they reflect the social and economic dimensions; however, as previously stated, the development of these goals should not divert attention or effort away from achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

As a measure, it is essential that the global targets contribute, taking into account that each country has the right to apply the recommendations of the Programme of Action and the Montevideo Consensus in line with its own laws and development priorities.

Fulfilment of the Programme of Action requires the international community to renew its political will. We call on it to continue strengthening closer cooperation with regional and international development agencies, such as UNFPA, and between sub-regional entities and groups. We further encourage the promotion of North-South, South-South and Triangular regional and extra-regional cooperation in order to build up a system of global economic governance that is fair and sensitive to the needs and interests of developing countries and their populations.

Thank you very much, Mr President