



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA



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STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. DR. MWABA P. KASESE-BOTA
AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

ON

**THE DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEM 13(B) ENTITLED
"FOLLOW-UP TO THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT"**

New York
9 October 2014

Mr. President,

Zambia wishes to recall with satisfaction the outcome of the UNGA Special Session (UNGASS), including the commitments made by world leaders as well as the decision of the General Assembly to take note of the deliberations of the Special session on the findings and recommendations of the report on the ICPD beyond 2014 review.

We are pleased to have contributed to the global survey for the ICPD beyond 2014 review which highlighted progress made and challenges that still daunt the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Mr. President,

We reiterate our support to the views expressed in the context of the Africa regional review of the implementation of the ICPD beyond 2014 where we joined in the adoption of the regional plan of action for implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the importance of harnessing Africa's demographic dividends given its youthful population.

Zambia wishes to stress that the ICPD beyond 2014 review has significant linkages and implications for the Beijing +20 reviews as well as the Post 2015 Development Agenda and call for the strengthening of those outcomes through the integration of the findings and recommendations of the review.

Mr. President,

As we had highlighted during the special session Zambia has a young population with 45.5 percent of persons being categorized as such. The Government of Zambia, with support from various stakeholders, has therefore prioritized investments in the development needs of young people. These include:

1. Investments in higher education – The Government of Zambia is making infrastructural investments in secondary and tertiary education in order to meet the higher education needs of its youthful population.
2. Comprehensive Sexuality Education – the Government has integrated Comprehensive Sexuality Education into the school curriculum in order ensure that young people have access to age-appropriate information that will enable them make informed life choices and decisions
3. Harnessing the Demographic Dividend – The Government of Zambia is spearheading a national Demographic Dividend study that will inform the attainment of economic gains resulting from bold and strategic investments in health, education and job creation

4. Youth friendly services – the country is continuing to invest in the Sexual Reproductive Health and reproductive right needs of young people through the provision of youth friendly information and services
5. Ending Child Early and Forced Marriages – The Government is coordinating a multi-sectoral initiative to end child marriages which remain prevalent in Zambia. Apart from addressing socio-cultural issues that drive the problem, a marriage bill is in place which is currently undergoing consultations. The bill address among other things, formalizing the age of marriage at 18 under both customary and statutory law, consenting of the two parties and all marriages whether customary, civil and religious will now be required to be registered upon meeting the stipulated criteria.
6. National Youth Policy – the policy has been reviewed to incorporate new and emerging issues relating to young people.

Mr. President,

The Government of Zambia (GRZ) has stressed that meaningful development cannot take place without addressing the fundamental gender issues and particularly those of women's empowerment that continue to constrain development. Addressing gender equality and women's empowerment is, therefore, central to Zambia's development agenda.

The Revised National Gender Policy therefore remains the principal tool for Government for advancing the status of women. Gender inequality is exacerbated by socio-cultural norms that prevent women from having equal access to education, health and labor market opportunities. Although the country has achieved gender parity in education, more remains to be done to ensure equal access in other areas of development including higher education. In order to attain the above, some Legal and Policy Framework have been put in place.

Zambia recognizes that sexual and reproductive health and reproductive right are essential for all people to achieve dignity and contribute to sustainable development through the realization of individual self-potential. The achievement of the SRHR depends on strengthening health systems by expanding their reach and comprehensiveness. The Government remains committed to increase national budgetary expenditure on health with a focus on women and children and increase access to Family Planning services.

- i. Zambia is therefore making the following investments:
 - I. implementation of commitments made at the London 2012 Family Planning summit which include the double budgetary allocation to Family Planning Commodities, striving to eliminate the unmet need for FP, and improve

- universal coverage through an expanded method mix and increased access, particularly to the underserved population
- II. Construction of 650 health posts in all districts in the country in order to bring health services closer to the people, especially in rural areas
 - III. Implementation of sector devolution

Mr. President

Zambia, reaffirms its commitment to the resolution of the 47th session of the Commission on Population and Development that called for the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions for its implementation beyond 2014. These include sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, population and development, education and gender equality and equity which are integrally linked to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development.

Mr. President

Zambia acknowledges the support rendered by our Cooperating Partners including United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD. In this regard, we wish to support the outcome of the special session in all the organs of the UN, including in the Executive Board and the Commission on Population and Development and to support countries in the further implementation of the ICPD agenda, taking into account the findings and recommendations of the ICPD beyond 2014 review.

I thank you.