

Madam Chair

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission on Population and Development. Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by Latvia on behalf of the European Union.

2015 is a pivotal year for international development, and Ireland is honoured to be playing a leading role

in shaping a new global framework to follow on from the Millennium Development Goals. Ireland has been a leading voice on the need for continued progress on MDG 3 on gender equality, and MDG 5 on

maternal mortality. As we look towards the new development agenda, we are reminded that realising

the vision of the MDGs is not only essential if we are to eliminate maternal and child mortality, but also essential for other important goals such as health, education, gender equality and women's

empowerment

Access to quality maternal and reproductive healthcare, supporting safe motherhood and allowing

As highlighted in the most recent *State of the World's Population Report*, unless we take account of the particular vulnerabilities, needs and rights of youth in the post-2015 agenda, we will miss the key demographic cohort which has the potential and power to ensure a more sustainable world for all.

Girls' Education

Statistically, we know that girls who are educated longer, are more likely to marry later and to delay

improved life opportunities. This is critical in countries where the leading cause of death for girls between 15 and 19 is related to pregnancy and childbirth.

It remains the case that 50% of girls in the poorest countries do not attend secondary school. Ireland is therefore working closely with civil society organisations and governments in these countries to