

Ministerial Meeting  
Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development  
10 Year Continental Review  
09 – 10 November 2023, Lusaka, Zambia

Remarks  
Ambassador Noer ESPINOZA MADRID  
Chair of the fiftyseventh session of the Commission on Population and Development

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

I bring you greetings of solidarity and friendship from the first female president of Honduras, H.E. Xiomara Castro and from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Eduardo Enrique Reina. Allow me to especially greet Her Honour Mrs. W.K. Nalumango, Vice President of the Republic of Zambia. Thank you for honoring us with your presence today. I would like to acknowledge H.E. Ambassador Minata Samate Cessouma, Commissioner of the AU.

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Holding this ministerial meeting is of the utmost importance in the current context. We are on the brink of the 30th anniversary of the existence of the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), and the 10th anniversary of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development. Both agreements represent the great commitment that governments have made to this comprehensive and broad agenda that seeks the well-being of all people on our planet. The global community has the responsibility to reaffirm that commitment. Urgent issues such as the climate crisis facing the planet, demographic changes and migration demand our action.

Since 1994, the world has made remarkable progress.

On average, people today live 9 years longer globally, and even 13 years longer in sub-Saharan Africa, than they did in 1994. At the same time, the use of modern contraceptive methods in sub-Saharan Africa has tripled, from 10 to 30 per cent, while infant and child mortality have fallen dramatically, and the school enrolment of girls has risen sharply.

Yet, the world is also facing numerous challenges.

In November 2022, the global population reached 8 billion, 2.5 billion more than in 1994. Even though fertility rates are declining worldwide, pockets of high fertility persist. In 26 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, women have on average 4 or more children.

Whereas the global share of the older population is increasing, the absolute number of older persons in Africa is still relatively small.

When fertility rates are falling and the number of older persons is still relatively small, the workingage population represents an increasing share of the total population. Taking advantage of the rapid growth in the workingage population, countries may be able to benefit from a demographic dividend.

What I want to say is what we all know, our current world is full of opportunities and also what seem like overwhelming crisis

As I transited through Doha on my way here, I noticed a large electronic advertisement that read:

“Should we arbitrate life and death at a round table or a square one?  
Meanwhile, people perished. Animals died. Houses burned down.”

It made me think of what we tend to do at the United Nations discuss the parameters of the table, whilst people are dying.

There is no doubt that our current world faces interconnected challenges and that only seem to worsen by conflicts and so called “natural” disasters.

Yet, as I noted at the beginning we have in our hands, at our disposal, a rich and holistic agenda on population and development that outlines clear solutions to achieving all of the SDGs. We

change, human rights, demographic changes but we have been bogged down discussing the parameters of the task. Should it be round or should it be square? This is not the time to stop, we must act. People are dying, our common home is burning down.

The 10-year review of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development is a great opportunity to identify challenges and make the most of the lessons learned. This is an opportunity to improve public policies and implement strategic actions that allow you to move forward in your

Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”.

Last April, I was honored to be elected as the President of the 57th session of the Commission on Population and Development. This assignment bolsters the acknowledgement and credibility of the Government of the first woman President of Honduras, Her Excellency Xiomara Castro, and contributes to promote inclusive, egalitarian and sustainable development for my country, my region and the world.

During my tenure of the presidency for the 57th session of the CPD, working with all countries to strengthen the Commission for it is the intergovernmental body mandated to follow-up on the implementation of the Program of Action. The CPD is the home of the ICPD. The ICPD is an integral, ambitious and indispensable agenda for development as Member States must use a fundamental way to achieve the SDGs and as we look towards the Summit of the Future.

The celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Program of Action is something that must not go unnoticed and, therefore, during the CPD Week, we will hold a commemorative event in the General Assembly. It is only natural to commemorate the ICPD during the week that its home, the CPD, meets.

I am certain that by listening to each other, all 193 Member States of the United Nations can agree on the centrality of the ICPD agenda.



I thank you once again for this space. The presidency of the CPD will be exciting to witness all of your significant results. I look forward to seeing you in New York next April.