

Republic of Tunisia
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Speech to be delivered by Dr. Mohamed Saleh ben Ammar,
Minister of Public Health,
on the Occasion of the Twenty-Ninth Extraordinary Session of
the United Nations General Assembly on the Beyond 2014
Action Programme
of the International Conference on
Population and Development (ICPD)

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*The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Tunisia
to the United Nations
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Honourable Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Secretary General,
Esteemed monarchs and rulers,
Esteemed ladies and gentlemen:

First of all, it is my pleasure to express sincerest thanks and appreciation to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and, through him, to all UN structures, for the efforts that have been made toward achieving prosperity and a decent life for all the world's population.

The scheduling of a special session of the UN General Assembly to follow up on the action programme of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) bears eloquent testimony to the importance the United Nations has accorded this topic. We all realize the vital nature of issues relating to population and development in view of their direct link to the life of the individual and all of his universal rights, including the right to enjoy a decent life and equal development opportunities.

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen:

The International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994 represented a milestone in the area of development and population, having established a new approach to population and development founded upon the principles of respect for human rights and the guarantee of human dignity for all without distinction or prejudice. The ICPD had visible, concrete effects which manifested themselves through a number of indicators that have registered qualitative progress in numerous areas, including efforts to eliminate poverty, promote the spread of education, eliminate numerous epidemics, and improve reproductive health.

However, while Tunisia appreciates the qualitative developmental leap in living standards made over the past two decades and the efforts made by all intervening parties, a number of weaknesses and deficiencies nevertheless remain. Wide sectors of the population in numerous regions across the world, including children, women, youths, the elderly, and those with special needs, are marginalized and excluded,

Tunisia has taken part in a variety of major regional and international events of relevance to population issues. Moreover, it recently embraced the agenda of the 28th ministerial session of the UN Economic and Social Committee for West Asia (ESCWA), which was held under the slogan, "Challenges and Opportunities of Social Justice in the Arab Region."

This interactive movement, together with the recommendations and resolutions of regional and international conferences and seminars, has served to move Tunisian population policy in the direction of deepening the relationship between population, development and the environment, incorporating these elements into development plans and sectoral policies, and rooting the components of investment in the human sphere.

Tunisia has achieved progress in the area of advancing women and improving their conditions, promoting gender equity and amending relevant legislation, creating institutions and mechanisms supportive of the family, women, young people, children,

