



STATEMENT BY

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MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE FOLLOW-UP  
TO THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD),

22 SEPTEMBER 2014, NEW YORK

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Your Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

From the outset, let me affirm that the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) remains relevant today, as it was in 1994 in Cairo.

Since the ICPD, Zimbabwe has made significant progress towards addressing population issues within the context of its development framework. We have adopted a population issues from the overall development agenda.

Mr. President,

We note the great impact of rapid population dynamics as well as urban development. Rapid population growth and increasing urbanization are some of the major population and development challenges facing many developing countries, including Zimbabwe. Increased rates of population growth in urban areas have resulted in increased pressure on existing infrastructure, while rural areas have remained lagging behind. A significant number of residents of these areas often grapple with inadequate water, sanitation and energy infrastructure.

Mr. President,

Zimbabwe's efforts on population and development have paid significant attention to the human rights underpinnings of the Programme of Action. This has led to impressive improvements in the areas of gender equality and the empowerment of women, access to family planning, as well as expanded access to education for all. In the course of combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic, we have also derived valuable lessons which have helped us to strengthen our health systems.

Many developing countries, including my own, continue to grapple with unacceptably high maternal mortality rates as well as infant and neonatal deaths. We therefore believe that strong political will needs to be combined with sound strategies and policies to break the death traps for women.

Mr. President,

Going forward, I urge all of us here gathered to do more in addressing other critical matters identified in the Programme of Action such as the needs of elders, people with disabilities and children.

In fulfilling our obligations contained in the Programme of Action, discussions on administrative matters must always respect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our responsibilities in prioritising interventions and programmes.

In conclusion, let me exhort all of us to rededicate our collective efforts towards timely implementing the Programme of Action of the ICPD.

**Mr President, I thank you!**