



Statement

by

Mr. Hassan Abbas

**at the
forty-ninth session**

**of the
Commission on Population and Development**

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Check against delivery

***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
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Mrs. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you and the members of your bureau on your election, and I wish you all success in running our deliberations.

Mrs. Chairman,

The 49th session of the Commission on Population and Development comes at a crucial time in the global development agenda, only a few months after the adoption of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Most of the Programme's priorities are addressed in many of the SDG's, whether we're talking about poverty eradication, achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions, human rights, gender equality, migration, healthcare or education. The Commission's discussions this Session and in the following years will feed as an important input on the issues of Population and Development into the High Level Political Forum, the main body that will monitor and review the progress in the implementation of the global goals and targets. Lebanon assigns a particular significance to the pivotal role of the CPD throughout the implementation phase of Agenda 2030.

In this regard, I reaffirm Lebanon's commitment to the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, including those areas related to the respect, protection and promotion of human rights, including the right to development, achieving sustainable economic growth, reducing inequalities, protecting the environment, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, ensuring their universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and ensuring universal quality health-care and education for all.

In the last 22 years, Lebanon, in cooperation with UNFPA and other relevant agencies and civil society, has achieved a considerable progress in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action's objectives, by adopting a series of laws and programs in the fields of the provision of quality sexual and reproductive healthcare, family planning, combating HIV/AIDS, incorporating population concerns into school curricula, regulating the conditions of the ageing and persons with disabilities. The highlights of those achievements were the adoption in 2012 of the National Youth Policy and the National Strategy for Women 2011-2021 and its plan of action, and most recently the adoption in 2014 of the Law on Domestic Violence.

Mrs. Chairman,

In the last few years, the Middle East has witnessed a massive wave of forced displacement, unprecedented since the end of World War II. As a result of the ongoing crisis in Syria, millions of people have been forced to leave their homes and livelihoods to safer places within Syria and across the borders to neighbouring countries, including Lebanon where more than 1.2 million Syrian refugees currently reside, and then across the Mediterranean to Europe and beyond.

This has placed immense social, demographic, environmental and economic pressures on host communities, exacerbating vulnerabilities, overstressing limited resources and basic social services such as health, water, sanitation, housing capacities, energy and education, aggravating unemployment, and affecting stability and security.

Failure to address this serious situation could derail further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in Lebanon, with even the possibility of reversal in some areas.

Agenda 2030 and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have both recognized the importance of addressing the challenges of humanitarian crises, including strengthening the resilience of host communities. We believe that this could best be achieved through improved coherence and coordination between UN agencies at the national and regional levels, and through the provision of sufficient and predictable long term developmental assistance to host communities, in addition to the shorter term humanitarian assistance.

Finally Mrs. Chairman,

Despite all the challenges posed by the recent refugee crisis, Lebanon continues to believe that migration, when conducted in a safe and orderly manner, enriches the economies and societies of destination countries through the increased productivity and diversity brought in by migrants, and also contributes to economic growth in countries of origin, through the billions of dollars that migrants send back every year in the form of remittances.

Thank you.