

**Statement By  
Ms. Paulomi Tripathi, First Secretary  
73<sup>rd</sup> UNGA**

**High-level Plenary Meeting on  
'Commemoration of 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ICPD'  
July 17, 2019**

Madam President,

1. At the outset I would like to thank you for convening this meeting to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994.
2. An unprecedented global consensus was achieved in Cairo as ICPD marked a departure from the ongoing discussion on controlling population growth through a target-based approach. It has shifted the emphasis of population policies to improving the lives of individuals, particularly to women, to bring in demographic and societal changes.
3. This agreement that population policies should address social development, especially advancement of women, and that family planning should be provided as part of a broader package of health care, enlarged the scope of policy discussions. Underlying this new emphasis was a belief that enhancing individual health and realization of other rights would ultimately lower birth rate and slow population growth.
4. The policies spawned by this consensus continue to evolve and guide action to address challenges and opportunities arising from demographic dynamics even today.

Madam President,

5. India's commitment to the ICPD and its Programme of Action remains firm. It is evident in the policies and programmes in the context of SDG implementation. An integrated, service-oriented approach in line with the ICPD Programme of Action, continue to guide our actions towards fulfilling the needs for services and social protection, especially for the women, children, youth and older persons in pursuit of inclusive growth.
6. One sixth of global population resides in India. Rapid strides taken by India in eradication of extreme poverty have been well recognized. According to a recent UNDP report India is one of the countries that has achieved significant reduction in multidimensional poverty without leaving the poorest groups behind.
7. Financial inclusion and income security supported by innovative use of modern technology played a pivotal role in upscaling efforts to lift millions of people in India out of poverty.

8. As a step towards Universal Health Coverage, in September 2018, India has launched the world's largest healthcare programme, "National Health Protection Scheme", to provide medical treatment coverage for 500 million people.

9. India is also taking ambitious action towards preserving the environment through a renewable energy transition, eliminating plastic pollution and promoting usage of pollution free vehicles. The International Solar Alliance, championed by India and France, now joined by 76 nations, is taking strides towards tangible contribution to global climate action.

10. In 2014, India launched the largest sanitation and hygiene program in the world - the Clean India Mission to make India open defecation free and to achieve scientific waste management by 2 October 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi.

11. India is a 'young' nation, with half of the population under 25 years of age. The focus is on harnessing this demographic dividend by creating opportunities through skill and entrepreneurship development and by using digital technologies to improve access to information and knowledge. The holistic, service-oriented approach reflected in ICPD Programme of Action also remains relevant for addressing emerging challenges and opportunities in the context of urbanization and population ageing.

12. Maternal and child health has remained a priority. Substantial reduction maternal and infant mortality have been achieved by incentivizing institutional deliveries, new-born healthcare and family planning. Family planning has been integrated into the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health Strategy. India has continued its efforts to expand the range and reach of contraceptive options and to meet the unmet contraceptive needs.

13. Better health and education facilities for women, greater participation of women in governance at grassroots level coupled with enhanced access to family planning services have contributed to rapid fall in the fertility rate and population growth rate in India.

14. India has been strengthening global partnership for sustainable development through South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, India supports project to improve availability of data for tracking progress of the ICPD agenda in the framework of SDGs.

Madam President,

15. In conclusion, let me reiterate India's firm commitment to the ICPD and its Programme of Action to address current demographic challenges and opportunities both nationally and globally.

I thank you.