



STATEMENT
BY NIYI OJUOLAPE, UNFPA GHANA REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD POPULATION DAY
AT MANTSE AGBONAA, JAMES TOWN, ACCRA
ON THURSDAY, 11 JULY, 2019.

Protocol:

- The Chief Director, Office of the President
- The Executive Director of National Population Council
- Directors of Ministries, Departments and Agencies
- Heads of Parliamentary Select Committees
- Development Partners
- Representatives of NGO/CSO/FBO Community
- Representatives of Traditional and Religious Bodies
- Heads of Educational Institutions
- Distinguished Invited Guests
- The Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am very happy to be here for the *third* time this year. This time I am joining you for us to celebrate the World Population Day.

In 1989, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme recommended that 11 July be observed by the international community as World Population Day, a day to focus attention on the



urgency and importance of population issues. Each year a theme is defined to address an overarching population issue.

The theme for this year's World Population Day is "*25 years of the ICPD: accelerating the promise*", in keeping with the overall theme of the Nairobi Summit. UNFPA and partners should use this occasion as an opportunity to raise awareness about how choices and opportunities have changed for girls and women since the ICPD and to raise awareness and mobilize political support for the *Nairobi Summit on ICPD25*, to be held from 12 to 14 November 2019.

Preparation towards the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 was initiated in June with a conference on population and development. UNFPA will use the occasion of celebrating the day to work with government to consult broadly on how to finish the unfinished business of the ICPD Programme of Action. What we will arrive at as a country would be our set of commitments to take to Nairobi in November. These commitments from partner countries, put together, will facilitate UNFPA consolidation of a clear strategy for finishing off the unfinished business of the ICPD programme of action from 1994.

M/Chair

What do we term unfinished business?



At the ICPD in Cairo, what began as a discussion about population targets shifted and put the needs and aspirations of human beings at the centre of sustainable development? With this paradigm shift, 179 governments adopted the visionary Programme of Action and agreed that putting people first, empowering women, and enabling people to freely decide the timing and spacing of their pregnancies would clear the way to sustainable development.

The gains made since then are remarkable:

- In 1994, only about 15 per cent of married women in the least developed countries used a modern contraceptive. Today, 37 per cent do.
- Twenty-five years ago in the least-developed countries, nearly eight in 1,000 women died during pregnancy or childbirth. Today, that rate has been cut in half.
- A woman in a least-developed country 25 years ago had nearly six children. Today she has fewer than four.

Despite this success, we still have a long way to go before we can claim to have lived up to the commitments pledged in Cairo. In short, we still have business to do. We need to accelerate the promise made

M/ Chair



At the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25, heads of state and ministers, parliamentarians, thought-leaders, technical experts, civil society organizations, young people, business and community leaders, faith-based organizations, international financial institutions, academics and thousands of others interested in the pursuit of reproductive health and rights will come together with a common purpose: to commit to finally implementing the full ICPD Programme of Action.

That will mean a renewed focus on leaving no one behind, by achieving the “three zeros” comprising (zero avoidable maternal deaths; zero unmet need for contraceptives and zero sexual and gender based violence); by harnessing the demographic dividend, and by building inclusive and just societies, where adolescents and young people can live healthy and productive lives, where older people and people with disabilities feel included and valued in their communities, where stigmatization and discrimination have no place, and where sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are promoted, respected and protected. And the target year is 2030, the year for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

M/Chair

In Ghana, there is certainly unfinished business in all the areas specified above. Following this celebration of the population day UNFPA will collaborate with key partners comprising



Youth, CSOs; Government and the private sector to convene multiple stakeholders to discuss the Nairobi Summit, its objectives, commitments and engagement plan.

I wish you a happy celebration. Thank you.