

**PGA Remarks at the informal plenary meeting to mark the 30th Anniversary of the
International Conference on Population and Development**

29 April 2024 at 3.00 p.m. , General Assembly Hall

Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive-Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),

Mr. Li Junhua, Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs,

Your Excellency, Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President of the General Assembly at its 73rd

But we must also admit that progress has been uneven both within and among countries.

Multifaceted global crises from climate change to conflict have jeopardized many of these hard-won gains.

Despite these headwinds, visionary objectives have only grown in importance.

Universal access to quality education, gender equality and a reduction in maternal and child mortality are all essential to the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the realization of its central promise to *leave no one behind*.

Perhaps nowhere is this more visible than in unswerving focus on reducing poverty, improving access to quality education and importantly recognizing the empowerment of women and girls as a **precondition** for peace, prosperity, and the well-being of **all people**.

Today with the goal of universality still before us we are challenged to ask: *How do we build on these gains, and what must we do to address our shortcomings?*

(BRIEF PAUSE)

We must start by acknowledging that progress across the Sustainable Development Goals will surely continue to stall unless we **do more, much**

more, to bridge the gender gap and to reduce poverty and socio-economic inequality, everywhere.

We must certainly do much more to acknowledge that empowered women and girls, children and others in vulnerable situations are **central** for peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable societies and **pro – actively do much more** to support and facilitate them in the full realization of their potential.

This means we must **do much more** to leverage the power of the ICPD Programme of Action to realise a sustainable future for **people and planet**.

We must therefore take the next bold steps within the context of the ongoing negotiations for the **Summit of the Future** in September 2024 and preparations for the **World Social Summit** in 2025.

These processes are part of a continuum of efforts to deliver faster, fairer and smarter on the 2030 Agenda and to renew the social contract underpinning a reinvigorated multilateral system.

It was with this

(BRIEF PAUSE BEFORE A CLOSE)

Excellencies,

Dear friends,

In closing, it is worth recalling the apt words of Dr. Nafis Sadik, former UNFPA Executive Director, who proved to be ahead of the times in understanding that, **and I quote:**

"When the essential needs of the individual are addressed, those of larger groups – the family, the community, the nation and indeed the planet – are more likely to be kept in the right perspective.

Many of the challenges that have hampered implementation of the Programme of Action over the last 30 years continue to resonate across our societies today.

So we must find fresh, innovative ways to address and indeed surmount these challenges.

Let us, as the Programme of Action demands of us, reestablish common ground.

Let us cement our efforts, yet again, in our common humanity – the ethos of the adoption of the Programme of Action thirty years ago.

And let us rededicate ourselves, in earnest, to a shared future of **peace, prosperity, progress** and **sustainability**, for all, with all, everywhere.

I thank you.