

United States Mission to the United Nations

Explanation of Position by Miriam Hughes, Deputy U.S. Representative to ECOSOC, at the 39th Session of the Commission on Population and Development, May 10, 2006

The United States is pleased to join consensus on the two resolutions of the 39th Session of the Commission on Population and Development with the following Explanation of Position.

Mr. Chairman, immigration has played a very important and defining role in shaping the history and success of the United States. The United States believes that orderly migration, when managed effectively, is a positive phenomenon for both countries of origin and destination, as well as for the migrants themselves. Migration is a complex issue and the international community has found past attempts to deal with this subject at the international level to be extremely difficult.

This trend was further evidenced by this year's CPD deliberations on migration. The United States was disappointed by the extended negotiations that were required to come to consensus on the migration resolution. My delegation believes that the value of resolutions produced by an ECOSOC functional commission such as the CPD is diminished when meetings run over their allotted time.

Moreover, the extended and lengthy nature of the discussions that were required over the past month to produce a migration text highlight the very great difficulty the international community faces in addressing the complex topic of migration at the global level.

The International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action expresses important political goals that the United States endorses. We reaffirm the goals and objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Key Actions for Further Implementation of ICPD based on the following understandings.

We understand these documents constitute a non-legal policy framework that does not create international legal rights or legally binding obligations on states under international law.

Our reaffirmation of the goals and objectives of these documents does not constitute a change in the position of the United States with respect to treaties we have not ratified.

The United States fully supports the principle of voluntary choice regarding maternal and child health and family planning. We have stated clearly and on many occasions consistent with the ICPD, that we do not recognize abortion as a method of family planning, nor do we support abortion in our reproductive health assistance.

The United States interprets references within this document to the Plan of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (Durban, 2001) as only applying to the migration-related provisions. The

The United States Government made no commitment at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.

We request that this Explanation of Position be included in the report of this meeting.

Thank You.