

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

**OPENING REMARKS TO THE COMMISSION
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 1 April 2019

[As prepared for delivery]

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
UN system colleagues,
Friends from civil society,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of a landmark achievement in global cooperation: the adoption of the far-reaching Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994.

The Programme of Action provides a comprehensive review of the multiple linkages between population and development.

The conference also consolidated a major shift in the global discussion of population issues towards a greater emphasis on the rights, equality, dignity and well-being of individuals as

The Programme of Action has had remarkable staying power, and remains today a living document, able to guide us as we strive to achieve its goals alongside those enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

From a global perspective, that work gives us much to celebrate.

Since 1994, fewer persons are living in extreme poverty, the risk of maternal death has declined by more than 40 per cent and primary education has expanded the horizons of millions of people.

But there are gaps in implementation, and many challenges remain.

Our efforts on some Sustainable Development Goals are not keeping pace with population growth. When we look at targets on poverty in the least developed countries, or on child

the most severe impacts of climate change, even though they have contributed the least to its underlying cause.

The Secretary-General is convening a Climate Summit in September to raise ambition across the board on mitigation, adaptation and financing. He and I count on your strong support and readiness to participation with solutions and commitments.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The International Conference on Population and Development and other summits and conferences of the 1990s laid a solid foundation for the 2030 Agenda.

Today, I call on all Member States, including members of this Commission, to recognize and reinforce the critical contributions that the Cairo agenda can make to the achievement of the SDGs.

In practice, this means ensuring that the demographic situation in each country is reflected in national development policies and planning, and that the findings and conclusions of this Commission inform the reviews of progress on the SDGs taking place in the High-Level Political Forum later this year.

In that spirit, I wish you every success in your important deliberations.

Thank you.