Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS
Annual Session 2015

Item 8 - UNFPA Annual Report of the Executive Director

Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota
Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

- Thank you, Mr. President, Dr. Babatunde, Ministers, Members of the Executive Board.

- I'd like to thank and congratulate the Executive Director of UNFPA for the presentation of his Annual Report, which highlights efforts to achieve the "unfinished business" of the International Conference on Population and Development through the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2014-2017.

- We are pleased to note special progress has been made in Latin America and the Caribbean, with family planning innovations in the Dominican Republic, Bolivia and Paraguay, and we underscore the importance of prioritizing the needs and rights of adolescent girls in our region, where we still have challenges, in particular related to the high prevalence of teenage pregnancy, among others.

- Despite overall steady progress in increasing the availability and use of integrated services, we recognize the need for increased support for effective positioning of UNFPA in order to complete the unfinished MDG 5a, on maternal mortality ratio, and 5b, regarding universal access to reproductive health services, as well as further investments in young people, in order to enable countries to realize the demographic dividend in the context of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

- In this context, let me say we were very pleased to witness the high level of attendance and participation in the event on "Youth Employment and the Demographic Dividend" held yesterday in New York, where the National Secretary for Youth Policies, Gabriel Medina, represented our Delegation.
- Allow me to commend UNFPA's response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa as a member of the Global Response Coalition and UNMEER, having mobilized contact tracers and supplies and equipment for infection prevention, and supported hundreds of thousands of women through reproductive health services.

- In this regard, we note the link between such efforts and the advocacy and follow-up of the Peacebuilding Commission, which contributed not only to preserve post-conflict peacebuilding gains in the three West African countries, but also to avoid the outbreak of the virus in other countries emerging from conflict in the vicinity, such as Guinea Bissau, Mali and Cote D'Ivoire. I took note with interest of the intervention by the Minister from Sierra Leone, who mentioned that the Manu River Union will be meeting also at the level of Youth Ministers. I think this is yet another indication of how a crisis and tragedy such as the Ebola outbreak can also be used as an opportunity for increased coordination at the subregional level.

- As Chairman of the 60th Commission on the Status of Women, I am confident that we will be able to create synergies given the convergence of agendas, as for example on issues related to early and forced marriage and gender based violence. I was encouraged to hear Dr. Babatunde's report on his contacts in India and with the African Union on these important matters.

- In terms of galvanizing common agendas, we support the increased generation and sharing of good practices by UNFPA through South-South cooperation, in line with the QCPR recommendations. In our view, the potential of this modality of cooperation has yet to be fully explored and we welcome the appointment of the former Director for Latin America and the Caribbean to head UNFPA's new Corporate Project on South-South Cooperation.

- Like others, we were disappointed with the failure of the CPD to reach consensus on a resolution, and we suggest that we review the working methods of the CPD to ensure the best possible outcome from the Committee's work in the future.
Mr. President, Mr. Executive Director,

- Brazil welcomes the integration of population issues into the sustainable development agenda. As we are all aware, the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda is one of universal applicability. In this regard, we believe the UNFPA is particularly well positioned to continue to provide assistance through its expertise, given its experience in looking at population and development from a global perspective and given the universal applicability of the Cairo Program of Action platform.

- In concluding, Brazil welcomes reaffirmation of the commitment to sexual and reproductive health and the full realization of reproductive rights. Gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls are not only a stand-alone goal, but also a crosscutting issue throughout the Agenda.

- Thank you.