

As written
EMBASSY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
The Hague

ADDRESS BY
THE HEAD OF THE TURKISH DELEGATION,
H.E. MR. BİLGİN UNAN
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE OPERATIONAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF
IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND
DEVELOPMENT
(ICPD)

THE HAGUE, 8-12 FEBRUARY 1999

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my congratulations on your election as the President of the Conference. I also would like to congratulate the newly elected members of the Bureau. I believe that, under your able guidance, we will have the opportunity to review the overall achievements in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and to develop constructive recommendations for future actions.

At a time when we are experiencing a tremendous change with globalization in the world, internationally agreed documents like ICPD Programme of Action are functioning as tools to realise fundamental principles such as improving the quality of life, rule of law and respect for human rights.

As we all know, the basic purpose of development is to enhance the level of individual well being. The attainment of this aim could only be **possible** with the interactive implementation of economic and social policies. Measures and programmes which affect population variables such as the size of population, growth rate, distribution and quality are integral parts of population policy. Thus, population policy is closely linked to development policies.

Therefore, while formulating population policies, authorities feel responsibility for future generations. Adoption of an approach which considers the interaction between population, resources, environment and development, has become essential for sustainable development.

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The analysis of the interaction between 'development' and 'population' has been an approach which was adopted as of 1960s in Turkey. ICPD Programme of Action has therefore some similarities with the five-year Development Plans, which Turkey has been implementing in the status of law since 1960s. The population policies are taken as an integral part of sector plans within the context of Turkish development planning. Therefore, population concerns are integrated in all policies and programmes relating to sustainable development in Turkey.

The Seventh Five Years Development Plan of Turkey, which encompasses 1996-2000 period, considers population structure and family planning as one of the structural reform projects. The fundamental principles of this Plan is the improvement of human resources and well-being of individuals necessary for development by maintaining population structure consistent with sustainable development objectives.

Turkey has already obtained positive results of this policy. Population growth decreased from %2 in 1990 to %1.5 in 1998. Declines are also observed in total fertility and infant mortality rates, which have dropped to 2.6 and 43 per thousand respectively.

Recent mortality analyses have shown that the life expectancy at birth has increased from 59 years (1980-85 period) to 67.3 years (1990-95). By the year 2000, it is expected to be 69.3. Maternal mortality rate has been decreasing sharply as a result of better health services and improvements in social and economic conditions.

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Turkey believes that implementation of population programmes would not be successful, unless they are developed and implemented in collaboration with non governmental organisations, private and public sectors. All these population policy elements should take part in decision making. Such a multilateral approach should take into account the needs of both the individuals and the society, as well as the rights of individuals.

Turkey has solidified the **ICPD** Programme of Action through forming some national action plans. These are : National Environmental Action Plan, National Action Plan for Women, National Action Programme for Children, National Action Plan for Women's Health and Family Planning and National Plan for Prevention of HIV/AIDS. These plans are pursued with great participation in Turkey.

Certain institutional mechanisms have also been established in Turkey for the implementation of **ICPD** Programme of Action. Under the leadership and co-ordination of Turkish State Planning Organisation and Ministry of Health with the collaboration of relevant institutions, an **ICPD** Follow-up Committee, a National AIDS Commission, a Family Planning Advisory Board, were formed. Certain legal reforms, such as the extension of compulsory education to eight years in order to achieve universal standards and eliminate gender disparities in education, were introduced as foreseen by the Programme of Action. Similarly, legal changes on the equality of women have been made. The traditional approach in the service provision in Turkey has been replaced with the comprehensive understanding of reproductive and sexual health and family planning. The relevant legal structure settled before **ICPD**, gained grounds for application in accordance with the reproductive health approach as indicated in **ICPD** Programme of Action.

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Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to point out that an effective implementation of the **ICPD** recommendations requires an adequate budget allocation, an efficient data collection and monitoring system, a well trained staff and awareness of the interaction between population and development issues. While doing these, Turkey has been giving priority to the development of modern informational infrastructure for its economic and social development as well as for the purposes in the field of reproductive health and family planning. As it was stated in the International Seminar on **ICTs** which took place in Ankara in 1993, new information and knowledge management technologies have been increasingly operational since the **ICPD**.

Turkey is determined to continue to fulfil the commitments of the **ICPD** and to this end, ready to co-operate with other countries sharing the same objectives.

Thank you.