



TWENTY-NINTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC

Mr. President,

Togo, my country, welcomes the organization of this special session dedicated to the International Conference on Population and Development. Twenty years after the adoption of our Programme of Action in Cairo, several initiatives have been adopted and multiple efforts made to improve the lives of our populations. However, several gaps remain and hinder the achievement of the objectives of the ICPD.

Although some countries have seen more success than others in different areas, we should all make further effort to improve the activities implementing our plan of action through capacity-building and increases to the resources allocated to certain areas of development.

We are convinced that the Cairo plan of action is still wholly relevant, and the international community should continue with its implementation.

Mr. President,

Togo has made significant effort in most areas covered by the plan of action, allowing it to make notable progress in the wellbeing of its population. However, the emergence of new challenges linked to globalization, different successive financial crises, the effects of climate change, new pandemics and accelerated population growth has jeopardized our fragile economy, hampering actions to see our programmes through.

Nevertheless, Togo has the necessary means to achieve the ICPD objectives. This is reflected in the establishment of institutional and legal frameworks promoting economic growth, gender equality and access to sexual and reproductive health services. With this in mind, the actions undertaken by my country have led to notable results between 1998 and 2013, including:

- Reduction of the maternal mortality rate by 17 per cent;
- Reduction of the infant mortality rate by more than 70 per cent;
- Halving of the mortality rate among children under 5;
- A slight decrease in the fertility rate;
- A notable increase in the use of modern contraceptives;
- A notable decrease in HIV prevalence;
- Encouraging results regarding the eradication of female genital mutilation, the prevention of gender-based violence, etc.

Furthermore, as is the case in most African countries, young people make up a large section of the Togolese population (more than 60 per cent of the population is under 25), which is both a challenge and an opportunity. In terms of challenge, responding to the needs of this population group requires vast resources. However, at the same time, the vitality of youth is an important asset for any nation. In Togo, the concept of the demographic dividend highlighted by the ICPD review was quickly detected. For that reason, measures have been adopted to use that energy wisely, particularly through a volunteer system and incentives for entrepreneurship so as to reduce unemployment.

We are aware that several challenges have yet to be addressed regarding improving maternal health and further reducing neonatal, infant and juvenile mortality. With that in mind, we believe that it is only through a multilateral approach that we can overcome challenges. In that regard, our common organization has an important role to play. I commend the clarity of the report of the Secretary-General on that matter.

My country, Togo, will continue to endeavour to build capacities and individual resilience and would appreciate the support of the international community in achieving sustainable development. Therefore, it fully adheres to the position of the African Union concerning the follow-up to the implementation of the plan of action beyond 2014.

I therefore believe that ensuring coherence between commitment to the ICPD and the sustainable development objectives being finalized is vital. I would therefore like to close by calling on the international community to redouble its enthusiasm, with strengthened solidarity and cooperation, so as to achieve more significant results in this new phase of the implementation of the ICPD.

Thank you for your kind attention.