



PERMANENT MISSION OF MEXICO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Agenda item 3: General Debate**

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Madam Chair,

I wish to congratulate you for the work carried out previous to this session; it will certainly guarantee the success of the review exercise and analysis on the demographic transition, the changes in the age structures and their impact on sustainable development that the Commission on Population and Development will carry out throughout this session. We are certain that your talent and leadership will strengthen the impact of our joint work and its contribution to the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

The changes on age structures of the population that are taking place globally represent important consequences on sustainable development. For this reason, we recognize the important role that population policies and all other policies related to health, education, employment and social protection have, in order to improve potential economic and social benefits, resulting from such changes.

Today's demographic dynamics represent an opportunity for development, welfare and productivity of all nations. We need a healthy, equipped and informed population that can fully enjoy their rights and that can responsibly make decisions on their life projects, aware that only throughout the full exercise of these rights and by fully complying with these rights, a balanced development of women, men and their families can be achieved.

In Mexico, from 1974, year in which the Population Law was published, to 2016 the annual rate of natural growth of the population decreased from 3.5% to 1.26%; 14.6 years were added to life expectancy, which increased from 60.6 to 75.2 years; child mortality decreased from 80.9 to 11.7 per each thousand children born; the global fertility rate changed from 6.7 to 2.18 children per woman, a number that is close to the replacement-level fertility and; the flow of migrants changed from rural-urban to urban-urban and Mexico City stopped being the main migrant destination.

In the framework of gender equality and empowerment of women, Mexico aims for equality in every sphere. As a result, it is important that public policies pay the necessary attention to the needs of women and girls throughout their lives. Demographic and migratory tendencies show the need to pay particular attention to older women, who, although, as agents of development contribute to their families and communities, also suffer from multiple and interrelated forms of discrimination and are exposed to abuse, abandonment and marginalization.

It is essential to work on strategies and action plans for a healthy aging population based on long-term health services, preventive action, and accessible environments, by adapting health services in order to adequately respond to the needs of the elderly and developing medical-social care systems. It is also necessary to consider employment as well as financial and insurance mechanisms.

Demographic change linked to the decrease in number of boys, girls and adolescents in school age and youth population increase (demographic bono), encourages the opportunity to improve education for the new generations of girls, boys, adolescents and youth and improve access to decent and quality employment. In turn, these contribute to the attainment of better social and economic development and to strengthen our human capital that will be necessary to face the challenges resulting from aging population.

Health is one of the main components of economic development and social welfare for the Mexican population, as a result of this; universal access to equal social security is one of the main objectives of the Mexican Government. In this regard, and in coherence with our international commitments, we have established strategies that intend to improve or avoid the factors that have favored the increase of incapacitating and chronic-degenerative diseases and the existence of behaviors and habits that significantly affect the health of Mexican population.

The sum of all efforts contribute to the enjoyment of a satisfactory, healthy and non-risky sexual and reproductive life, based on the full respect of rights and freedom to decide, in groups such as, migrants, indigenous population, people with disabilities and adolescents, in rural and urban marginalized areas; emphasizing that women and men have responsibilities when talking about sexuality and reproduction. These same responsibilities will help avoid the presence of child and adolescent pregnancy and in turn help generate sustainable development for their families, communities and countries.

With regard to rural development, we have supported productive projects on agriculture, forest and fishing sectors, as well as the construction of infrastructure for the management of resources such as water, biodiversity and important crops for Mexico. These actions were promoted in the frame of environmental protection, in so that benefits can be obtained but at the same time preserve biodiversity.

On the other hand, we recognize the positive contributions of migrants, particularly of working migrant women, in countries of origin, transit and destination, strengthening the economic cycles and making greater contributions in societies. In this regard, we note with great concern the fact that Mexicans living in United States face a several barriers that limit their full integration in the American society, due, in large extent, to stereotypes and discrimination that hinders their access to health, education and housing, among other services, which in turn limits their inclusion to low-skilled and underpaid jobs.

Migration, as a multidimensional reality related to demography, represents challenges and opportunities. For States that need workforce and those that are trying to create opportunities for their young populations must have as a common

priority to provide the people willing to migrate the qualifications needed to find a legal employment abroad along with making sure that these qualifications are transferable to other countries, and at the same time, double the efforts to create jobs and opportunities at the national level.

In that respect, our country reaffirms its confidence in multilateralism as the ideal way to promote global initiatives in favor of the common good and it is firmly convinced that the migration related goals of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the adoption of the World Pact for Safe, Organized and Regular Migration, represent a valuable opportunity to guide the actions of policymaking design in line with a humane vision of migration and offer to be the ideal vehicle to instrument better practices on the subject thus ensuring that migration is a decision not a necessity.

Therefore, safeguarding the well being and human rights of the 36.9 million Mexicans that live in the United States of America, and their descendants, as well as of the Mexicans [migrants] that return to our country either voluntarily or involuntarily, has been, is and always will be a fundamental axis of the Mexican population policy.

Finally, demographic challenges are increasingly complex and of larger scale, the population policy is called upon to be strengthened and renewed in order to contribute to laying solid foundations that allow us to move forward towards a sustainable development and improve the quality of life of the population and therefore leave no one behind.

Mexico is a regional leader in generating disaggregated information and in developing mechanisms to analyze statistical, population, geospatial and territorial phenomena, and we are well aware that evidence-based decision making is universally recognized as the foundation of good governance and efficient management of social and economic matters. Updated and precise population data allow governments to generate diagnoses in order to anticipate the needs of the population, determine the impact of public policies and confirm the progress of the sustainable development indicators.

Madame Chair,

Mexico reaffirms its commitment to the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; as they represent broad reaching and ambitious plans to promote human well-being placing human rights at the center of the agenda for sustainable development.

We recognize that the changes in age structures reflect great achievements. Having low mortality and fertility rates its in large part the result of the developments of population policy, which has encouraged that population as a whole to achieve a higher life expectancy. Departing from the complete respect of human rights, population policy in Mexico has a long-term vision and gender perspective to deal with the challenges of the future decades.

The Mexican Government, headed by President Enrique Peña Nieto, reaffirms its commitment so that all actions are based on accurate diagnoses that recognize the importance that changes in age structures have on sustainable development, thus allowing us to provide answers to the challenges of tomorrow.

Thank you very much.