

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Seventy-fifth session**

Bangkok, 27–31 May 2019

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for****Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: social development****Report of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific  
Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development***Summary*

The Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development was held in Bangkok from 26 to 28 November 2018. Representatives of 36 members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), as well as civil society, international organizations and academia attended the meeting.

The Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, adopted at the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, held in 2012, requested that the Commission, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund “conduct a regional intergovernmental review meeting of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the recommendations of the present Declaration in 2018”.

Five years after the adoption of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, the Midterm Review served as a key regional platform for reviewing the achievements in the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration and the remaining challenges.

The present report outlines the organization of the meeting, the recommendations made and the decision taken. The meeting decided “to submit its report, including the Chair’s summary, which is not a negotiated outcome, as well as the regional overview report and synthesis report, as a regional input to the review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the Commission on Population and Development at its fifty-second session and to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-fifth session in the context of the review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The Chair’s summary, which is a non-negotiated outcome and which sets out priority actions for the further implementation of the Ministerial Declaration, is contained in annex II to the present report; the regional overview report is contained in [ESCAP/APPC/2018/1](#); and the synthesis report is contained in [ESCAP/APPC/2018/CRP.1](#).

The Commission is invited to endorse the report of the meeting and to take note of the Chair’s summary.

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\* ESCAP/75/L.1.

**I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

**A. Matters calling for action by the Commission**

1. The following recommendations of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for its consideration and possible action:

**Recommendation 1**

The meeting recommends that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific and the United Nations Population Fund, within their mandates, continue to support Commission members and associate members in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of its reviews, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and regional levels.

**Recommendation 2**

The meeting stresses the importance of a region-specific monitoring framework and recommends that the secretariat, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, further develop a regional monitoring framework to monitor the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as appropriate, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; it further recommends that the framework be submitted to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for its consideration before the sixth session of the Committee on Social Development.

**B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission**

2. The following decision adopted by the meeting is brought to the attention of the Commission:

**Decision**

The meeting decides to submit its report, including the Chair's summary, which is not a negotiated outcome, as well as the regional overview report and synthesis report, as a regional input to the review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the Commission on Population and Development at its fifty-second session and to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-fifth session in the context of the review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## II. Proceedings

### A. **Review of progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development**

(Agenda item 2)

3. The meeting had before it the note by the secretariat on progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (ESCAP/APPC/2018/1).

4. The meeting benefited from a panel discussion reviewing progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, which comprised Mr. Richard Maru, Minister, Department of National Planning and Monitoring, Papua New Guinea; Mr. Gavin Jones, Emeritus Professor, Australian National University; Mr. John Wilmoth, Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations; and Ms. Sivananthi Thanenthiran, Executive Director, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, Malaysia. It was moderated by Mr. Björn Andersson, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

5. Representatives of the following members and associate members of the Commission made statements: Afghanistan; Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Cook Islands; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kiribati; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Tuvalu; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

6. The representative of the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women made a consolidated statement on behalf of a group of civil society organizations; the Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights also delivered a consolidated statement on behalf of several civil society organizations.

### B. **Thematic discussion on emerging issues and gaps in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development**

(Agenda item 3)

#### **Population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific**

(Agenda item 3 (a))

7. The meeting had before it the note by the secretariat on population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/APPC/2018/2).

8. The meeting benefited from a panel on population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific. The panel comprised Mr. Wenzhuang Yang, Director General, Department of Population Monitoring and Family Development, National Health Commission, China; Ms. Zeba Sathar, Senior Associate and Country Director, Population Council, Pakistan; Mr. Peter Morrison, Regional Programme Adviser, HelpAge International Asia-Pacific Regional Office; and Mr. Nuno Cunha, Senior Social Protection Specialist, International Labour Organization, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. It was moderated by Ms. Reiko Hayashi, Director, Department of International Research and Cooperation, National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Japan.

9. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Bangladesh; China; Philippines; and Timor-Leste.

**Advancing gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights**

(Agenda item 3 (b))

10. The meeting had before it the note by the secretariat on advancing gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (ESCAP/APPC/2018/3).

11. The meeting benefited from a panel on advancing gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. The panel comprised Mr. Saroj Kumar Sikdar, Deputy Commissioner, Family Planning Division, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India; Ms. Heisoo Shin, Vice-Chair, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Republic of Korea; and Ms. Junice Melgar, Executive Director, Likhaan Center for Women's Health, Philippines. It was moderated by Ms. Christine Sturrock, Director, Health Programme and Performance Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia.

12. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Marshall Islands on behalf of the Pacific island countries; and Philippines.

13. A representative of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development made a statement.

**Population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters**

(Agenda item 3 (c))

14. The meeting had before it the note by the secretariat on population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters (ESCAP/APPC/2018/4).

15. The meeting benefited from a panel discussion on population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters. The panel comprised Mr. Lakshman Dissanayake, Senior Professor, Department of Demography, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka; Ms. Chinara Aitbaeva, Director, Nash Vek Public Foundation, Kyrgyzstan; and Ms. Nelly Caleb, National Coordinator, Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association, Ministry of Justice and Community Service, Vanuatu. It was moderated by Mr. Mohammed Anwar Hossain, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh.

16. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Bangladesh; China; Kiribati on behalf of the Pacific island countries; and Philippines.

17. A consolidated statement by civil society organizations was made. The Pacific Disability Forum also made a statement.

**C. Indicator framework for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development**

(Agenda item 4)

18. The meeting had before it the information document on a suggested indicator framework for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development (ESCAP/APPC/2018/INF/1). The secretariat delivered a presentation on the proposed indicator framework, which informed the subsequent discussion.

19. The meeting benefited from a panel discussion on a suggested indicator framework for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development. It comprised Mr. Nofrijal, Principal Secretary, National Family Planning Coordinating Board, Indonesia; Mr. John Wilmoth, Director, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations; Mr. Benoît Kalasa, Director, Technical Division, UNFPA; and Ms. Neha Chauhan, Senior Technical Adviser, Advocacy and Accountability, International Planned Parenthood Federation/South Asia Region. It was moderated by Dr. Juan Antonio Perez III, Executive Director, Commission on Population, Philippines.

20. Representatives of the following members and associate members made statements: Bangladesh; China; Cook Islands on behalf of the Pacific island countries; and Philippines.

21. A consolidated statement by civil society organizations was made.

**D. Consideration of the Chair's summary**

(Agenda item 5)

22. The meeting had before it the draft Chair's summary (ESCAP/APPC/2018/WP.1). The Chair made a statement. After consideration, the meeting agreed that it reflected the discussions held during the Midterm Review. The Chair's summary of the Midterm Review is annexed to the report.

**E. Adoption of the report of the meeting**

(Agenda item 6)

23. The meeting adopted the present report on 28 November 2018.

**III. Organization**

**A. Opening, duration and organization of the meeting**

24. The Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development was held in Bangkok from 26 to 28 November 2018. The meeting was opened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. The Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director, Management, UNFPA and Mr. Vijavat Isarabhakdi, Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

Thailand, made statements. Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, delivered a video message.

**B. Attendance**

25. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members: Afghanistan; Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Cook Islands; Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kiribati; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; New Zealand; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Tuvalu; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

26. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs attended.

27. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds attended: International Labour Organization; Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; and UNFPA.

28. The representative of the Asian Development Bank attended.

29. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities attended: APCOM Foundation; Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights; Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development; Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women; Bandhu Social Welfare Society; Beyond Beijing Committee; Centre for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population; Civil Society Education Partnership; Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era; Ecoforum of Uzbekistan; Family Planning Association of India; Family Planning Association of Nepal; Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka; Family Planning New Zealand; Family Planning Organization of the Philippines; Global Call to Action Against Poverty Youth SENCAP – Free and Equal Rights; HelpAge International; Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association; International Planned Parenthood Federation/Central Office London; International Planned Parenthood Federation/East and South East Asia and Oceania Region; Japan Center for International Exchange; MAP Foundation; Monfemnet National Network; Pacific Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Coalition; Psychological Responsiveness non-governmental organization; Radanar Ayar Rural Development Association; Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji; Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia; SAHAYOG; Seven Sisters Coalition of Asia Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS; Youth Advocacy Network; Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Indonesia; Youth Peer Education Network; Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Philippines; and YouthLEAD.

**C. Election of officers**

30. The meeting elected the following officers:

- Chair: Dr. Juan Antonio Perez III (Philippines)
- Vice-Chairs: Dr. Ahmad Jan Naeem (Afghanistan)  
Dr. Josefa Koroivueta (Fiji)

**D. Agenda**

31. The meeting adopted the following agenda:
  1. Opening of the session:
    - (a) Opening statements;
    - (b) Election of officers;
    - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
  2. Review of progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development.
  3. Thematic discussion on emerging issues and gaps in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development.
    - (a) Population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific;
    - (b) Advancing gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights;
    - (c) Population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters.
  4. Indicator framework for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development.
  5. Consideration of the Chair's summary.
  6. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
  7. Closing of the meeting.

**E. Other events**

32. The following side events were held in conjunction with the meeting:
  - (a) 26 November 2018: side event on comprehensive sexuality education: a foundation for life and love, co-hosted with the Government of Cambodia;
  - (b) 26 November 2018: side event on leveraging on the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals to promote young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights, co-hosted with the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women;
  - (c) 26 November 2018: side event on raising the bar on gender equality and women's health in the age of climate change, co-hosted with the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women;

(d) 26 November 2018: side event on family, community and State in ageing societies, co-hosted with the State Welfare Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNFPA Islamic Republic of Iran;

(e) 27 November 2018: side event entitled “International Conference on Population and Development works in the Philippines: from advocacy, to legislation, to the community”, co-hosted with the Government of the Philippines;

(f) 27 November 2018: side event on a multi-stakeholder approach to healthy and active ageing, co-hosted with the Government of Japan, the Japan Centre for International Exchange; and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia;

(g) 28 November 2018: side event on putting people first: role of impact investment and innovation towards sustainable population development, co-hosted with the Government of Thailand, UNFPA and Asian Venture Philanthropy Network.



## Annex I

### List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/APPC/2018/1	Progress towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions for its further implementation and the recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development	2
ESCAP/APPC/2018/2	Population dynamics and inequality in Asia and the Pacific	3 (a)
ESCAP/APPC/2018/3	Advancing gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights	3 (b)
ESCAP/APPC/2018/4	Population dynamics, vulnerable groups and resilience to climate change and disasters	3 (c)
ESCAP/APPC/2018/5	Report of the Midterm Review of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development	
<i>Conference room paper</i>		
ESCAP/APPC/2018/CRP.1	Implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Recommendations of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development: A Regional Synthesis: Asia and the Pacific	2
<i>Working papers</i>		
ESCAP/APPC/2018/WP.1	Draft Chair's summary	5
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ESCAP/APPC/2018/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
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<i>Information series</i>		
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<i>Information available online</i>		
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC">www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC</a>	Information for participants	
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC">www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC</a>	List of participants	
<a href="http://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC">www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/MTR-APPC</a>	Tentative programme	

## Annex II

### Chair's summary\*

#### I. Introduction

1. The meeting underscored and confirmed the crucial role of the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, in the context of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in achieving inclusive, rights-based and people-centred sustainable development. The meeting further noted the interlinkages between these agendas and their mutually reinforcing nature. One delegation stressed the importance of adherence to the agreed language of the Programme of Action and that its language should be the basis of the outcome of the meeting.

2. Some delegations stressed the need for the outcome of the meeting and the regional reports to be transmitted to the fifty-second session of the Commission on Population and Development to inform the review and appraisal of the Programme of Action, and to be incorporated into the 2019 regional review of the 2030 Agenda.

3. The meeting highlighted extensive progress that had been achieved across the region, while acknowledging that gaps remained, and progress needed to be accelerated. The meeting stressed the importance of leaving no one behind and protecting marginalized groups and people in vulnerable situations. The meeting further stressed the need for long term planning, partnerships and multisectoral approaches to achieve the objectives of the Ministerial Declaration, which would also reinforce achievement of the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals. Some delegations underscored the need for accelerated and sustained financial and technical resources to overcome economic and social challenges to the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration.

#### II. Poverty eradication and employment

4. The meeting noted that, while the region had experienced widespread reductions in both income and multi-dimensional poverty, in some countries poverty had increased, while in others there were insufficient data to establish baselines. Several delegations noted that high unemployment, especially among young people, was an area of concern. It was also noted that, despite declines in poverty, many population groups remained highly vulnerable to falling below the poverty line partly due to inequality. It was further noted that poverty contributed to ill-health and poor access to sexual and reproductive health services. Malnutrition among children remained a related concern. Several delegations noted that contributions to poverty reduction had come from investments in health and education, economic diversification, targeted poverty eradication and expansion of social safety nets, as well as redistribution initiatives to address inequalities.

5. It was further noted that regional collaboration and partnerships, including South-South cooperation and an enabling multilateral economic environment, were key to combating poverty and achieving sustainable development, especially in countries with high rates of poverty. Some

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\* This document is being issued without formal editing.

delegations highlighted that unilateral measures created economic barriers that impeded the full achievement of economic and social development.

### **III. Health**

6. The meeting noted that health outcomes had improved significantly across the region, including increases in life expectancy and reductions in the incidence of communicable diseases. It was further noted that non-communicable diseases were rising and remained a major concern, while information and communication technologies provided opportunities for improving health and enhancing health promotion. The importance of health for development was noted by several delegations, as was the contribution of universal health coverage and quality of services at the grassroots level for improving health outcomes. It was also noted that some vulnerable population groups continued to face barriers to accessing health services, including sexual and reproductive health services.

### **IV. Sexual and reproductive health, services and rights**

7. The meeting recognized declines in maternal and infant mortality as some of the major health achievements of the region. Several delegations attributed these reductions to improved access to quality maternal and child health care, including increased access to antenatal and neonatal services, basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric care, and skilled attendance at birth, as well as improved surveillance of maternal deaths. Some countries noted that access to safe abortion and post-abortion care had contributed to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity.

8. Delegations reported mixed results in increasing contraceptive prevalence, with unmet need for family planning remaining a concern, especially for unmarried people. Moreover, several delegations reported that adolescent birth rates were on the rise, pointing to the need for universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including for adolescents. Some countries mentioned the need to scale up preventive and curative measures for reproductive cancers.

9. Several delegations noted the linkages between human rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights and the achievement of the Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Several delegations highlighted their commitment to universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, and to eliminate all forms of discrimination in the provision of these services, particularly for young people, persons with disabilities, migrants and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity. The role of civil society organizations to reach rural and vulnerable populations and the contribution of faith-based organizations in reducing sociocultural barriers to family planning were highlighted by several delegations.

### **V. Education**

10. The meeting underscored the centrality of education in achieving the Ministerial Declaration, the Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Several delegations reported on improvements in literacy and numeracy, as well as the achievement of gender parity in primary education and increases in the proportion of girls in secondary and tertiary education. Some delegations reported on targeted courses for school drop-outs and initiatives for non-formal skills development to reduce youth unemployment and maximize the potential benefits of the demographic dividend. Several delegations emphasized the significance of access to education for women, especially in rural areas.

## **VI. Gender equality and women's empowerment**

11. The meeting expressed commitment to achieving gender equality. Several delegations shared good practices, policies, and legislative changes that were undertaken to advance gender equality, including strengthening institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and reinforcing universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

12. Several countries reported progress on increasing the number of women holding decision-making positions, including in parliament, while some noted that there had been little or no change. Several countries also reported a decline in the labour force participation of women, calling for more enabling environments for women to enter and stay in the workforce, including through access to decent work, equal pay for equal work and prevention of sexual harassment.

13. The meeting expressed the need to urgently address gender-based violence. Some countries reported progress on legal reform for the prevention of and multi-sectoral response to gender-based violence, including intimate-partner and domestic violence. Several countries cited data on national prevalence of violence and one highlighted undertaking its first national prevalence survey. One country noted the specific needs of refugees and the services that were provided to improve access to one-stop crisis centres, mental health services as well as trauma counselling for victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

14. Several countries stressed the need to eliminate child marriage, gender-biased sex selection and female genital mutilation, and to address the sociocultural context in which these practices occurred.

## **VII. Adolescents and young people**

15. The meeting highlighted the importance of investing in young women and men for a better future and the achievement of the objectives of the Ministerial Declaration, the Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Some delegations reported developing and implementing comprehensive youth policies, taking into account all relevant recommendations of the Ministerial Declaration. Several countries noted that their window for a demographic dividend was either open or beginning to close, and stressed the need for policies to ensure the dividend would be realized.

16. The meeting noted the significance of investment in education and skills development, including tertiary education, business incubation and support for small and medium enterprises for women and youth, as part of measures to increase their potential and reduce high levels of youth unemployment.

17. The meeting stressed the urgency of reducing adolescent birth rates. Several delegations highlighted the need for expanded investments in comprehensive sexuality education for all young people, which is consistent with the evolving capacities of adolescents, as well as ensuring improved quality and integration of comprehensive sexuality education into all public and private schools and institutions. Some delegations also highlighted the importance of expanding access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services that are rights-based, gender sensitive, respectful and non-judgemental, and which included a range of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable contraceptive choices. It was further noted that young people had power to advocate on behalf of their communities, and that intergenerational dialogue on issues, including life choices, well-being and empowerment, were important in the context of supporting large youth generations and preparing for rapid ageing.

**VIII. Ageing**

18. Several delegations highlighted population ageing as an emerging trend associated with opportunities and challenges. One delegation raised the potential of a second demographic dividend linked to a higher proportion of older persons. It was noted that declining labour forces posed challenges and required attention. Several countries underscored the importance of social protection, particularly pension systems to prevent older persons from falling into poverty. Providing long-term care for older persons was mentioned as another challenge. It was further noted that older persons in rural areas and older women were at highest risk of being left behind. Some delegations reported having introduced measures, such as improving child care services, introducing child-care allowances and policies to ensure work-life balance opportunities for women, in order to address low fertility and resultant population ageing.

**IX. International migration**

19. Several delegations emphasized that migration was a key issue in the context of population and development, and highlighted the benefits of remittances and other contributions of migrants, including women migrant workers. The need for more comprehensive migration data was also highlighted. One delegation underscored the importance of incorporating migrants into the local registration system for smooth integration. Another delegation noted the vulnerability of migrants to exploitation and discrimination and the need to protect their rights and ensure their access to sexual and reproductive health services.

**X. Urbanization and internal migration**

20. The meeting noted that the region was experiencing increasing levels of urbanization, as well as high levels of rural to urban migration. Some delegations shared innovative policy and programmatic approaches to maximize benefits of internal migration and urbanization. Some countries reported prioritizing expanding availability of services and opportunities for income generation in rural areas to address the root causes of migration to urban areas.

**XI. Population and sustainable development**

21. The meeting noted that countries in the region were highly prone to natural disasters. Several delegations reported on the negative impacts of climate change and conflict on a range of population and development issues, including reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, poverty, urbanization, and country capacities. Several delegations emphasized that while climate change affects everyone, women, children, young people, older persons, migrants and persons with disabilities were disproportionately affected. It was further noted that populations in vulnerable situations should be equal partners and be able to exercise their rights in resilience building and humanitarian response.

22. Some delegations reported on efforts to increase resilience, including replanting in mountain areas, improving disaster preparedness, applying integrated and multidimensional risk prevention approaches as part of poverty reduction, building on cultural and traditional knowledge and practices, and ensuring the use of disaggregated data in adaptation planning. It was noted that these efforts should be in alignment with the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda, Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security and the Kailash Declaration, as appropriate.

**XII. Data and statistics**

23. The meeting noted significant advancements in the collection and use of data for population and development policies and programming, for instance in civil registration and vital statistics, censuses, demographic and health surveys and specific surveys on issues such as ageing, disability and gender-based violence. It was noted that geospatial data and small area estimation was important for identifying those left behind. One delegation raised the importance of birth registration for legal identity as a human right. Several delegations highlighted the importance of strengthening capacities and data systems and the need to invest in improving timely collection, availability and use of disaggregated data, including as part of efforts to protect dignity and human rights of all people.

**XIII. Monitoring progress**

24. The meeting acknowledged the need for a regional monitoring framework to measure progress on the Ministerial Declaration, linked to the Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Some delegations noted the importance of more frequent and regular monitoring of progress in the region towards the Ministerial Declaration commitments, with clear indicators and targets. Several delegations suggested that the development of the proposed monitoring framework should be inclusive and participatory. It was noted that such a framework should focus on the well-being of people, build on existing indicators to avoid undue burden on governments, and emphasize utility for the users of the data. One delegation raised the need to include measurement of the drivers of change in indicators, for instance with regard to poverty. Another delegation requested the inclusion of SDG indicators 3.4.1 and 3.8.1 in the suggested regional monitoring framework.

**XIV. Summary of statements from civil society organizations**

25. The meeting was presented with several statements from civil society, including one from youth organizations. They noted that, while there had been significant progress in sexual and reproductive health policies in the region, implementation continued to be a challenge, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable groups. Structural problems including limited resources and capacities as well as the lack of disaggregated data were identified as contributing to the gaps in implementation. They suggested, amongst other measures, the review and repeal or amendment of laws and policies that restrict the fulfilment of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including related services, information and education. Such information, education and services should reflect the principles of continuum of care and the use of a life cycle approach in the provision of all relevant services, particularly for adolescents, youth, unmarried people, and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics. They also noted the urgent need to eliminate all forms of sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence, including intimate partner and non-partner violence, as well as violence perpetrated against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer people.

26. Representatives from the Youth Forum noted that, while all young people were at greater risk of vulnerabilities and inequalities, the challenges were greater for young people from sexual, ethnic and religious minorities, as well as young migrants and young people living with HIV. They also urged member States to recognize and reaffirm human rights, gender equality, equity, social inclusion and justice, as well as youth empowerment and leadership, as central

to sustainable development. They ended with a call for meaningful discourse on young people's needs and aspirations.

27. The Pacific Disability Forum noted the need for mainstreaming disability into all policies discussed at the meeting, including those on sexual and reproductive health, poverty alleviation, gender and climate change. It was further noted that buildings, transportation and information should be accessible to persons with diverse disabilities and harmonized with the Incheon strategy. Persons with disabilities should no longer be invisible, unheard and unrepresented.

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