In the name of God

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Speech delivered By, Mohammad Javad Mahmoudi for first round table: Population dynamics, climate change and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific on behalf of National Population Headquarter of Islamic Republic of Iran

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen: Thanks Mr. Chairman giving the floor

I would like to take this opportunity to speech and make you a short presentation about population dynamics and climate change in Islamic Republic of Iran.

Reviewing the historical background of demographic developments in my (Iran) country shows that ups and downs have been experienced in terms of changes in the population growth rate, total fertility rate and changes in the population age structure. The growth of population and fertility in Iran decreased in the 1990s and this decline continued in the 2000s.

The rapid decrease in the total fertility rate from 6.5 children per woman on average in the 1980s to about 1.8 children per woman in 2011 and its partial increase to about 2 children per woman in the year ending with the census of 2016 (SCI) and then its decrease to About 1.6 children per Iranian woman in 2022 was unprecedented in the country’s history.

The studies conducted on the future fertility developments in Iran show that if policy interventions are not carried out, the fertility rate will most likely stabilize below the replacement level. The population growth rate has also reached from about 3.2 percent in the first decade of the Islamic republic of Iran revolution (1976 to 1986) to about 0.6 percent at right now.
Forecasting Total fertility rate of Iran, compared to Asian and South Asian countries from 1950 to 2100 (Source: World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Volume II)

Considering that the fertility rate is still lower than the rate needed to replace the population, according to the population projection made by Iranian Statistical Center and international sources, it is expected that in the coming years, we will face a further decrease in the population growth rate.

At present, the population of Iran, like many developing countries, following the steady and continuous decrease in fertility and the increase in life expectancy at birth from 54 years in 1976 to 74 years in 2016, has undergone fundamental and important changes in the age structure of population. Because of this situation, Iran has experienced the second phase of age structure transition from youth to middle age. Therefore, Iran is at the threshold of population aging. The above changes will cause the country to have a completely aged society in the next three decades.

In 2021, about 11% of the Iranian population was over 60 years old. In the next 30 years (i.e. 2050), the percentage of Iran's population over 60 years will increase to 33%.

Furthermore, according to the UN population projection revision based on the medium scenario in 2017, it is projected about nearly 12% of the total population of Iran will be over 60 years old by 2025, and will reach 32% by 2050. That is, almost one-third of the total population of Iran and by 2080 about 40% of population will be elderly.
Based on this, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in order to adjust the above-mentioned indicators, first started making policies in terms of laws and regulations, including presenting general population policies, and subsequently the law on supporting the family and the youth of the population to increase the fertility rate. Every year, in the country budget, considerable funds have been allocated to implement the mentioned policies.

In this regard the activities and actions includes providing facilities, reducing the office hours of female employees in the public and private sectors, increasing pregnancy and maternity leave, providing subsidies for kindergartens, giving land to families with 2 or more children, and supporting the future of New-Born by offering stock, revising the laws and regulations related to abortion, and etc.

Finally, by considering the continued decline in the fertility and population growth rates, and as a result, the decrease in population at the working age, the increase in elderly people, and the double burden that it imposes on the pension funds in Iran and some countries in the region, the following suggestions are recommended:

1- This conference, contrary to the spirit of the ministerial declaration, which followed the goals of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 to reduce the population growth rate to zero, undertake different approaches regarding the state of the countries' fertility rates, taking into account economic indicators and social and their requirements. One of the approaches can be aimed at policies to increase the fertility rate in countries with fertility rates lower than the replacement level.

2- Also, considering the issue in the ESCAP/APPC (7)/3 and the emphasis on environmental protection in paragraph 78 in the ESCAP/APPC (7)/2 it is suggested that the member countries show sensitivity towards the destruction of the environment of defenseless (vulnerable) communities. Because in oppressed communities like the Gaza Strip, Palestine, the destruction of the environment due to occupation and war threatens the health of these communities and weakens them in the face of climate change, and leads to unwanted migrations of the population caused by the destruction of the environment.