Nepal's National Statement
In the 7th Asia Pacific Population Conference, Bangkok, Thailand.
November 15-17, 2023.

Distinguished Chair, Esteemed Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with immense pleasure and a deep sense of honor that I join this esteemed 7th Asia Pacific Population Conference today. I extend my sincere appreciation to the dedicated organizers and the gracious support of the Thai Government, which have been supportive in the success of this event and for affording me the privilege to address this distinguished gathering.

2. The significance of population in the area of development is enormous and intricately connected to a multitude of stakeholders. Nepal's constitution of 2015 marked a pivotal moment in our political landscape, transitioning to a federal democratic structure while upholding the principles of inclusive development, including the provision of basic healthcare services as a fundamental right for all citizens. We've linked the issues of population dynamics and international commitments into our national development policies, legislation, plans.

3. Despite the challenges and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Nepal has made imperative progress in the field of population and development. These achievements include a remarkable increase in life expectancy at birth, reaching 71.2 years, a literacy rate exceeding 76.3% among those aged six and above, and a significant rise in institutional deliveries, reaching 79.3%. Moreover, we've made substantial efforts to reduce maternal mortality rates to 151 per 100,000 live births. Our annual population growth stands at 0.93%, the Total Fertility Rate is at 2.1 per woman, and we've successfully lowered the poverty ratio by 15.1%. With persistent determination, Nepal is on track to graduate from the category of Least Developed Countries by 2026, alongside the development of relevant policies and institutional capacities.
4. While we take pride in these accomplishments, it is essential to acknowledge the numerous challenges and gaps that lie ahead. Access to quality healthcare and education, the prevention of gender-based violence, addressing population imbalances, enhancing employment opportunities, protecting sexual and reproductive rights, and reducing mortality rates are among the foremost challenges. Addressing these challenges necessitates the allocation of resources, enhancing capacity, and adapting policies to align with our national planning goals. We are equally committed to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives outlined in the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Plan of Action. Nepal is resolute in setting clear objectives in our planning processes and continuously adapting policies to reflect these priorities. We recognize that addressing these multifaceted issues necessitates collaboration across various sectors, and we hope this conference will serve as a platform for sharing experiences and gaining insights to bridge existing knowledge gaps.

5. In the spirit of unity and collaboration, I call upon all of us to join hands in working together to achieve more favorable outcomes. Together, we can overcome the challenges that lie ahead. I entirely wish for the resounding success of this conference, and I am confident that the discussions and partnerships formed during this event will propel us further towards our shared goals of a brighter future for all.

Thank you and I look forward to the productive deliberations ahead.

Ramesh Kumar kc, Joint Secretary
Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal

15 November, 2023