Agenda Item 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

10:30-17:00 (Conference Room 2, Level 2, UNCC), November 26, 2018

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates and the Audiences,

Good afternoon!
Its my great pleasure to deliver the statement on Population and Development in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh involved all relevant ministries to execute the priority actions as specified in the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration (APMD) on Population and Development. The country has constituted a Task Team and consulted with a wide range of national and international stakeholders to monitor the progress.

Bangladesh has tremendous success, particularly in the areas of poverty alleviation, food security, primary school enrolment, gender parity in primary and secondary education, infant and under-five mortality rate, maternal mortality ratio, immunization coverage, and reduction of communicable diseases. Among these remarkable progress in respect of eradication of poverty was largely possible due to the pragmatic policy strategies - especially Five Year Plans and Social Safety Net Program.

Bangladesh’s socio-economic condition has improved substantially, consistently maintaining an average steady growth rate of 6.5% during the last eight years. With an all-time high national growth of 7.24% in FY 2017, the per capita income increased to US$ 1752. In 2015, per capita income of the country crossed the Lower Middle Income threshold. Bangladesh is on a track to become a middle-income country by 2021. Young population of Bangladesh constitutes 30% of the total population. Demographic trend in Bangladesh is opening up new economic opportunities. Recent trend of women’s participation in the labor force is encouraging.

Distinguished Delegates

The country’s coverage of government health services has increased significantly. The Government provides free medical services to people at the community level with the support of various NGOs and private institutions. Some of the good practices that have contributed to the country’s success in improving sexual and reproductive health.

In Bangladesh, school participation rates greatly improved. The primary education is free for
all and secondary education is free for female students. As a result, more girls are now participating in schools compared to 15 years ago, and most regions of the country have reached gender parity in primary education. Major challenges in Bangladesh’s education system includes the prevention of student dropouts, particularly of girls, at primary and secondary level, ensuring quality education, and providing schools and educational institutions with adequate resources.

Mr. Chair,

Enacting legal framework, imparting skill development program and gender responsive budget bring a remarkable outcome to women empowerment in Bangladesh. But, inadequate availability of resources for the implementation of national action plans on gender equality and gender equality policies is a significant challenge.

Bangladesh is now in the golden period, known as the demographic window of opportunity, to reap a demographic dividend. Importantly, for this to become a reality the Government of Bangladesh will need to make the necessary investments in addressing the education, health and employment needs of young people. However, two shifts are also taking place in the country’s demography; while population ageing is increasing (8% in 2018), the working aged population is also increasing (62.7% in 2018). To ensure employment opportunities for the working age population including the youth population is one of the key area to give emphasis by the Government. To address the vulnerabilities and risks of elderly population, the Government of Bangladesh is providing old age allowance to these people, whereas the coverage has increased over times.

Bangladesh has been practicing a next level of disaster risk management shifting relief to risk management that is currently aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and Climate Change Action. On the endeavor towards the Vision 2021, the country has taken initiatives to mainstream disaster risk management through the 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020). Very recently, Bangladesh has developed a comprehensive Mega Plan- Delta Plan 2100 to address the expected impacts of climate change to deal with the future land and water management issues in relation to water safety and food security as well as economic growth and to avoid colossal effects of natural hazards.

Bangladesh is committed to implement the ICPD Programme of Actions (ICPD PoA) and the SDGs with the highest priorities focusing on the rights of the people to become a developed country by 2041. For that, policies, programs and interventions are being taken by the Government with effective participations from various stakeholders.