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Statement by Mme. Peng Peiyun
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State Councillor and Minister of the State Family

Planning Commission of China at
The International Conference on Population and Development

September 5, 1994, Cairo, Egypt

Respected Mr. President, Respected Fellow Delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

The Chinese Delegation is very happy to have come to Egypt, a country with such a long history and ancient civilization, to attend this grand Conference and discuss with delegates from all over the world on the issue of population and development. Please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese Government, to express my warm congratulations to the convening of the conference, my heartfelt thanks to the Government of Egypt for its great efforts and thoughtful arrangements for the Conference, and my deep respect to the hospitable people of Egypt. I would like also to express my congratulations to you for being elected as President of the Conference.

Since the Bucharest and Mexico City Conferences, the international community has made great progress in their understanding on the population issue. It has become a consensus that the issue of population must be considered in close relation to development. In the past 20 years, the international community and the governments of nations have devoted sustained efforts to the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action. Tangible progress has been made at global level in reducing the crude birth rate, crude death rate, especially infant mortality rate, and in increasing the average life expectancy at birth. Education level, especially women's education status, in all countries has been upgraded. More people have had accesses to reproductive health and family planning information and services. However, it must be noted, that the world is still faced with severe challenges in the area of population and development. the world still sees a net increase of 90 million people each year, the number of poverty people is still in the

increase the environmental pollution caused by irrational mode of consumption and excessive depletion of natural resources is still deteriorating. Faced with these challenges we must take actions to reduce the speed of population growth eliminate poverty and protect ecology and environment in order to achieve sustained development. We must take our due responsibilities in ensuring a beautiful and happy life for all our people and our future generations. 'This is a sacred mission that history has endowed with us, and is also a common goal that brings us together today.

Mr.President

This conference is of great importance. Its significance and influence will well extend into the next century. The final document that will be adopted by this conference will have lasting impact on international population and development programs in the coming 20 years. As one of the most populous country in the world , China ,like many other developing countries is confronted with the important and urgent task of solving the problems in the area of population and development. With the aim of seeking solutions to the problems of population and development the Chinese Government would like to make the following propositions and share them with delegates from all countries.

The issue of population is in essence an issue of development. A country can only solve its population problems from the bottom through combined efforts of sustained development of productivity promoting the over-all social and economic development giving more emphasis to environment protection upgrading culture education health care standards improving family planning services and women's status. Governments of nations should formulate population policies and programs in accordance

with the specific conditions of each country and incorporate them as an important integral part ;into the nation's over-all strategy for sustained social and economic development It, thus can help speed up, the economic and development eliminate poverty, upgrade people's living standard and improve people's quality of life.

The implementation of population and family planning programs so as to slow down the speed of population growth is an effective method} to solve the population problems in many developing countries. In countries where the speed of population growth has hindered the nation's social and economic development the formulation and implementation of an appropriate population policy and goal to control the rapid population growth will be beneficial to the social and economic development and will better protect tile rights to survival and development of the people in the country. (Governments should make efforts to provide acceptable obtainable and affordable family planning services of good quality to all people who need them. Governments should also couples and individuals freely and responsibly make their decisions on childbearing In the course of implementing family planning programs all kinds of coercion should be opposed

Countries are different in their population situation level of economic development cultural background and historical traditions Therefore it is impossible for all countries to follow one uniformed model in their efforts to solve the population problem countries should in(independently formulate their population policies and targets according to their specific country conditions and population situation and choose their methods and programs to attain their goals This is the sovereign right of a country that should be fully respected

The improvement of women's status and the conditions for women to receive education facilitation of women to be more involved in politics and economic development protection of women's rights and interests realization of gender equality are vitally important factors to the success Or population and development programs. Efforts should be made to provide women with more information education and counselling services in the field of reproductive health and family planning Males should take more responsibilities in family planning

The stabilization of the world population and the achievement of sustained development depend not only on the endeavours of governments of nations but also on further strengthening and promotion of international cooperation The developed countries should make efforts to improve the international economic environment increase funds for population and developed programs and transfer technology at preferable conditions That will be beneficial to both the developing and the countries 'The United Nations and relevant organizations should make more contibutions and the international non-governmental organizations should continue to play their positive and unique roles in this respect.

The international co-operation in thc Fields of population and development should be established on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit; and must be in line with the spirit of the United Nations Charter No country should attach political conditions to assistance provide for population and development programs 'The United Nations organizations that are specialized in development and providing assistance should stick to their purposes of their organizations and principles of universality and neutrality in providing assistance to countries

Mr President

It is the strategic goal of China to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development, fulfil the increasing material and cultural needs of all her people, endeavor to improve people's quality of life so as to achieve over-all progress of society They are also the ultimate objectives of solving the population problems China is of the situation of having an enormous size of population, inadequate arable land, poor economic basis, insufficient average natural resources and very unbalanced level of economic and social development between areas By the end of 1993, the total population of China's mainland had reached 1 185 billion, and it still sees a net increase of 14 million each year If the rapid population growth in China is not effectively controlled, it will not only present a major obstacle to economic and social development and the guarantee of the basic rights of people, but could even endanger the subsistence of the Chinese nation Just imagine, what will be the consequences if the Chinese population is allowed to grow in an uncontrolled way, which will lead to destruction of natural resources and degradation of the environment, leaving nearly 1 2 billion people in a condition of having insufficient food and clothing and the world being flooded by refugees It is out of a high sense of responsibility for the present and future interests of the Chinese nation as well as for the stability and prosperity of the world that the Chinese Government has adopted the reform and opening policy While concentrating on developing the national economy, the Chinese Government has set family planning and environment protection as two fundamental national policies and has incorporated them into the over-all national planning for economic and social development In implementing population and family planning programs, the Chinese Government has been adhering to the principal Of combining government guidance and voluntariness of the people 'Through comprehensive information education and communication ((IEC)) programs

and other service oriented programs, which address the needs of families and eligible couples in terms of production, family life and childbearing etc, the programs have won widespread voluntary support from the people and have attained tangible achievements. The Chinese Government uses legal provisions, administrative and educational measures to eliminate all kinds of discrimination against women and protect their rights and interests so that the status of women be continuously improved. Our practices in the past have proved that the policy adopted by the Chinese Government, which aims at making the growth of population be co-ordinated with economic and social development and be concerted with utilization of natural resources and protection of the environment is in conformity with the interests and desires of the Chinese people and is a correct choice to protect the basic human rights of the Chinese people. Even though such great efforts have been made, China still sees an excessive increase in the number of population annually. There are still about 80 million people in China who do not have sufficient food and clothing. Besides, the low level of education for women and the pollution of the environment etc continue to be major problems in China. Addressing these problems, the Government of China has formulated China's Agenda 21 and is in the process of formulating The Outline Social Development of China, 1996-2010. Being an active and responsible member of the international community, China will work even harder to solve its own population problems and at the same time, try to make its contribution to the stabilization of the global population, promotion of world peace, development and cooperation.

Mr President,

Even though we are faced with such severe challenges, we should have full confidence in the future of the world. In the common interests

of the whole mankind, and also in the interests of each country ,we should join hands, seek common ground while putting aside minor differences in order to formulate a program of action that is acceptable to all countries for tile future population and development programs . The Chinese Delegation would like to work closely with delegations from all countries and make its due contribution to the success of the Conference

I Thank you, Mr President

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