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AS WRITTEN

STATEMENT BY

THE PORTUGUESE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COOPERATION

MR. J.M. BROISA E. GALA

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD)

CAIRO, EGYPT, 8 SEPTEMBER 1994

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THANK YOU MR. RESIDENT,

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE AND THAT OF MY DELEGATION TO
THE AUTHORITIES NAD PEOPLE OF EGYPT FOR THE WELCOME THAT HAS BEEN

EXTENDED TO US AND CONGRATULATE THE SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE EXCELLENT ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE.

THE CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IS IMPORTANT AND TIMELY FOR MY GOVERNMENT.

THE DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY HAS ALREADY PUT FORWARD THE POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION. THIS POSITION WAS THE RESULT OF VERY CAREFUL AND DETAILED PREPARATION . WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS A BALANCED POSITION AND CAN CONSTITUTE A VALID CONTRIBUTION, PAVING THE WAY TO A MUCH NEEDED CONSENSUS.

MY GOVERNMENT IS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH WORLD POPULATION GROWTH AND THE WAY THIS INTERACTS ON WORLD RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT . THE SITUATION MY CONCERN BECOME EVEN MORE SERIOUS IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE IF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DOES NOT MEET THE RESULTING CHALLENGES, THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS WHY WE ARE MEETING IN CAIRO, .

IN FACE OF THE URGENCY AND COMPLEXITY OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH WE MUST TACKLE, THE FUTURE DEMANDS COURAGE AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO STRONGLY AFFIRM THAT DEMOGRAPHIC POLICIES CAN NO LONGER BE SEEN IN A SIMPLISTIC MANNER, OUT OF THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES, ON THE CONTRARY, THEY MUST BE CONSIDERED IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE AND FORMULATED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF COOPERATION POLICIES CLEARLY ORIENTED TO A SUSTAINABLE AND HUMAN-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

MR. PRESIDENT,

LET ME FIRST DESCRIBE THE MAIN ASPECTS OF THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT,

THE GROWTH OF THE PORTUGUESE POPULATION IS ONE OF THE LOWEST OBSERVED RECENTLY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION, BOTH DUE TO ITS LOW NATURAL GROWTH AND TO A NEGATIVE BALANCE OF MIGRATION, HOWEVER, PORTUGAL IS INCREASINGLY A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRATION.

THE SHARP DROP IN FERTILITY AND THE RISE IN LIFE EXPECTANCY, INCLUDING THE SIGNIFICANT DECREASE OF THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE, HAVE ACCELERATED THE DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING PROCESS IN RECENT YEARS.

IN SHORT, PORTUGAL IS COMING CLOSER TO THE DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS OF INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETIES.

THE WORLD CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY IN 1994 (PROCLAIMED BY THE UN) IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR STRENGTHENING THE STABILITY AND PERMANENCE OF THE FAMILY, VIS-A-VIS DEMOGRAPHIC, CULTURAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGES.

ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES LAID DOWN IN UN DOCUMENTS, GOVERNMENTS MUST NOT IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO DECREASE OR INCREASE THE BIRTH-RATE, FOR OTHERWISE HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL LIBERTIES WITH REGARD THE FAMILY ARE VIOLATED.

FOR MY COUNTRY, THE FAMILY IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE, THE BASIC UNIT OF SOCIETY AND AS SUCH IS RECOGNISED IN OUR CONSTITUTION. IT IS THE IDEAL FRAMEWORK FOR INTER-GENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE POINT OF VIEW, THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION ADDRESSES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ON FAMILY ISSUES

DEVELOPMENT POLICIES SHOULD INCLUDE THE PROMOTION OF A HEALTHY

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT WHICH IMPLIES COORDINATION OF SECTORIAL POLICIES
RELATING TO HOUSING, HEALTH, EDUCATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND TAXATION

CONDITIONS MUST BE ASSURED TO ENABLE EACH COUPLE TO MAKE A FREE
AND INFORMED DECISION ABOUT THE NUMBER AND SPACING OF THEIR CHILDREN,
WITHOUT INTERFERENCE WITH THE SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS AND LIFE PLAN OF EACH
FAMILY .

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS CANNOT BE APPROACHED INDEPENDENTLY OF
EMOTIONAL FULFILMENT, WHICH IS FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMAN EXISTENCE .

THE FREEDOM OF THE COUPLE IN RELATION TO THEIR FERTILITY ALSO
DEPENDS ON MEASURES TO ENSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN AND
FOR AN EFFECTIVE SHARING OF FAMILY, PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC
RESPONSIBILITIES.

THIS WHOLE PROCESS SHOULD PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO EDUCATION
AND INFORMATION . WE ARE OF THE OPINION THAT EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND
AWARENESS PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE DEVELOPED, NOT ONLY FOR THE POPULATION IN
GENERAL, BUT PARTICULARLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES.

WE CONSIDER THAT DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED FAMILY AND POPULATION
POLICIES SHOULD ALWAYS TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF
INDIVIDUALS IN THEIR REAL LIFE-CONDITIONS. THESE POLICIES SHOULD ALSO,
IN FULL RESPECT OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AIM AT THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT OF ALL PEOPLE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND THEIR EMPOWERMENT ARE FACTORS WHICH

DETERMINE DEVELOPMENT AND WHICH ARE CLOSELY LINKED TO POPULATION ISSUES,

BY REAFFIRMING WOMEN S RIGHTS AS AN INALIENABLE, INTEGRAL AND
INDIVISIBLE PART OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS, THE VIENA CONFERENCE
REINFORCED THE NEED TO GUARANTEE THE EXERCISE OF THOSE RIGHTS,

THE RECOGNITION OF REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ALLOWS INDIVIDUALS, AND
PARTICULARLY WOMEN, THE CAPACITY TO MAKE DECISIONS, WHILE RESPECTING
THEIR DIGNITY,

UNFORTUNATELY, COERCIVE STERILIZATION POLICIES ARE STILL BEING
PURSUED IN SOME COUNTRIES, NAMELY AS A MEANS OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS
PERSECUTION, PORTUGAL FIRMLY CONDEMNS ANY KIND OF COERCIVENESS ON
INDIVIDUALS IN THESE POLICIES.

MR. PRESIDENT.,

IN PORTUGAL, MANY LEGISLATIVE CHANGES HAVE BEEN ADOPTED, FULLY
GUARANTEEING LEGAL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN AND MEN,

THE SITUATION NOWADAYS, WHICH HAS POSITIVE AND HOPEFUL ASPECTS,
SUCH AS IN HEALTH AND EDUCATION, STILL REQUIRES CONTINUED EFFORTS FOR
AN EFFECTIVE BALANCE OF POWER AND FOR THE CONCILIATION OF FAMILY AND
PROFESSIONAL LIFE, WE ARE VERY HAPPY TO SEE THAT THE
PROGRAMME OF ACTION RECOGNIZES THE PROMOTION OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND
THEIR PARTICIPATION AT ALL LEVELS AND .

IN ALL AREAS, AS AN IMPORTANT END IN ITSELF AND AS ESSENTIAL FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MR. PRESIDENT,

HEALTH IS ALSO AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

THE PORTUGUESE CONSTITUTION AFFIRMS THE RIGHT TO HEALTH PROTECTION. THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE EXTENSIVE TO ALL AND GENERALLY FREE OF CHARGE, ASSURES PREVENTIVE, CURATIVE AND REHABILITATIVE CARE.

EVERY CITIZEN HAS ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PRE-CONCEPTION ASSISTANCE, PRE-NATAL AND BIRTH ASSISTANCE, NEO-NATAL AND CHILD CARE. FAMILY PLANNING, WHICH IS A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT, IS OPEN TO EVERYONE, INCLUDING YOUNG PEOPLE OF BOTH SEXES.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE MEASURES AND THE EASIER ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE IN PORTUGAL, HAVE ALLOWED FOR A GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN THE HEALTH OF THE POPULATION, PARTICULARLY OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

CONCERNING ABORTION -WHICH IS NOT A FAMILY PLANNING METHOD AND IS ILLEGAL - , A LAW WAS ADOPTED THAT DEFINES THE MEDICAL REASONS FOR WHICH, IN SOME CASES, THE VOLUNTARY INTERRUPTION OF PREGNANCY IS NOT ILLEGAL. TOGETHER WITH HEALTH EDUCATION AND PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE CARE, THIS IS THE GENERAL STRATEGY FOR THE HEALTH CARE OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN PORTUGAL.

MR. PRESIDENT,

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IS OF GREAT INTEREST FOR MY COUNTRY ,PORTUGAL HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING EMIGRATION FOR MANY YEARS. THERE ARE CONSEQUENTLY LARGE EMIGRANT COMMUNITIES ABROAD WHOSE IMPORTANT ROLE THE STATE VALUES. MORE RECENTLY, PORTUGAL IS ALSO BECOMING A COUNTRY OF DESTINATION.

I WISH TO DRAW THE CONFERENCES ATTENTION TO THE URGENT NEED OF WORLDWIDE AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, IN POPULATION ISSUES, THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION HAS ALREADY STATED THAT INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IS CLEARLY A RELEVANT ISSUE. I WOULD LIKE TO ECHO AND AMPLIFY WHAT HAS BEEN SAID.

THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE PROTECTION OF ITS NATIONALS RIGHTS AND INTERESTS ABROAD, IN THE SAME WAY, IT CONSIDERS THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF DOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS , IN MUTUAL RESPECT OF BOTH CULTURAL IDENTITIES, TO BE ONE OF THE MAINSTAYS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY.

AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL, WE ARE ALSO CONTINUING TO SUPPORT THE ADVANTAGES OF EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION IN ALL AREAS, WHICH MAY DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY IMPROVE THE STATUS OF MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. IN THIS CONTEXT, WE THINK THAT EFFICIENT COOPERATION IS NECESSARY TO FIGHT AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION OF HUMAN BEINGS.

WE NEED MIGRATION POLICIES WITHIN A CONTEXT OF A MORE GLOBAL STRATEGY.

WE NOTE WITH INTEREST THAT THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION RECOGNIZES THE NEED OF USING ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INSTRUMENTS ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATORY PRESSURES, .

WE ALSO BELIEVE IT IS NECESSARY FOR SOCIAL GROUPS, STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, TO FIND SATISFACTORY AND EFFICIENT WAYS TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF XENOPHOBIA, RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION.

IN TODAY S MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETIES, A MUTUAL EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND

DIFFERENCES IS URGENTLY NECESSARY, ALLOWING EVERYONE TO ENJOY THE EXERCISE OF THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING AND TOLERANCE, BETWEEN DIFFERENT PEOPLES AND CULTURES, USING THE EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING SYSTEMS TO THAT EFFECT.

WE FEEL THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF THE WORK OF MIGRANTS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR PRESENCE, TOGETHER WITH THEIR FAMILIES, FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION AS WELL AS OF THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, AND THE HUMAN AND SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF REUNITING FAMILIES. IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED THAT MIGRANTS PLAY A RELEVANT ROLE IN THE CREATION OF WEALTH, SAVINGS, INVESTMENT AND TRADE, A FACT WHICH IS NOT ALWAYS ACKNOWLEDGED.

MY COUNTRY WOULD LIKE THIS CONFERENCE TO CONSTITUTE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO THE ROLE OF MIGRANTS, WITHIN THE POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT.

MR. PRESIDENT,

AS I SAID IN THE BEGINNING OF MY STATEMENT, CREDIBLE MEASURES TO ADDRESS POPULATION ISSUES MUST NECESSARILY INVOLVE A PROFOUND COMMITMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN THE FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT.

PORTUGAL THEREFORE ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND MAINTAINS A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY WITH THE PORTUGUESE SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IS VERY MUCH ORIENTED TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND HAS PAID INCREASING ATTENTION

TO THE SOCIAL SECTORS, ESPECIALLY HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

WE THINK THAT THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS TO PROMOTE CAPACITY-BUILDING, WITH A VIEW TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY. WE ARE THEREFORE VERY PLEASED THAT THE CONFERENCE S PROGRAMME OF ACTION SO RECOGNIZES.

PORTUGAL IS COMMITTED TO EMPHASIZE THE ASPECTS COVERED BY THIS CONFERENCE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ITS ODA.

WE ARE FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION.

COORDINATION BETWEEN BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL DONORS IS FUNDAMENTAL TO AVOID DUPLICATION AND CONSEQUENTLY TO MAKE OUR ACTION MORE COHERENT AND EFFECTIVE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IS PART OF A VERY IMPORTANT SET OF UN INITIATIVES WHICH ALSO INCLUDES THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN.

MY COUNTRY IS TAKING PART IN THE CAIRO CONFERENCE WITH A CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE AND WILL ENDEAVOUR TO FACILITATE THE PROGRESS OF OUR WORK, AVOIDING CONFRONTATIONS AND FAVOURING CONSENSUS

SLIM RESOURCES, ENDANGERED ENVIRONMENT AND A DETERIORATING FOOD SITUATION SHADOW OUR FUTURE, DESPITE THIS, I AM CONVINCED THAT VERY MUCH DEPENDS ON I IS, MUCH DEPENDES ON US , MUCH DEPENDS ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION..

ONLY IF WE JOIN OUR EFFORTS WILL WE BE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE
DIFFICULTIES THAT LIE AHEAD, I BELIEVE THIS IS THE TASK OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE. MY GOVERNMENT IS FULLY AWARE OF
THESE PROBLEMS AND IS PREPARED TO SHARE ITS PART OF THE GLOBAL
RESPONSIBILITY.

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