

AS WRITTEN



PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**21st SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FOR THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION
AND DEVELOPMENT**

Statement by

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. LUÍS FILIPE MARQUES
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SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION,
HEAD OF THE PORTUGUESE DELEGATION**

New York, July 2, 1999

Check Against Delivery

MR. PRESIDENT,

AT THE OUTSET, LET ME CONGRATULATE YOU FOR YOUR ELECTION TO PRESIDE OVER THIS HONOURABLE MEETING AND WISH YOU THE BEST SUCCESS.

MY DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE FROM GERMANY, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, HAS ALREADY EXPRESSED THE MAIN IDEAS ON THIS IMPORTANT EVENT WHICH WE FULLY ENDORSE.

AT THIS FIRST REVISION OF PROGRESS MADE SINCE ICPD LET ME ADD A FEW REFERENCES TO OUR MAJOR NATIONAL CONCERNS IN THIS FIELD AND TO SOME OF THE MEASURES THAT HAVE BEEN ADOPTED IN MY COUNTRY SINCE CAIRO.

FIVE YEARS HAVE GONE BY SINCE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY GATHERED IN CAIRO TO APPROVE A WORLDWIDE PLAN OF ACTION IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

MY COUNTRY ATTACHED THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO THE CONFERENCE, BOTH ON ITSELF AND AS A PART OF A GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE **RECOGNISED** INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN POPULATION, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

WE ALSO DEEPLY APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT ICPD FOCUSED ITS ATTENTION ON A HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO POPULATION ISSUES.

PORTUGAL, AS OTHER COUNTRIES, IS GOING THROUGH A POPULATION **AGEING** PROCESS RESULTING FROM A GROWING LIFE EXPECTANCY AND REDUCED FERTILITY RATES WHICH BRINGS ABOUT GREAT CHALLENGES.

MY GOVERNMENT FULLY ASSOCIATES WITH THE WORLD CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE ELDER, HAVING ESTABLISHED A NATIONAL COMMISSION AIMED AT **PUTTING** INTO PRACTICE THE PRINCIPLES AND GOALS DEFINED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITHIN THIS CONTEXT.

THE PROGRAMME OF THIS COMMISSION INCLUDES THE PROMOTION OF A REDEFINITION OF THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES WITH REGARD TO AGEING, THE INCLUSION OF AGEING RELATED ISSUES IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE ELDERLY.

WE BELIEVE THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH, WHICH ALLOWED FOR GREATER LIFE EXPECTANCY IN MANY COUNTRIES, SHOULD BE COMPLEMENTED BY SOCIAL POLICIES AIMED AT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OLDER PERSONS.

WE WILL PROCEED WITH OUR EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE RECOGNITION OF THE DIGNITY OF OLDER PERSONS AND OF THEIR ROLE IN SOCIETY, PROMOTE GENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT FAMILY CARE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

PORTUGAL HAS BOTH AN IMPORT EMIGRANT COMMUNITY ABROAD AND AN INCREASING NUMBER OF IMIGRANTS.

THIS DOUBLE CAPACITY OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION COUNTRY PROVIDES US WITH A DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF MIGRATION ISSUES BUT ALSO WITH GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO THEIR TREATMENT.

PORTUGAL SUSTAINS A POSITIVE APPROACH TO THE ISSUE OF MIGRATION IN WHICH THE CONTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS TO BOTH THEIR SOCIETIES OF ORIGIN AND DESTINATION IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

WE ARE **COMMITTED** TO THE FULL INTEGRATION OF DOCUMENTED MIGRANTS IN THE PORTUGUESE SOCIETY, THUS WE ACHIEVED TWO **LEGALISATION** PROCESSES DURING THE LAST YEARS, UNDER THE CONTROL OF A DESIGNATED HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR IMMIGRATION AFFAIRS.

WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO DEVELOP CO-OPERATION WITH ORIGIN COUNTRIES, NAMELY BY COMBATING TRAFFICKING OF ILEGAL MIGRANTS.

BUT WE BELIEVE THAT A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IMPLIES FIRST AND FOREMOST THE PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF ALL MIGRANTS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR LEGAL STATUS, INCLUDING THROUGH THE ADOPTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF LEGAL INSTRUMENTS BOTH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL.

MR. PRESIDENT.

PORTUGAL ATTACHES THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, WHICH WE CONSIDER A MATTER OF VITAL INTEREST NOT ONLY FOR WOMEN BUT FOR THE SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.

THIS CONCERN HAS BEEN REFLECTED AT THE LAST CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION, WHICH ENSHRINED THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN AS A FUNDAMENTAL TASK OF THE STATE.

FOLLOWING THAT REVISION THE PORTUGUESE CONSTITUTION NOT ONLY ESTABLISHES THAT THE DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THE POLITICAL LIFE IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF DEMOCRACY BUT ALSO THAT THE LAW MUST PROMOTE EQUALITY IN THE EXERCISE OF CIVIC AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND NON-DISCRIMINATION BASED ON GENDER IN THE ACCESS TO POLITICAL OFFICE.

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIFIC BODIES SUCH AS THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION FOR PARITY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THE FAMILY AND THE POST OF HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR EQUALITY AND FAMILY.

A GLOBAL PLAN FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WAS ADOPTED LAST YEAR, FOCUSING ON AREAS SUCH AS VIOLENCE, WORK AND EMPLOYMENT, RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES, SOCIAL PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY AND MATERNITY, HEALTH, EDUCATION SCIENCE AND CULTURE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

WE BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO CONTINUE THE WORLDWIDE EFFORTS TO ENABLE ALL PERSONS TO MAKE FREE AND INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT THEIR REPRODUCTIVE LIFE, BY INCREASING ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT NEEDED.

THE NATIONAL HEALTH STRATEGY PLAN FOR 1998-2002 ADDRESSES IN A COMPREHENSIVE WAY THE ISSUES AT STAKE WHEN DEALING WITH REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.

A NEW DOCUMENT REFORMULATING THE GUIDELINES FOR FAMILY PLANNING, MATERNAL HEALTH, INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ON SEXUALITY AND REPRODUCTION FOR ADOLESCENTS WAS RECENTLY PUBLISHED. WE BELIEVE IT WILL HAVE A LONG RUN POSITIVE EFFECT.

MR. PRESIDENT,

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION IS PRIMARILY A NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT COUNTRIES DEVELOP THEIR OWN POPULATION PROGRAMMES ACCORDING TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF

THEIR PEOPLES AS PART OF THE GLOBAL EFFORT TO INCREASE NATIONAL INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

PROMOTING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT, WHICH INCLUDES RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE, DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW, GOOD AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY ARE ELEMENTS THAT MUST BE PRESENT AND CONSIDERED IN THIS CONTEXT.

HAVING SAID THIS, WE MUST ALSO REGOGNISE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THE LEAST DEVELOPED AMONG THEM, MAY REQUIRE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION TO COMPLEMENT THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THEIR PEOPLE.

WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS DOMAIN AND WE HAVE DEVELOPED SEVERAL CO-OPERATION PROGRAMMES WITH SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION DATA AND ANALYSIS, AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH.

WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO REFORM OUR COOPERATION POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT, ADJUSTING IT TO THE FRAMEWORK OF PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES AS SPELLED OUT IN THE "DAC" STRATEGY, "SHAPING THE 21st CENTURY: THE CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION", AND IN THAT WAY WE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO A NECESSARY BETTER COORDINATION OF DONOR STATES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE MAIN PROPOSED GOAL OF REDUCING POVERTY BY HALF BY THE YEAR 2015.

WITHOUT A BETTER COORDINATION SYSTEM, ENVOLVING THE UN INSTITUTIONS, THE WORLD BANK, THE IMF, THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE MAJOR STATE DONORS, ALL THE EFFORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE POLICIES WILL BE JEOPARDIZED.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE WORLD POPULATION WILL SOON REACH THE HISTORICAL FIGURE OF 6 BILLION.

WHILE PAYING A FAIR TRIBUTE TO THE ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH, THIS FACT BRINGS ABOUT GREAT CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT CENTURY IN THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL PEOPLES IN ALL COUNTRIES.

THE GREATER OF THOSE CHALLENGES WILL BE THE **ERRADICATION** OF POVERTY, WHICH AFFLICTS TWO THIRDS OF THE WORLD POPULATION, IN SPITE OF ALL EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

THE PACE OF THE GROWTH OF WORLD POPULATION IN THE NEXT CENTURY WILL DEPEND GREATLY ON OUR COMMITMENT TO MANY OF THE GOALS OF THE CAIRO PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

IT IS IN OUR HANDS TO ENSURE THAT THIS. GROWTH IS COMMENSURATE WITH THE EARTH RESOURCES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ALLOWING FOR A HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND DIGNIFIED LIFE FOR ALL.

THIS WAS THE SPIRIT WHICH ORIENTED OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS OF REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION WHICH CULMINATES IN THIS SESSION.

IT IS ALSO THE REASON FOR OUR FULL COMMITMENT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KEY FUTURE ACTIONS WE HAVE APPROVED.

THANK YOU MR. PRESIDENT

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