

UK national statement on the occasion of the UN International Commission on Population and Development (ICPD)

Thank you Chair,

Let me begin by thanking the Secretariat and all speakers for their remarks this morning and for sharing the key findings from the regional report.

The 30th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development is a major international moment for us. An opportunity to come together to reflect on, and celebrate the global progress made on access to quality education, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, sustainable development and human rights.

Whilst we haven't achieved the full ambitions agreed in Cairo, there is much to celebrate.

I want to reinforce once again The United Kingdom's commitment to play its part and to stand boldly beside others, who are striving to ensure that by 2030:

- All women and adolescents have agency over their own lives and futures and control over their own bodies
- They are able to make fully informed choices on having children
- And they are able to give birth safely, free from coercion and violence

Sustainable and equitable development can only be realised when all women, adolescents and girls have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled, when no woman or girl is truly left behind.

I would like to share with you some of the advancements domestically.

- Last year, the UK Government published its flagship Women's Health Strategy. We have significantly enhanced information provision through our National Health Service website, invested £25 million to expand women's health hubs across the country and improved access to Hormone Replacement Therapy.
- In January 2019, the Government committed to end new HIV transmissions, AIDS diagnoses and HIV-related deaths within England by 2030. Informed by the findings of the independent HIV Commission and the input and insight from a range of partners, the Government published the HIV Action Plan for England in December 2021.
- The HIV Action Plan sets out a programme of work across the health system to enable us to achieve our interim ambition of an 80% reduction in the number of people first diagnosed with HIV in England by 2025. And despite the challenging backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, **England has seen the lowest ever number of people living with undiagnosed HIV** and has met the UNAIDS 95-95-95 target for both 2020 and 2021. HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been made available free to anyone who needs it since 2020 and opt-out HIV testing has now been established in many hospital emergency departments, massively increasing overall HIV testing and finding both undiagnosed and untreated cases.

Chairs, excellencies, the global context we find ourselves in compared to 30 years ago is fundamentally different. As we have heard today, whilst the general global trend has been positive, we have to address head on the challenges that we are experiencing.

We face an emboldened, global anti-rights movement, putting at risk women and girls' lifesaving access to quality contraception, education, safe abortion, and lifesaving maternal health services.

This is further compounded by the devastating legacy of the pandemic compounded by other legal and socio-economic barriers that women, adolescents, and girls are facing. Conflict, crises and climate change are among those universal challenges where women and girls continue to be disproportionately impacted.

We have a duty to collectively stand up to these universal challenges and ensure that women and girls around the world can enjoy their human rights and have agency over their own body.

I am inspired by the progress and commitment from those in the room today. As we look forward to the Summit of the Future, I want to say to the women and girls, and those most marginalised around the world, that there is hope. The UK remains fully committed to listening to you, amplifying your voices and empowering you as decision-makers, as advocates, and as leaders of the future.

Thank you Chair, Excellencies for your time.