



THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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29th Special Session of the General Assembly on Follow up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, 22 September 2014

Statement by H.E. Mr. Salim Muslimov, Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Mr. President,

I would like to thank for the opportunity to evaluate the twenty-year term of the implementation of the Cairo Program of Action.

The year of 1994 coincided with early years of our independence. The political, economic and social crisis was further worsened with the occupation of some twenty percent of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia, and the presence of about one million refugees and internally displaced persons.

Despite the difficult times, Azerbaijan actively participated in the Cairo Conference, and later our country incorporated the Program goals into its national policies.

Since 1995, our country entered a new phase of development with extensive economic reforms. In a short period of time, Azerbaijan has become one of the leading countries in terms of socio-economic development. The latest UN report on Human Development ranks Azerbaijan the seventy sixth among hundred and eighty seven countries. According to the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum, Azerbaijan ranks thirty eighth among hundred and forty four countries in the world.

In the post-Conference period, population issues remained high on our national agenda. In 1999, Azerbaijan was the first post-soviet country to adopt a national strategy on demographic development. Its implementation had a great positive impact on demography, health, education, employment, gender equality, and regulation of migration.

Over the past 10 years, our population grew by 26%. Annual population growth rate is 1.3%. Life expectancy increased by 4.6 years and currently is 74.2 years. Poverty rate

declined 10 times, unemployment rate - 3.5 times, amounting to date 5.3% and 5.0%, respectively.

We have drafted a new "State Program on Population and Demographic development for the period up to 2025".

In this context, I want to emphasize the role of cooperation with international organizations, especially the UN Population Fund in the effective implementation of the principles of the Program of Action in our country.

I hope that recommendations of today's Session will preserve the continuity of the Cairo Conference, and lay the foundation for the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thank you for your attention.