

Statement of the Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy

Olga Marta Sánchez Oviedo

International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014

New York – September 2014

A very good afternoon to you all.

20 years ago, the Cairo Conference took a fundamental step to demonstrate the link between development and the well-being of populations. It is people, with all their diversity, who build societies, and they should be the ones who benefit from its achievements. However, the challenges the world was called upon to address on that occasion are as persistent now as they were then.

The search for gender equality, access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and the effective achievement of the rights of women, young people and the elderly, as well as their empowerment, are necessary conditions for cooperative, sustainable and inclusive development in accordance with the achievements of our time.

Costa Rica, its government and its citizens are committed to the promotion and protection of human rights in all their dimensions. That is why we have continued making sustained efforts to ensure that laws, public policies, programmes and projects become instruments for the implementation of these rights. There are precise directives for state action and practices which are aimed towards reaching this goal.

The Costa Rican population and authorities are aware that we are still a long way from effectively achieving human rights for the populace; particularly for those sections of society living in vulnerable conditions. That is why we reiterate our commitment to the principles and values adopted at the Cairo Conference and ratified by the Montevideo Consensus.

We have worked with particular determination to: combat poverty, inequality and social exclusion, to achieve a sustainable and equitable development that protects biodiversity and ecosystems, and for sex education from a young age. We aspire to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, and is risk-free, and that the full development of mothers and children is guaranteed. That is why we are decisively opposed to improper relationships between adults and children or teenagers.

We also work to defend the territorial rights of indigenous peoples, for the recognition of Afro-descendants, for safe cities and for dignity in old age. All of this requires strong state action to make these matters a priority for public social investment.

We consider that the discussion of the Post-2015 Development Agenda is an appropriate space for the renewal of national commitments to the principles and rights declared at the Cairo conference and in Montevideo.

Thank you very much for your attention.