



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS,  
NEW YORK**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**THE HONOURABLE MRS. KAMLA PERSAD-BISSESSAR**

**PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

**AT THE**

**TWENTY-NINTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

**OF THE**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT BEYOND**

**2014**

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**UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK  
September 22, 2014**

Mr. President,

Trinidad and Tobago is honoured to participate in this Special Session of the United Nations on the International Conference on Population and Development. We take this opportunity to acknowledge with appreciation the Report of the Secretary-General, A/69/62 entitled "Framework of Actions for the Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014", as well as the Index Report on the Interactive Debate of the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development.

As Prime Minister, I have the honour and privilege to report that Trinidad and Tobago has contributed to the Global Survey for the ICPD Beyond 2014 Review, and wish to emphasize that Trinidad and Tobago has made considerable progress in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Mr. President,

Allow me to enumerate some of the areas in which my Government has implemented the Programme of Action of the ICPD for the benefit of our citizens. These include the areas of education, employment, health and the provision of several social safety nets for the poor through the Ministry of the People and Social Development. It should be noted that a significant portion of the budgetary resources allocated for the upcoming financial year have been dedicated to education as well as programmes which target women, especially single mothers. Once more, education has received the lion's share of the national budget as we seek to make our education system MDG plus, which would result in Trinidad and Tobago achieving universal early childhood education by 2015. As Prime Minister, I have recently re-designed certain programmes in the Ministry with responsibility for youth affairs with a view to ensuring that young people, especially the vulnerable, benefit through avenues available in the education system, as well as from Skills and Entrepreneurial Training, Mentoring and Youth Health programmes. Most recently, in addressing issues of the poor, my Government introduced a new programme which will provide financial assistance for one year for any child born to under-privileged parents.

Mr. President,

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has achieved a number of successes with regard to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD. However, we are quite aware that there remain certain challenges, but we are committed to ensuring equality and equity in an environment which would harness the talents of current and future generations.

Notwithstanding the strides we have made through proactive intervention by the Government, including efforts made to improve the efficacy of our Central Statistical Office (CSO) in order to promote evidence-based policy making, we recognize that there is still need for assistance from our development partners to strengthen our institutional capacity in some areas, including data collection and statistical systems. This would enable us to implement more effectively Government policies. Special Sessions such as these are important so that Member States have the opportunity to share with each other best practices and other experiences. Additionally, a National Population Policy is in the process of being finalized and will further facilitate the level of data analysis to address key population issues.

Mr. President,

My Government has already begun to put measures in place to ensure that Trinidad and Tobago is not left behind with regard to the implementation of a transformative post 2015 development agenda. In this regard, programmes are being developed by the relevant national agencies to address issues relating to pre natal and neo natal care, as well as other issues affecting the health of mothers and infants.

Mr. President,

Trinidad and Tobago notes with satisfaction the emphasis placed in the Secretary-General's report on issues related to human rights and we fully support the conclusion of the report that "investing in individual human rights, capabilities and dignity — across the multiple sectors of the ICPD and throughout the life-course

— is the foundation of sustainable development." We also advocate that Sustainable development requires a holistic approach and recognition of the inter-linkages between human rights and the population dynamics that have materialized and which continue to emerge.

Mr. President

Increasingly diverse household structures and living arrangements require us to plan and build sustainable cities and strengthen urban-rural linkages. It is therefore crucial that we understand the population dynamics at the micro and macro levels for seamless integration into development planning at the national, regional and international levels. We agree that the development challenges we face require systematic participation of all stakeholders in crafting responses to these challenges, which require partnership and global leadership through the United Nations.

My country is proud to join the international community in reaffirming support for the historic ICPD Programme of Action as well as for the transformational vision presented in the Report of the Secretary-General.

I thank you.