

**STATEMENT BY HON. FATMA FEREJ, MINISTER OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING
THE TWENTY-NINTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON
THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
BEYOND 2014**

22 SEPTEMBER, 2014

Mr. President,

Despite that two decades have passed, the ICPD vision is still relevant and paramount to the social and economic development of every nation. Its relevance has become more evident as we negotiate on the post-2015 development agenda which some of the unfinished issues need to be integrated.

Mr. President,

I am glad to inform that, Tanzania undertook operational review of the implementation of ICPD Programme of Action and the findings indicate overall good progress on reproductive and sexual health (88 percent), morbidity and mortality (88 percent) and education (82 percent). Tanzania has made significant achievements on the MDG 2, 3 and 4 well before 2015.

We have reduced under-five and infant mortality rates from 191 to 81 per 1,000 live births and from 1990 to 2012, while infant mortality rate has decreased from 115 to 51 per 1,000 live births at the same period. Despite these achievements, Tanzania is facing challenges of children dying from preventable diseases, like malaria, diarrhea and tuberculosis.

Tanzania achieved little in maternal mortality from 529 to 432 per 100,000 live births in the year 1990 to 2012. However, my Government is fully committed in intensifying the efforts to improve health services in maternal health facilities.

Mr. President;

Despite remarkable improvement in the above mentioned areas over the last two decades, there have been challenges in improving other areas.

The achievement of goal number one of the MDGs is still one of the major stumbling block in achieving the objectives and goals of ICPD and POA. Approximately 12 million Tanzanians are still living below the poverty line;

Abject poverty has led to the pattern of early marriage and childbearing of the Tanzania's youth. Statistics indicate that, in 2010, 4 in 10 women were married by the age of 18 years and 23 percent women have begun childbearing by 19 years. High number of maternal deaths is still a challenge. These deaths are due to low utilization of family planning services, low coverage of care at birth by skilled providers and low postnatal care.

The failure to achieve all the targets of the MDGs 1 is one of the major stumbling block in achieving the objectives and goals of ICPD Programme of Action. It is approximated that 12 million Tanzanians are living below the poverty line. Poverty has led to the pattern of early marriage and childbearing of the Tanzania's youth. Statistics indicate that, in 2010, 4 in 10 women were married by the age of 18 years and 23 percent of those women began childbearing by 19 years.

Generally, major challenges that impede the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action include among others- inadequate capacities in skills and institutional structures; lack of human capital, research and data use; modern technology and financial constraints. We are working hard in collaboration with other development partners to address these challenges, so that we can successfully implement the Programme of Action.

Mr. President,

Lastly, my delegation wishes to underscore the following points to be taken into account in the beyond 2014 agenda

- unfinished business that still has national priority will need to be carried forward in the areas of poverty eradication, elimination of inequalities and discrimination, including the basis of sex; education to ensure that it empowers the youth, especially girls;
- Address the new and emerging challenges, including that of the youth population. We need to maximize the demographic benefits by investing in creating opportunities and supportive environment for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship for young people to create and access quality education and jobs thereby realizing their full potential;
- There is need to strengthen our health systems. A fully functional and efficient health system is required in all countries for the achievement of ICPD Action beyond 2014, and the MDGs. We need to build health systems which we all know takes time and investment to show results;
- Improving access to essential services while scaling up interventions to eradicate malaria, tuberculosis and HIV as well as addressing other non-communicable diseases;
- Adequate resource mobilization to fund high impact interventions based on the needs of the country needs to be accelerated and most important.

I thank you.