

Dear participants of the Conference,

On behalf of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, I am pleased to welcome all participants of the conference "Enabling Choices: Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development". I want to express my deep gratitude to the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Economic Commission for the invitation to the conference and opportunity to speak and report about the progress in the field of sexual and reproductive health in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, world countries including the Kyrgyz Republic took commitments to make all possible effort to meet the reproductive health needs of the population that include family planning; countries defined the concept of reproductive rights and came to the consensus that the empowerment of women, gender equality and elimination of all forms of violence against girls and women are key issues in population development.

Since 1994, the Kyrgyz Republic made great efforts to improve the sexual and reproductive health of the country population and to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health services.

The Kyrgyz Republic has made significant progress in reducing maternal mortality in the last few years. By the end of 2017, the Kyrgyz Republic has achieved the objectives on reducing maternal mortality in the framework of the National Health Reform Program "Den-Sooluk" for 2012-2018. The maternal mortality ratio in 2017 was 31.2 per 100,000 live births and decreased by 35% in comparison to 2012 MMR. However, the Ministry of Health understands that maternal mortality is still high and makes great efforts for further reduction of maternal mortality in the country. In particular, the Ministry of Health is analyzing the second report on the Confidential Investigation of Maternal Mortality for 141 cases of maternal mortality for 2014-2015 and will continuously monitor implementation of the recommendations of this report.

In 2015, the Parliament of the country adopted a new law "On Reproductive Rights of Citizens and Guarantees of their Implementation". The adoption of this law is a historic moment for our country. The new edition of the Law "On Reproductive Rights of Citizens and Guarantees of their Implementation" is a good example of integrating the principle of the life course approach into the policy on sexual and reproductive health. Because of this law, young people of the Kyrgyz Republic have access to sexual education and the age limit of young people who can receive medical services without parents' consent has decreased to 16 years. The new law instructs consideration of aspects of age and sex in the development and implementation of standards to protect reproductive health of citizens.

The Kyrgyz Republic has achieved good results in preventing of HIV infection as well. The legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of HIV infection is compatible to the standards of international law and creates conditions for implementation of preventive programs. In 2017, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic approved a new state program to fight HIV in 2017-2021. The goal of the program is to minimize the spread of HIV infection by 50% reduction of HIV incidence and mortality. Like other countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, the Kyrgyz Republic has seen a shift in transmission patterns of HIV from injectable drug use to sexual way of transmission. In this regard, the new state program includes number of activities on further integration of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services.

It worth to note that there has been little progress in ensuring of population rights to access the modern contraceptive methods and in improvement of the quality of family planning services. For instance, indicator of unmet need for family planning remains high as 19%. In 2018, while recognizing the importance of access to contraceptives, especially for vulnerable populations, for the first time since country independence the Ministry of Health allocated 3.2 million KGS from its budget to purchase contraceptives to cover the needs of women of vulnerable populations in family planning. Currently, the Ministry of Health is working on the preparation of a 5-year plan to ensure the sustainability of financing the procurement of contraceptives from the state budget. Recently the Kyrgyz Republic joined the global partnership "Family Planning 2020" and took certain commitments to achieve the goals of "Family Planning 2020".

I deeply believe that joining the global partnership "Family Planning 2020" will give an additional impetus to our desire to improve the quality of family planning services, to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you for your attention!