

Excellencies, ladies and gentleman,

Allow me to thank the organizers for the opportunities to address this distinguished audience on behalf of the Foreign Ministry of Kazakhstan on the progress made in ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health as part of the Sustainable Development agenda and as one of the countries who adopted the ICPD Programme of Action in 1994.

Kazakhstan has made considerable progress in the last 25 years in the area of Reproductive Health. One of its greatest achievement has been the reduction by 75% of the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) since the early 1990s where it was estimated at 62 per 100,000 livebirths in 1990 to 12.6 per 100,000 live births in 2017.

A Reproductive Health Situation Analysis carried out in 2015 suggested that there was a need to focus much more on Family Planning to further reduce MMR. Access and utilization of modern contraceptives – which are not in the Basic Benefit Package - has stagnated over for the last 15 years with IUDs remaining the most popular method and abortion rates at unacceptably high rates as they are often used as a method of family planning. Furthermore, the quality of the services is uneven across the regions of the country, sexually-transmitted infections are increasing and teenage pregnancies are much higher than the average OECD rate, with only few sexually-active adolescents using a contraceptive method.

Following an extensive consultative process such analysis has led to the development and adoption of “The Kazakhstan Strategic Framework on Family Planning” up to 2021 and incorporation of its key interventions into the Government’s Road Map of the Health Development Programme “Densaulyk”.

President Nazarbayev in its address to the nation at the beginning of 2018 stressed that the country needs to invest and prioritize the Reproductive Health of young people. As part of the Densaulyk and as further reinforced by our President, three main strategic directions are being discussed with UNFPA:

- The need to ensure availability and accessibility to Quality Youth Friendly Services;
- The need to provide access to Contraceptives for Sexually Active Adolescents and;
- The importance of Introducing Sexuality Education in the Education System.

The ICPD Programme of action remains as relevant as ever in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and will continue to be prioritized in the years ahead, both nationally and sub-nationally but also through the promotion of regional and inter-country cooperation around these crucial areas of social development that affect everyone’s life.

Thank you for your attention.