

Address of Minister Jovana Trenchevska at the High-Level segment of the ICPD30 Conference, Geneva, 19-20 October 2023

Distinguished excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I have the honor to share the progress of North Macedonia in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action of 1994. I will highlight the key points of the National Report on ICPD30, that we developed in the run-up to this conference.

- In the Republic of North Macedonia, we witness similar changes in the population trends as seen in the region of Eastern Europe (aging, migration, and other). These challenges and the aspects of demographic resilience are addressed in the current update of the Demographic Strategy, and the National Development Strategy that is being finalized.
- The new National Youth Strategy, 2023-2027, developed with the contribution of over 1,000 young people, outlines the priorities of our youth: access to information and services, support to sustain their health and wellbeing, quality education, participation and employment. We stand with and by our youth, supporting them to reach their full potential.
- In 2021 we have adopted a new Law on Prevention and Protection from Gender-based Violence, and have introduced legislative changes that address early marriages. We promoted the multi sectoral response and cooperation, in line with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and the Nairobi Commitments of our Government.
- We have developed the first ever National Strategy on Disability Inclusion, and we work closely with the organizations of persons with disabilities, counterparts and supporters, towards full implementation of the CRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).
- In achieving gender equality, let me highlight the importance of the gender sensitive policies in the private sector which reflects the decisions to start a family and share the family responsibilities.
- Finally, I would like to share highlights from the Call to Action that resulted from the High-Level Regional Conference on Bodily Autonomy and SRHR, held in Skopje two weeks ago, where we re-affirmed the regional commitment to work on:
 - Promoting bodily autonomy and SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights), respecting the diversity of all people, in all stages of their lives, with focus on the most marginalized women and girls;
 - Addressing inequalities, harmful social norms and discriminatory practices, including child marriages, online abuse and other forms of GBV in the digital space, and

- Strong advocacy for better access to information, knowledge and education on gender equality, bodily autonomy and achievement of SRHR.

By building alliances and fostering greater transparency and accountability, I am confident that we can address the challenges that go well beyond our individual countries' capacities.

Thank you.

ICPD Programme of Action:

Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994

CRPD:

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Promoting bodily autonomy and SRHR:

Promoting bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights