

UN Economic Commission of Europe (ECE) Regional Conference on ICPD30
19 - 20 October 2023

Geneva, Switzerland

Closing Statement by Ms. Diene Keita, UN Assistant Secretary-General and

Deputy Executive Director, Programme, UNFPA

Date: 20 October 2023

Time: 04:30 pm - 05:30 pm (Geneva time)

Venue: Room XVII, Palais des Nations

Esteemed Co-Chairs,

H.E. Mr. Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova

H.E. Ms. Aurora Diaz-Rato Revuelta, Permanent Representative of Spain to United Nations in Geneva

UNECE Executive Secretary Ms. Tatiana Molcean,

Honorable Delegates,

Colleagues and friends,

Good afternoon!

We came to this conference to take stock of where we stand with turning the ICPD vision into practice in this region after a few tumultuous years and in light of the transformational changes that the region is undergoing.

And we came here to chart a path forward for the ICPD in this new world full of uncertainties.

It is undeniable that overall, there has been a lot of progress. But we still have more to achieve. And we have also seen that there is no room for complacency, as part of this progress has come under threat recently due to crises and pushbacks.

But most importantly, we have seen that the ICPD agenda remains an essential tool in our collective efforts to address the challenges we are facing and to keep this region on a path towards stability, well-being, and prosperity.

The ICPD agenda at its core is about empowering people. It is about creating conditions for people – all people – to succeed in life, to fulfill their potential.

We may take different paths on how best to do this. But there can be no doubt that bringing the best out of people is beneficial, for individuals and for countries.

Be it confronting demographic change or the climate crisis, fighting poverty or stimulating economic growth, ensuring rights to education, health and opportunities they need is absolutely key for them to flourish.

This is what the ICPD vision is all about. And this is why it remains so urgent today.

Distinguished delegates,

There is much to celebrate. We heard impressive examples of how you have taken the ICPD agenda forward in your countries. How you have pushed forward, despite all odds, with measures making your societies more inclusive, more equitable, more just.

it is humbling and so heartwarming to hear about your pride in advancing the agenda .

We have seen an incredible diversity of approaches, experiences and lessons learned, from a region as big and varied as this, where we can learn so much from each other.

We have heard from governments, parliamentarians, civil society, young people, older people, people with disabilities, a cross section of the diverse and vibrant societies that together form this region.

Hearing your voices, and the passion and enthusiasm that speaks through them, especially from civil society and young people, gives me confidence that we will be able to tackle the challenges before us.

UNFPA is fully committed to supporting you on this path.

Distinguished delegates,

Before I finish, I join Madame Executive Secretary in thanking you for your valuable guidance, your experiences, and your voices.

It was heartening to hear the many voices calling for the commitments of the ICPD to be carried further and to be applied in this changing reality of ours.

I take this opportunity to say a special thank you to our co-chairs:

H.E. Mr. Alexei Buzu, Minister of Labour and Social Protection, Republic of Moldova

H.E. Ms. Aurora Diaz-Rato Revuelta, Permanent Representative of Spain to United Nations in Geneva

who have lead us through these 2 days with great skill, and facilitated such an interactive and substantive conference.

I would like to thank all our speakers and panelists for their truly inspiring presentations and interventions.

I would also make a special acknowledgement to the UNECE and Ms. Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary of UNECE. Our close partnership is exceptional.

I would also like to convey my thanks and gratitude to our colleagues with UNECE and UNFPA, rapporteurs and interpreters, and many others who made this conference a success.

I look forward to see you strong engagement in NYC during COD 57 at the global review

I thank you all for your kind attention!