



## **“Development Challenges and Population Dynamics in a Changing Arab World”**

### **Cairo Declaration**

**Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States  
(ICPD Beyond 2014)**

24-26 June 2013



## Preamble

*We, the representatives of member States of the League of Arab States (LAS), assembled in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt, from 24-26 June 2013 for the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States, to review the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), adopted in Cairo in 1994, and to commit to key actions and priorities to expeditiously achieve the goals and objectives of the ICPD beyond 2014 as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the global development agenda post- 2015,*

*Recalling United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/234 of December 2010 which extended the Programme of Action and the Key Actions for its Further Implementation beyond 2014, and requested Governments to “undertake reviews of the progress achieved and the constraints faced therein in the implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels of international cooperation”, mandating UNFPA, in cooperation with all relevant organizations of the UN system and other relevant international organizations, as well as institutions and experts, to undertake an operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action “on the basis of the highest-quality data and analysis of the state of population and development”, taking into account the need to respond to “new challenges relevant to population and development and to the changing development environment, and reinforcing the integration of the population and development agenda in global processes related to development”;*

*Further recalling the outcomes of all relevant League of Arab States declarations and resolutions, including Arab Summits’ Decisions as well as United Nations Conferences and Summits of the 1990s and beyond and outcomes and declarations of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (ECA);*

*Recognizing that the full implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Key Actions for its Further Implementation, including the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health and reproductive rights by 2015, as specified in the Programme of Action and Millennium Development Goal Target 5b, is integrally linked to global efforts to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development;*

*Further recognizing the critical inter-linkages between population and sustained economic growth and sustainable development and their important central role to addressing the challenges and priorities of the region, and improving the quality of life of all people, especially children, adolescent girls, youth, women, older persons, . people with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons; in eradicating poverty and social inequities; achieving universal primary and secondary education; achieving gender equality; improving maternal and child health; enhancing reproductive health and reproductive rights; combating sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS; and eliminating gender based violence as well as all forms of discrimination;*

*Acknowledging the contribution of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in support of the region’s priorities, including the review of the ICPD beyond 2014;*

1. Welcomes the findings and conclusions of the regional review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD and its Key Actions and its follow up beyond 2014,
2. Further welcomes the success of numerous population programmes implemented by Arab States since the adoption of the Programme of Action, especially in the areas of population dynamics, sexual and reproductive health, gender equity and women empowerment, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV and information and data,
3. Recognizes that in spite of the progress made towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action in the region, implementation has been uneven within countries and across the region in general, with the continuous challenges related to poverty and wealth disparities, social inclusion, youth, ageing, the status of women and girls, universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, migration, urbanization as well as complicated emergencies and armed conflict, the environment and climate change,

Reiterating the principles included in the Cairo Programme of Action related to the sovereign right of the state in implementing the recommendations in accordance with national laws, with full respect to various religious and moral values and the cultural background of the people, in accordance with internationally recognized human rights.

## **Recommendations**

### **Overall Policies**

Conscious of the need for policies, programmes, institutions and partnerships as well as allocations of appropriate resources that are commensurate with the challenges and priorities for achieving human well-being and sustainable development, identified by the regional review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the recommendations for its follow up beyond 2014, including ensuring an integrated approach to inclusive economic growth and inclusive social development, the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, equality of opportunity for all as well access to social and health services and the need to recognize equality and dignity as central to progress and peace and security,

We agree to the following:

#### **A. Dignity and Equality**

*Recognizing that while some government policies based on linking economic and social issues over the past 20 years have led to expanded opportunities and well-being for many, there is still a need for further efforts to combat poverty and attain fundamental rights and*

*freedoms that enable people to fully participate in society, benefit from social and economic progress and lead a decent life;*

*Acknowledging that expanding inequality has further undermined the grounds for ensuring minimum social justice for all, has contributed to slower growth at the macro level, and has thwarted poverty reduction efforts and social mobility strategies at the micro level;*

*Further recognizing the important role of equity and equality and the need to eliminate all forms of multiple and overlapping disempowerment and discrimination that women and girls, young people, the elderly, migrants and displaced persons,, persons with disabilities, and persons belonging to ethnic, cultural and linguistic minorities, continue to be subject to.*

1. Address the issue of social and economic inequality, through redressing the maldistribution of wealth and increasing opportunities ensuring full utilization of human capital to advance socioeconomic development;
2. Direct due attention to the rights and responsibilities of the family and all its members to ensure protection, wellbeing, stability and productivity;
3. Implement poverty reduction strategies and programs aimed at the vulnerable groups especially women, while paying more attention to women heading households, and provide them socio-economic support;
4. Urge governments to develop plans and programmes to enhance the role of women in family bonding and cohesion and educating young people on the values of citizenship

## **Women**

*Recognizing the important role, which women play in all facets of life in the region and stressing that gender equality, equity and empowerment of women are requirements to help achieve and sustain population and development goals;*

5. Call upon all countries that have not done so, to consider signing and ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW and its optional protocol) and translate in law and practice its provisions and develop strategies to uphold United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1188 and 1960; in a way consistent with the sovereignty of the state;
6. Call upon Arab countries to consider lifting any remaining reservations to any of the articles of CEDAW;
7. Commit to ensuring political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of women and girls without discrimination on the basis of religion, belief, ethnicity, or national origin;
8. Integrate gender equality and women's empowerment principles in all development plans with a special attention to education and communication programmes and strategies; and work to provide equal opportunities and enabling environment;

9. Protect the right of women to effective participation in the conduct of public affairs as well as decision-making circles and adopt measures to promote it including stimulating mechanisms;
10. Address legal and cultural challenges to promote women's equal opportunities, in urban and rural areas, in occupational mobility, especially at management, executive and political levels;
11. Enact reforms of marriage laws that prevent child marriage and ensure protection and well-being of the girl child and make compulsory the registration of marriage in official registry system, and issuance of personal status legislations enhancing the rights of women and children in the family;
12. Implementation of programs and measures through the involvement of community leaders and civil society and youth to address the underlying causes of child marriage, and raise awareness about the serious consequences of child marriage on the health and survival;
13. Implement programs targeting changing the attitudes and behavior of communities especially regarding child-marriage, girls' education and employment, as well as ensuring the right to education and information for girls, including those who happen to be married;
14. Enhance engagement of men and boys and promote male participation and equal sharing of responsibilities through support programmes that promote gender equality in rights and opportunities;
15. Issuing legislations where they do not exist, and implementing existing legislations and development of necessary national plans of action, including monitoring, reporting and criminalizing measures that protect women from all forms of violence within and outside the family and enable them to exercise their full rights, and promote a systematic collection of data on gender-based violence;
16. Strengthen national systems and partnership with international organizations, civil society and youth as relevant to build capacity and awareness of all stakeholders involved in the prevention and response to GBV and abuse of the older persons, (involving health professionals including mental health, police, security actors, etc.);
17. Strengthening coordination and creating alliances and partnerships with local communities, civil society and young people, to mobilize efforts to prevent gender based violence;

### **Migrants and Displaced Persons**

18. Commit to the protection and fulfillment of the rights of all migrants, including refugees and displaced persons, which is essential to maximize their contribution to countries of origin and destination alike;

19. Pay special attention to the population and development conditions in the Arab states affected by occupation, war and conflict; especially regarding refugees, displaced persons and forced migration;
20. Emphasize the importance of protecting and fulfilling the human rights of all migrants including displaced persons, refugees and victims of trafficking, which is essential to maximize their contributions to countries of destination and origin alike;
21. Ensure the protection of all human and labor rights of international migrants from and within the Arab region;
22. Paying particular attention to the situation of the population and development in the Arab countries affected by occupation, wars and conflicts, especially with regard to refugees and displaced persons, forced migration and emphasizing that it hinders the achievement of sustainable development and lead to a decline in the progress towards achieving the Cairo Programme of Action on Population and Development, particularly what is happening in Palestine as a result the Israeli occupation and its effects on sustainable development and human rights;

### **Young people**

*Reaping the benefits of the demographic window of opportunity represented by the increasingly large youth population depends on the commitment to put in place legislations, policies and programmes and training ensuring the rights and participation of young people and enhancing their human capital to ensure that they have the capabilities to spur social and economic innovation;*

*Recognizing that wider participation of young people in decision-making will meaningfully address their aspirations and enhance their potentials to contribute towards social and economic development as well as the well-being and livelihood of future generations;*

*Recognizing that the contribution of youth to economic wellbeing, political stability and development will only be ensured through their representation in political structures and their effective participation in the conduct of public affairs.*

23. Improving the quality of and access to education to adequately respond to the labor market needs in the Arab region are essential for young people's economic development, job creation and active civic participation. The Doha Declaration (2009) focuses on education quality as the ultimate goal of educational reforms in the region and highlights the need for building systems of quality assurance and evaluations;
24. Ensure the right of young people to decent work through effective policies and programmes that generate stable, safe, secure, non-discriminatory employment, especially with regard to gender, and which provides a decent wage and opportunities for career development, adhering to the rights of young people at work, including the right to fair hiring, adequate housing and to join and organize labor unions, consistent with international conventions;

25. Develop youth capacity for interaction and building healthy social relations, prevent social isolation, promote responsible sexual and reproductive health awareness through guidance and support of parents that is consistent with their developing capacities;
26. Commit to prioritizing creation of jobs and a skilled work force by increased investment, including in the private sector, in programmes that foster youth entrepreneurship and provide capacity building to young people through trainings programmes, using formal and non-formal curricula, education, vocational and employment counseling, quality paid internships, offer social protection, mentoring and expertise sharing so that young people, persons whose conditions are leading to marginalizing them, and getting the necessary information and skills to access decent work opportunities;
27. Actively involve young people in all policies and mechanisms of national and regional programs, including the planning, implementation and decision-making, monitoring and evaluation;
28. Enable effective participation of young people as volunteers and leaders of social change without being subjected to exploitation, violence or deprivation of rights;
29. Activate various mechanisms and joint Arab institutions dealing with youth issues for enhanced networking in support of greater efficacy and feasibility;

### **Older persons**

Recognizing that increasing longevity is one of humanity's greatest achievements and that with the right measures in place to secure health care, regular income, social networks and legal protection, there is a longevity dividend to be reaped by current and future generations;

Further acknowledging the accumulated experience of the older persons and recognizing the opportunity for them to contribute to the development process and the need to share in its benefits;

30. Nurture an enabling environment that empower, value and invests in older persons' accumulated life experience and capabilities and recognize the societal and economic opportunities associated with ageing, thus reaping the rewards of the 'longevity dividend';
31. Work with stakeholders to ensure that ageing is mainstreamed into the broader development processes, including poverty reduction strategies, across all sectors and agencies involving governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as civil society and the private sector and support issuing legislations enabling families to care for the elderly while anticipating an increase in their numbers;
32. Support calls for 'Ageing in Place, which is embedded in Arab culture and often reflected in laws, as an essential goal, and ensure that existing services, living conditions and the environment are responsive to it.
33. Focus on the human rights paradigm for advocating and implementing ageing policies including by involving grassroots and civil society organizations as well as the older

persons themselves. This embraces the rights to financial security, health and social care and safe environments.

34. Ensure that all older persons, particularly older women can live with dignity and security, free of discrimination on the basis of age and free of abuse and violence against them. Encourage Governments and local municipalities as well as urban planners and architects to take into consideration the specific needs and functional capacities of older persons when designing housing, public buildings, mass transportation, outdoor spaces and private homes. Also support and encourage establishment of associations and networks of older persons;
35. Promote "life cycle" approach for disease prevention and control through the promotion of health and well-being in old age, and the adoption of the framework of "active aging", which requires health system reform that increases the focus on health promotion and disease prevention and early screening, rather than traditional "therapeutic" practices , as well as promoting health education materials that teach the "self-care" and supports the messages 'primary prevention', to enjoy a healthy life;
36. Advocate for the inclusion of geriatrics specialization within the education programs at universities such as family medicine, and the inclusion of aging diseases within the health basket;

### **Persons with Disability**

Recognizing the need to promote and protect the individual autonomy and independence of persons with disability, including the freedom to make their own choices and to participate actively in society and in decisions affecting their lives.

As well, recognizing the need to meet the reproductive health needs of persons with disabilities while acknowledging in particular that women and girls with disability are often at greater risk, within and outside their households, of violence, physical and sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation;

37. Call upon Arab countries that have not done so to sign and ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol and translate its provisions in law and practice;
38. Call upon Arab countries that have not done so to adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights of Persons with disability and to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disability in any aspects of the political, social, economic and cultural life.

### **B. Health**

*Recognizing that promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health, and protection of reproductive rights are not only essential to the realization of social justice*



*and ensuring healthy and secure life, but are essential to the achievement of national and global commitments for sustainable development;*

39. Make sexual and reproductive health a priority of the health sector, and an integral part of the national health plans and public budgets, with clearly identifiable allocations of resources and expenditures;
40. Adopt the life-cycle as a comprehensive approach for reproductive health, and the elimination of child marriage, forced marriage and early pregnancy. Provide information and high-quality services to help couples in the Arab region to make reproductive decisions based on accurate and reliable information and exercise their rights to access quality services without financial or institutional or any other obstacles, taking into account privacy;
41. Establish mechanisms that foster providers' compliance with human rights, ethical and professional standards, including full disclosure of complete scientific information, and regulating that such information and services are made available regardless of providers' personal beliefs or conscientious objection;
42. Ensure that policies concerning fertility in Arab countries are based on the right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, taking into account the need for such policies to be based on evidence and best practices;
43. Expand coverage through increasing the number of health units that provide Family Planning/Reproductive Health services; and ensure female health providers and establish partnerships with civil society and Arab private sector;
44. Increase access of men and male adolescents to sexual and reproductive health information, counseling and services in support of family health;
45. Improve the quality of services through improving health workers' skills and capabilities, diversifying available contraceptive method mix, and ensure effective counseling, respecting and protecting the rights of clients in an environment free of any form of discrimination;
46. Improve the skills and capabilities, through all accessible means, of all service providers working in health units that provide sexual and reproductive health services to enable them to serve women with better quality.
47. Develop policies to motivate human resources in the health sector to remain in their home countries and to motivate them to work in remote areas. Policies, incentives and mechanisms for distribution and capacity building of health workers should be introduced and implemented. In addition, human resource policies in the health sector should address the issue of the brain drain and provide solutions to retain health care providers;
48. Develop new approaches to maternal health service delivery that can reduce costs and ensure sustainability such as transferring experiences from some Arab countries to others on community participation in improving access to maternal health and the use

of qualified cadre to provide family planning services in remote areas where human resources are constrained;

49. Enable accessibility of young people to high quality affordable, youth-friendly health services including age appropriate sexual and reproductive health services and information, as appropriate to their age, taking into account privacy, confidentiality, that is especially tailored to their needs free of all forms of discrimination and stigma ;
50. Enhance health of young people including their mental aspects and addressing non-responsible behavior regarding smoking, drinking, drugs, and road safety;
51. Dedicating special and urgent attention to adolescent reproductive health, particularly prevention, diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, through access to age appropriate services with due respect to cultural values and religious beliefs, and in partnership with civil society organizations and NGOs;
52. Make available culturally and age appropriate sexual education, in and out of school, which addresses gender and life skills differences, which is necessary for young people to be able to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy, HIV and sexually transmitted infections, and to promote values of tolerance, mutual respect and refrain from all forms of violence;
53. Encourage young people to acquire skills and to assume responsibility for their own behavior and to respect the rights of others so that they develop values of non-discrimination, gender equality, and combat sexual abuse, gender-based violence and harmful practices;
54. Ensure that all victims/survivors of gender-based violence have immediate access to basic services, including 24-hour hotlines; psychosocial and mental health support; treatment of injuries; and provide needed post-rape care, post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention and access to police protection, safe housing and shelter; documentation of cases, forensic services and legal aid; and referrals and longer-term support;
55. Design and implement public education campaigns and community mobilization on human rights and laws related to sexual and reproductive health and protection of reproductive rights and reinforce a culture of acceptance, respect, non-discrimination and non-violence;
56. Eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls; and engage men and boys, policy-makers, parliamentarians, law enforcement officials, educators, health care providers , the private sector and journalists, in creating an environment that is conducive to enjoyment of these rights by all;

57. Amend, or enact laws and policies in order to provide high quality sexual and reproductive health services and to protect the reproductive rights of all and enable all individuals to enjoy the highest level of reproductive health without discrimination ;
58. Eliminate child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting as soon as possible ; prohibit practices that violate the reproductive rights of women and adolescent girls, such as forced sterilization and forced abortion, or discrimination in education and employment due to pregnancy and motherhood, age or family status;
59. Protect the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, and prohibit all forms of stigma, discrimination or violence against them;
60. Respect and implement legislation related to ensuring reproductive health rights for working women such as maternity and child care leaves;

### **C. Displacement and International Migration**

*Recognizing that population dynamics –growth and decline, changing age structures, urbanization, migration and changing family structure – affect human development opportunities, and in turn, are determined by the people's choices and are essential for effective planning for comprehensive economic growth and social development, as well as to achieve sustainable development and water and food security.;*

Call upon the League of Arab States in cooperation with regional and international organizations to hold preliminary consultations and preparations necessary to ensure the integration of the Arab point of view in the output of the high-level dialogue on international migration and development, periodically held by the United Nations General Assembly;

#### **Internal Migration & Displacement**

*As the level of urbanization is accelerating, due to internal migration, from rural areas and forced mobility, and is significantly growing and as future population growth will be primarily in urban areas, particularly small and medium-sized cities;*

61. Secure access of internal migrants to the benefits of employment, labor market, health, education, land and housing policies, ensuring equal conditions that facilitate migrant integration;
62. Include migration policies and programmes in development planning and ensure availability of the required financial resources needed to implement them;
63. Develop ambitious urban planning strategies to revitalize the role of medium and small towns and cities through encouraging public and private investment;
64. Provide land, housing and utilities, secured by the State, for current and future urban residents, living in squatter areas in the cities of the Arab region;

65. Create employment opportunities and provide quality utilities and social services, including education and health, and increase the investment in the agriculture sector and rural areas in order to combat unemployment and poverty in those areas;
66. Enhance understanding, coordination and cooperation with regard to displacement and migration due to climate change, and relocation plans, as needed, at the national, regional and international levels;
67. Prevent displacement as much as possible, through the facilitation of voluntary internal migration with support to displaced persons to facilitate returning to their original location, and pay due attention to all aspects of internal migrant women's special needs in all measures taken;
68. Strengthen service provision with a multi-sectoral response to all forms of violence associated with armed violence and displacement targeting women, young people and children, and secure availability of funding to ensure that appropriate multi-sectoral Gender-Based Violence response services (health, psychosocial, security and legal) are accessible to all conflict-affected populations. Local and national level governments and humanitarian response organizations should facilitate effective communication between professionals in various relevant sectors;
69. Commit to addressing the living conditions of people in large urban centers as a priority, while ensuring equal access to quality and affordable basic health and social services for all, including those living in rural and sub-urban areas as well as the vulnerable and very poor groups including and people with disabilities;
70. Ensure equity in access to services, by providing adequate geographic coverage in both urban and rural areas, and by making services free or affordable;

### **International Migration**

*Acknowledging the important nexus between international migration and development for various countries of the region, and the need to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination; and the need to make migration a matter of genuine choice, not due to lack of decent employment opportunities at home ;*

71. Acknowledge the benefits of international migration and its positive contribution throughout its economic, social and cultural dimension in countries of destination and origin;
72. Integrate the financial, human and social benefits of migration in the development plans in countries of origin;
73. Recognizing that remittances are private resources of international migrants and their families, incentives should be provided to put them at the service of development; to this end:

- Countries of origin and destination should commit to reducing remittance fees by promoting competition and diversifying banks and other means or channels of formal remittances;
  - Countries of destination should consider tax exemptions on financial transfers to countries of origin;
  - Countries of origin and destination, within immigration regulations, should consider setting up social security systems for migrants that allow accumulation of periods of contribution and transfer of entitlements;
  - Countries of origin should consider diversifying channels of investments in individual and community projects and providing incentives to maximize remittances;
  - Encourage experiences and practices aiming at better use of return migrants to fill labor needs in countries of origin in order to enhance social sectors such as health and education.
74. Skills acquisition is a major benefit of international migration; in order to maximize its contribution to development:
- Countries of destination should consider establishing systems for accrediting the skills acquired by migrant workers;
  - Countries of destination should consider organizing and supporting programmes for migrants wishing to return to their home countries. Such programmes including training for public employment services at home countries, training of return migrants on how to look for jobs, training on initiating projects, establishing small and medium enterprises, support establishing commercial business with receiving countries.
75. The social, financial and human capital accumulated by Arab immigrants is a major asset for development; in order to make the best use of it:
- Countries of destination should encourage Diasporas' transnational activities, through tax incentives, and financial, technological and administrative support;
  - A register of such activities should be set up so as to encourage emulation;
  - Countries of origin should also encourage such transnational activities through incentives and other forms of support;
  - To encourage the transnational contribution of migrants, countries of origin should ensure and guarantee their full enjoyment of their political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights.
76. Highly-skilled international migrants respond to the critical requirements for work in certain sectors and occupations in countries of destination. In order to avoid the detrimental effects of highly-skilled migration and to maximize its positive contributions:
- Destination countries should study and make periodic projections of demand in their labor markets, which should allow countries of origin to design appropriate education and training policies;
  - Establish adequate links that can enhance the management of skilled migration; this includes direct labor matching mechanisms, provision of labor market

- information, enhancement of training and education. These projections can also be the bases for cooperation between countries of origin and destination;
- Countries of destination should cooperate in setting up registers of highly-skilled migrants who could be called upon to contribute to development in their countries of origin;
  - Countries of destination should consider supporting university and research institutions in countries of origin, which should allow an increase in the number of graduates who can meet internal and external demand for labor. This support should also allow improvement in the working terms and conditions, and job satisfaction, and would result in fewer people desiring to migrate;
  - Research should be conducted to ascertain the feasibility of the return of migratory brains to the Arab countries;
77. Systematically combat all forms of hatred against expatriates, especially against Arab migrants as well as against migrants in the Arab region;
78. Combat smuggling and trafficking in human beings and in accordance with the provisions of the Palermo Convention of 2000 on cross-border crime and its protocols to combat smuggling and trafficking;;
79. Improve inter-country and multi-stakeholder collaboration and cooperation to ensure the orderly flow of migration and minimize the recourse to undocumented migration;
80. Consider developing pre-departure programmes to inform and prepare potential migrants for the migration journey and to warn them about smuggling and trafficking;
81. Mainstream migration into national development policies and into the post-2015 development agenda;
82. Encourage the ratification of all core international conventions on human rights and labor rights of migrants, including the International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990) and the International Labor Organization on Domestic Workers Convention (2011);
83. Generate, analyze and disseminate periodic statistical information on international migration to help formulate and implement policies on the basis of evidence and related research.
84. Support cooperation between sending and receiving countries to ensure the orderly flow of migration and reduce irregular migration, and intensify awareness of the dangers of irregular migration networks and warning of smuggling and trafficking in human beings;

### **Environmental Sustainability**

85. Ensure full understanding of the interaction between population, environment, climate change and economic development to create a foundation for sustainable development that takes into account the current and future size, composition, needs and rights of the population;

86. Remove the barriers to sustainability through increased use of clean technology, including innovation, sound governance, systematic awareness creation and sensitization of the public and sustainable consumption behavior that are beneficial to the environment;
87. Regional and local climate change response measures must take into account the distribution, vulnerability, and resilience of the targeted populations;
88. Initiate a large scale plan for development of coastal zones based on a coastal defense strategy, with full support to the residents of these areas, including minimizing displacement and providing developmental alternatives where displacement is unavoidable.
89. Identify capability gaps and needs of the local communities besides building institutional capacities to achieve long term progress. This will only be possible through monitoring programs to follow and continuously assess ecological, demographic and socio-economic performance of the region and the adequate environmental planning.
90. To better manage natural and environmental resources, there is need to activate institutions at all levels, local, national, regional and global, along with independent juridical system and good governance;
91. Promote and develop environment friendly production patterns and consumption patterns through research and clean technology, and technical cooperation, between countries and regions;
92. Young people, as agents of change, should be engaged in environmental protection efforts through concrete durable contributions that influence the mindsets, attitudes and behavior of their peers and communities. As well, they should be provided with education on practical skills in disaster preparedness and adaptation to climate change, on the potential consequences of climate change and global environmental degradation, and on the technological and social foundations of sustainable development, youth can make sustainable choices with regards to consumption and lifestyles as well as green jobs and develop the innovations necessary to achieve sustainability.

#### **D. Governance**

*Recognizing that good governance based on transparency, accountability and participation for all and the rule of law and reduction of corruption, and the promotion of good governance at the local level, national, regional and global levels, is the basis for optimal development results, and its implications for international peace and security;*

*Further recognizing that everyone's participation is critical to advancing sustainable development and responsive governance and institutions flexibility is very important for the integration and sustainability of social and economic development;*

93. Call upon those countries that have not ratified core International human rights treaties and conventions to do so and encourage those who have ratified them to take actions to achieve gender equality and equity for balanced and respectful relations between men and women in the region at societal and community level and within the family;
94. Conduct scientific research to study the older people's situation and identify their needs; and develop active ageing policies to utilize the knowledge and experience of the older population; support the collection of age and sex-disaggregated data and research on ageing, including national surveys that monitor the situation of older persons and make these available to inform policymaking;
95. Integrate women's empowerment and take measures to alleviate all kinds of gender-based discrimination in all macro and sectoral development plans and strategies, particularly ensuring access to equal opportunities, health services, employment, resource management and independence of financial decisions; and urge governments to enact decisions and legislations that broaden women's participation in political and legislative decision making;
96. Develop alternative strategies and programs to enroll girls in the education system and providing them with opportunities equal to those of boys to continue their education including their secondary and higher education;
97. Secure funds for population programs; and develop ways and mechanisms to sustain financing through establishing Arab trust fund with the participation of the Arab private sector;
98. Pay due attention to the current high fertility in some countries of the region and devise appropriate rights-based policies and programmes
99. Call upon the Arab countries to avail and disseminate national level and sub national data on population, and conduct qualitative studies to analyze the underlying social determinants of reproductive health and assess the impact of population strategies at the national and sub-national levels;
100. Create and strengthen relevant institutions with the necessary capacity to ensure effective integration of population dynamics into development planning as well as efficiency and accountability, including ensuring effective coordination of all relevant social and planning bodies;
101. Integrate population dynamics into development planning at the national and sub-national levels in order to comprehensively address population and development issues;
102. Calling on Arab countries to conduct population censuses periodically and timely disseminate results in accordance with established standards, analyze and use these



data, and vital statistics systems including registration of births and deaths, which are based on data classification by population groups, as well as the survey data, for the purposes of planning, monitoring and evaluation;

103. Governments of Arab countries, League of Arab States, United Nations organizations and relevant agencies at the local level should support research, data collection, analysis dissemination and utilization of high quality and timely census, vital statistic and for the purpose of evidence based planning monitoring and evaluation, and adopt detailed methodologies to ensure adequacy of programs to local conditions, enhance capacities to deal with various population challenges in different geographical areas, and set up priorities for the population and under-served areas;
104. Consider Integrating the impact of sustainable development, environment and social responsibility in all trade negotiations including social impacts on women, girls, young people and the poorest groups; commit to address, as a priority, the living conditions of people in large urban centers while ensuring equal access to quality and affordable basic health and social services for all, particularly for the vulnerable and poorest groups;
105. Ensure firm commitment to democracy, justice, transparency, integrity and equal representation in all governance processes, in a way that enables youth and the older people to participate in the process of national development, through access to management opportunities, employment, innovation and a fair distribution of wealth;
106. Reinforce the culture of democracy and participation among youth through education, arts, literature and all forms of communication media;
107. Ensure that young people are key partners in the decision making that concerns them, their families and their communities, ensuring that they are equal partners in development not passive beneficiaries;
108. Ensure compliance with equal and equitable representation in politics, as well as promoting girls' access to higher education levels, and addressing harmful practices against young women and girls, including forced and child marriage, gender-based violence and all other forms of discriminations.
109. Promote the participation of young women and young men from rural areas, and young people at-risk of marginalization in public debates and decisions;
110. Expand youth participation and empowerment through establishment and strengthening of institutional mechanisms that allow for meaningful youth participation in decision-making, particularly for those most marginalized, ensuring young people have access to the information they need to exercise their human rights, and strengthening the capacities of youth-led organizations and networks in order to enable them to fulfill their potential as active and equal members of society.
111. Establish a dynamic, up-to-date, gender, age, and locality-disaggregated population-based database to keep abreast of rapid demographic, socio-economic and health changes in the region, to ensure effective successful policies and programs. Relevant

research, especially on vulnerable older persons and in-depth analysis of existing data can be powerful tools for evaluation of policies and practices.

112. Establish enabling legal and policy frameworks to prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence including national justice systems to ensure accountability for all forms of violence perpetrated during humanitarian emergencies, and the exclusion of these crimes from amnesty provisions or mitigating measures. Ensure unimpeded access to justice and legal assistance to all;
113. Enact and implement laws that allow education in an environment free from discrimination, violence, and abuse;
114. Initiate national campaigns, including through the media and educational curricula and strengthen the capacity of the school/formal education and informal education/systems and community groups to fight violence against girls, and to raise awareness and change behavior in the short term, and strengthen programs to provide safe spaces for girls, based on best practices, in order to improve their knowledge and skills and self-confidence to live a decent life in the wider community where they belong;
115. Ensure universal access to free, quality, comprehensive education at all levels in a safe and participatory environment by adopting a rights based approach to education, including formal, informal and non-formal education, including for vulnerable and marginalized groups, particularly girls;

### **International cooperation and partnership**

116. Arab countries should benefit from all forms of international cooperation, within the framework of adapting to climate change and in facing up to its consequences and other environmental, developmental and population development;
117. Improve coordination and partnerships among local, national and international development partners including civil society to: a) strengthen the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of population programmes; and b) resource mobilization in order to strengthen the health system and address priority health issues in particular the high maternal mortality and the low contraceptive prevalence rates in some countries. Such funding mechanisms include the Paris declaration for donor harmonization, the Accra declaration of new aid and funding modalities that can serve as a tool for more effective donor programming and funding for MDG 5 targets to improve maternal health and reduce maternal mortality;
118. Provide financial, technical, and institutional support to national population commissions/councils in order to have legislations in place that facilitates playing active roles, and call upon countries that do not have such bodies to establish ones as soon as possible;
119. Call on the League of Arab States and UNFPA, and other organizations to develop plans and programmes to enhance capacities of national councils/commissions and

similar bodies, and provide assistance to countries in the process of establishing such institutions;

120. Encourage the development of regional initiatives on population and development to increase regional coordination and to mobilize resources and maximize returns;
121. Provide the financial resources necessary to achieve the objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 and its close association with the post 2015 development agenda, and call upon international donors to fulfill their financial pledges in Cairo in 1994 in order to provide the necessary resources to achieve the goals of population and development beyond 2014 with the need for Arab countries to fulfill the announced obligations;
122. Promote international cooperation efforts, including the development of joint programmes and initiatives, the strengthening policy dialogue and coordination, transfer of knowledge and technology, and the allocation and mobilization of financial and technical resources, for international cooperation in the area of population and development;
123. Call upon the League of Arab States, United Nations organizations, and other international and regional organizations to increase their support for building regional and national capacity in the field of research and the collection and dissemination of data through censuses and sample surveys focusing on young people, women and children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, and others, and to enhance capacities in the field of in-depth analysis using relevant software packages;
124. Expand the availability of quantitative and qualitative data covering population and development issues, trends and characteristics of migration through specialized research and scientific studies to forecast future trends;
125. Call upon governments to reduce forced migration and confront and solve problems arising therefrom, and to provide protection and services to forced migrants, refugees and displaced persons and facilitate their return;
126. Encourage international cooperation with a view to maximizing the contribution of migration into development and to protecting and ensuring the rights of international migrants;
127. Countries of origin and destination should cooperate in the formulation and implementation of policies aiming at facilitating the reintegration of return migrant in their own labor markets and societies.
128. Countries of destination should formulate and implement policies that foster the integration of migrants and their families, without discrimination, in their workplaces and societies.
129. Promote and strengthen partnerships with the private sector in the design, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of population and development programmes and policies, particularly in the areas of service delivery and commodity production and distribution; Expand collaboration and support at all

levels including North-South and South-South to exchange of experiences that lead to accelerating the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

Finally, the representatives of governments and non-governmental organizations in the Arab region who have met in Cairo from 24 - 26 June 2013, raise their voices high calling for efforts to achieve stability in the Arab region, and to put an end to disputes and conflicts that directly affect the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the relevant declarations particularly the Millennium Development Goals, the prospects for 2015 and beyond, and that reflect negatively on the situation of the population, especially women and youth.

As well, the Conference calls for taking into account the declarations of the parliamentarians and the Arab Youth Alliance for Population and Development (ICPD) and the Coalitions of NGOs working on women's issues and civil society associations and the recommendations contained therein.