



SIXTY-NINTH (69th) ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Twenty-ninth (29th) Special Session of the General Assembly on the
Follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on
Population and Development

Statement
by the President of the Republic of Benin,
Head of State and of Government,
Dr. Boni Yayi

New York, 22 September 2014

Mr. President,

On behalf of the people and government of Benin, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the sixty-ninth (69th) Session of the General Assembly.

The Republic of Benin is delighted to see this special session being held, with the aim of deciding the appropriate future course for the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Benin gives its support from the outset to **Report A/69/62** by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, concerning the Framework for Action for the Follow-up to the ICPD Programme of Action, as well as to the Report from the forty-seventh (47th) session of the Commission on Population and Development, giving due care and attention to the issues they address.

The reports focus on the considerable progress made in pursuing the objectives laid out by the Programme of Action, in various areas, in particular: recognition of the links between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development; promotion of gender equality and improved status of women; improved reproductive health; good quality education for all.

Alongside many other countries, Benin has been fully involved in the work by the international community to act on the decisions of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

In fact, shortly after the ICPD was held in Cairo in 1994, Benin adopted its Population Policy Declaration and established growth and poverty reduction strategies (PRSP), as well as national policies for education, health and gender promotion. Several laws and regulations to improve the legal status of women have been developed and applied. These measures have produced encouraging results, particularly in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, reduction and suppression of high risk behaviour, management and control of HIV/AIDS, suppression of sexual harassment and victim protection. The fight against violence towards women, the education of girls (with 108% enrolment rate in 2011) and the empowerment and leadership of women are additional achievements for Benin.

These advances cannot however obscure the fact that there are still many challenges. These pertain in particular to the realization of the demographic dividend, youth employment, the establishment of an effective social welfare system, the elimination of inequality and violence towards women and children, research and development on tropical illnesses such as malaria and the Ebola virus epidemic and the management of international migration, which will be needed in order to reap fuller benefits.

Benin joins forces with the community of nations in pursuing the Framework of Actions for the Follow-up to the ICPD Programme of Action. This is with a view to facing these challenges, which are also key to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We are pleased to note that the Framework of Actions under consideration coherently addresses the issue of the resources needed to reinforce individual capacity and population resilience. I can already assure you that my country is determined to fully invest in achieving the objectives laid down in the Framework of Actions.

In conclusion, I would like to invite all the other countries - in this case, our partners in the North - to strengthen their support for the Framework, in the form of financial and technical resources, preparing the way towards achieving the objectives of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thank you.