

U.S. Statement on UNFPA's 8th Country Program in China
UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board
August 31 or September 1, 2015

Thank you, Mr. President. The United States recognizes UNFPA's steadfast efforts to advance the ICPD agenda in China, particularly in the areas of reproductive health and rights and population dynamics. Following a recent visit in June of this year by representatives from the United States Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development, it is evident that UNFPA's activities in China continue to have a positive impact at all levels of government.

Our delegation welcomed the opportunity to provide comments on the draft country program upon its return and also appreciated UNFPA's willingness to consider our proposed amendments.

The U.S. supports the priorities outlined in UNFPA's 8th country program, particularly the increased focus on young people, including unmarried and migrant youth, many of whom may lack access to reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education. Also important are gender equity and women's and girls' empowerment. We encourage UNFPA to continue its efforts to address gender discrimination and violence against women in collaboration with the health, law enforcement, and legal sectors as well as civil society partners. Finally, with respect to population dynamics, we support UNFPA's work to improve socio-demographic data collection to better inform policies and programs, especially for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, youth, and migrants.

Although it is a comparatively small program, we note that government officials and other key stakeholders continue to express their appreciation for UNFPA's work in China – particularly technical assistance in the areas of rights-based reproductive health and population policy. We saw firsthand UNFPA's collaborative relationship with the Chinese government, specifically the National Health and Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Commerce, as well as other key partners such as the National Development and Reform Commission, the China Maternal and Child Health Association, the China Family Planning Association, the China National Commission on Ageing and the All-China Women's Federation.

We note that UNFPA's 8th Country Program in China will not be involved in direct service delivery. During its recent visit, the U.S. delegation observed the positive impact of UNFPA's rights-based programming in China. We commend the Fund's adherence to demonstrating the advantages of a voluntary approach to family planning and were pleased to see – in support of its ICPD commitments – increased provider emphasis on patient rights, especially with regard to privacy and confidentiality.

And while we understand the rationale for UNFPA's shift toward greater policy and advocacy work at the provincial and national level, we trust that vigilance will be exercised to ensure that the gains made in its previous country programs are not put at risk.

We expect UNFPA to continue to work with the Chinese government – and all member states – to uphold the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the

number, spacing and timing of their children in full alignment with the ICPD Program of Action. We remain convinced that such commitments will continue to inform China's policies and programs. And we expect nothing less.

Thank you.