



Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his opening remarks and for giving me the opportunity to address you on this special occasion. I would also like to thank the

Secretary-General for his unwavering support for the ICPD Programme of Action and the ICPD Beyond 2014 review and for his reports on the review.

Many have contributed to bringing us to this auspicious moment and I would like to thank your Governments, Excellencies, for your commitment and support and the progress made in your countries to improve people's lives.

As in Cairo, civil society was critical to the success of the ICPD review and I want to express our gratitude for their dedication and support.

Mr. President,

In 1992, the world rallied around the concept of sustainable development at the Earth Summit in

Over the past 20 years, we have seen the rise of hundreds of millions out of poverty, gender parity in primary education, fewer women dying giving life and more women in the workforce. These advances show just how powerful development founded on dignity and human rights can be.

But we still have a long way to go.

Our world is growing increasingly unequal, and all too often women and girls get the short end of the stick.

The pace of climate change and environmental degradation shows that we cannot sustain a system in which those at the top continue to draw more and more of our finite resources. Until ~~we can deliver for all people equitably and enable all people to reach their potential, we cannot~~

achieve sustainable development.

Excellencies,

The right to health is incontrovertible and this Assembly has adopted numerous resolutions on the importance of ensuring the highest attainable standard of health for all. Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are universal human rights. They are also central to ~~sustainability, gender equality and the empowerment of women~~

Not for tens of thousands of young people who lack the means and the knowledge to protect

themselves from HIV or other sexually transmitted infections...

Not for those affected by crises and conflicts, which often put women and girls at risk of sexual violence and limit their access to safe spaces, services and support.

And the consequence can be a death sentence: 800 women die every day from pregnancy-related

Discrimination and harmful traditions such as child marriage and female genital mutilation persist, and the perpetrators operate with impunity, even in the face of laws against such practices.

Each day's news brings home this reality in vivid detail. Another brutal gang rape, another battered woman, another girl dead from an utterly honourless killing, another young person lost to an unsafe abortion or to AIDS, another school empty....

Sexual violence on an epic scale as a weapon of war, a tactic of terror...

Is there a tipping point? When will we finally say 'enough' to violence and discrimination against women and girls?

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development efforts. Today 40% of the world's unemployed are young people, and 60% of all young people in developing regions are without work, not studying, or engaged in irregular employment.

What little data we have on the state of young people's sexual and reproductive health and access

among 15-24 year olds in developing countries in 2008, and 41 percent of all new HIV infections occurred in this same age group in 2009.

You hold the future of the world's poorest people in your hands. Invest in them because they

and by governing effectively and inclusively

we can realize these opportunities.

We face perhaps no greater challenge over the long term than climate change. Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will host a Climate Summit to build momentum towards a global agreement

The power of adolescent girls who challenge the status quo, against all odds, and resist early marriage, early motherhood and female genital mutilation, and instead embrace education and

The power of women pushing for change in their families, their communities, and their legislatures...

The power of men – husbands and fathers – pushing to educate their girls...

The power of older people in societies that respect and value their contributions....

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We cannot talk about sustainable development without ensuring that young people's needs are met, that we give voice to their aspirations, that we include them in decision-making.

We cannot talk about sustainable development without addressing women's empowerment, gender inequality, and discrimination and violence.