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“Population, Technology and Research in the Context of Sustainable Development”

Excerpts from Malaysia Country Statement at the 59th Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development, 17 April 2026, New York

The rapid advancement of technology is transforming the way societies understand and respond to demographic, social and economic challenges. Digital technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics and integrated information systems are creating new opportunities to generate knowledge, improve decision-making and strengthen the effectiveness of public policies. As countries navigate increasingly complex population dynamics, technology and research have become essential tools in supporting sustainable and inclusive development.

In the field of population and social research, technological innovation has significantly enhanced the ability to collect, analyse and interpret data. While traditional sources such as censuses, surveys and administrative records remain important, advances in data integration and analytics now enable researchers to generate more timely, comprehensive and evidence-based insights. These developments have improved understanding of population trends, social behaviours and emerging challenges, allowing policymakers to design more targeted and responsive interventions.

The growing importance of technology and research is particularly relevant in the context of ongoing demographic transitions. Across many countries, declining fertility rates, population ageing, changing family structures and evolving socio-economic aspirations are reshaping societies and influencing future development trajectories. Addressing these issues requires not only reliable data, but also

innovative research approaches capable of generating evidence that supports forward-looking and sustainable policy responses.

In Malaysia, efforts to strengthen digital transformation, data-driven governance and research capacity have become increasingly important in supporting national development priorities. The adoption of advanced technologies and analytical tools has enhanced the ability of government agencies, research institutions and universities to better understand population and family-related issues, including fertility decline, delayed marriage, healthy ageing, family well-being and social protection needs. These efforts contribute towards strengthening evidence-based policymaking and improving the effectiveness of programmes designed to enhance the quality of life of the population.

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Recognising the growing significance of these developments, the 59th Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD) focused on the theme “**Population, Technology and Research in the Context of Sustainable Development**”. The discussions highlighted the critical role of innovation, research and data-driven policymaking in addressing demographic challenges, strengthening institutional capacities and improving access to essential services.

Particular attention was given to the importance of strengthening research capabilities, expanding access to technology, enhancing data systems and promoting international cooperation in the exchange of knowledge and expertise. These elements are increasingly recognised as important enablers of sustainable development, particularly in helping countries respond to rapidly changing demographic and social realities.

The discussions also underscored the importance of ensuring that technological progress remains people-centred and inclusive. Beyond improving efficiency and productivity, technology should support broader development goals, including social well-being, equitable access to opportunities and improved quality of life for individuals and families. In this regard, family-friendly and family-oriented policies remain important components of sustainable development strategies, particularly in addressing demographic challenges and supporting social cohesion.

Despite widespread recognition of the importance of these issues, the Commission concluded its session without reaching consensus on a resolution under the special theme. The draft text contained several constructive elements relating to the use of technology and research in public policy, capacity-building in developing countries, international



cooperation and the promotion of family-oriented approaches to development. The absence of an agreed outcome therefore represents a missed opportunity to advance global consensus on an issue of growing significance to countries around the world.

Nevertheless, the discussions reaffirmed the need for continued investment in technology, research and innovation as key drivers of sustainable development. As demographic trends continue to evolve and societies become increasingly interconnected, strengthening evidence-based policymaking will remain essential in ensuring that development efforts are responsive, inclusive and capable of meeting the needs of present and future generations.

Looking ahead, collaboration among governments, research institutions, academia, the private sector and international organisations will be critical in unlocking the full potential of technology and research. By harnessing innovation responsibly and strengthening the use of evidence in decision-making, countries will be better positioned to address demographic challenges, improve societal well-being and ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development.



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