

**CPD53: Way forward in light of the COVID-19 pandemic**  
*(as of 16 March 2020)*

**1. Fifty-third session**

During the past several weeks, the Bureau of the fifty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) has considered various scenarios for holding the fifty-third session of the CPD, initially scheduled to be held from 30 March to 3 April 2020. Two weeks ago, the Bureau proposed to shorten the session from five to two days and to scale down the programme. Currently, the Bureau is of the view that the scaled down session should also be postponed.

Key elements of this scenario are:

- (a) holding the session by no later than mid-June. This scenario assumes that conference rooms and services are available, that the Secretariat is able to produce the report of the session within a reduced timeframe, and that Member States agree to waive the standard requirement that documentation be made available at least six weeks ahead of meetings.
- (b) shortening the session to one full day. This scenario allows for a session that includes both the necessary procedural elements and retains most substantive elements (high-level opening, presentation of SGs reports, multi-stakeholder panel), albeit in a scaled-down version. All scheduled draft proposals, including the resolution on the special theme, would be scheduled for adoption.

**2. Informal consultations**

The Bureau is currently exploring alternative working arrangements for the informal consultations, including the use of email, videoconferencing or other means of remote communication. The Secretariat stands ready to provide training in the use of online platforms.

By postponing the fifty-third session, the start of the informal consultations, initially scheduled to take place from 13 to 27 March, will also be delayed. This delay will give delegates time to familiarize themselves with means of remote communication. A new starting date for the consultations has not yet been set, given the fluidity of the current situation.

**3. Future role of the CPD**

In his letter dated 6 March, H.E. Mr. Christian Braun, Chair of the fifty-third session of the CPD, had posed three questions for consideration during an informal “brainstorming” on the future role of the CPD planned for the 13 March, but which could not take place.

The Bureau will further consult in order to determine how best to proceed on this issue and will inform the membership in due course.