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**STATEMENT TO THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
PROGRESS MADE IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME OF
ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM 3. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for this opportunity to introduce the Report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. The report aims to present a comprehensive, balanced and objective description of the implementation of the Programme of Action, both successes and shortfalls.

This is the second review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action. The first report, presented to the Commission in 1999, reviewed progress five years since the adoption of the Programme of Action, in Cairo, in 1994. This current report marks ten years since the Cairo Conference.

The Programme of Action was built on the previous decades of international efforts to address issues of population and development. In particular, the Programme of Action built on the earlier two United Nations population and development conferences; namely, the World Population Conference held in Bucharest, Romania in 1974, and the International Conference on Population held in Mexico City, Mexico, in 1984.

However the ICPD Programme of Action contains a great number of innovations in terms of new issues, new approaches and new activities, particularly in the way it deals with reproductive and gender issues, its focus on achieving sustainable development, and the role given to education, particularly of girls, in affecting change. The Programme of Action also gives wide and systematic recognition of the role of non-governmental organizations, provides detailed recommendations regarding resource needs and institutional mechanisms for achieving the Programme's goals and objectives.

The Review and Appraisal report finds that much progress has been made in implementation of the Programme of Action during the last ten years. The world is beginning to see the end of rapid population growth, couples are closer to achieving their desired family size and spacing, mortality is declining in most countries and there is evidence that many countries are taking the necessary steps to confront HIV/AIDS and other mortality crises, and Governments are initiating processes to address concerns related to international migratory movements.

However, progress has not been universal, and based on current trends, many countries are likely to fall short of the agreed goals of the Programme of Action. There have been noteworthy variations in fulfilling the Programme's goals and targets both among countries and among population groups within countries.

Mr. Chairman. I would like to highlight six points from the Review and Appraisal report.

Firstly. World population is 6.4 billion persons in today. The current average annual growth rate of population is 1.3 per cent, significantly lower than the rate of 1.7 per cent at the time of the Cairo Conference. However, rapid population growth remains a concern for more than half of Governments in the less developed regions.

Secondly. The decrease in the population growth rate at the world level is the result of an almost universal reduction of fertility. The number of countries with fertility levels above 5 children per woman, most of which are in Africa, dropped from 55 in 1990-1995 to 34 in 2000-2005. During the same period, the number of countries with below-replacement level fertility increased from 51 to 62 countries.

Reproductive health programmes have been established in many countries, with rising contraceptive use among couples indicating greater access to family planning. However, many births are still unplanned or mistimed, and modern family planning methods remain unavailable to large numbers of couples.

Thirdly. While global life expectancy is increasing, progress is by no means uniform, as many countries have witnessed a stagnation of mortality improvement if not a decline in life expectancy. The causes are related to conflict, socio-economic transformations, the re-emergence of diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and cholera, and the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. There is a global consensus that the AIDS epidemic is an urgent matter, requiring greater international efforts to arrest the epidemic.

Fourthly. Population ageing has become more evident throughout the world. Decreasing fertility along with lengthening life expectancy continues to reshape the age structure of the population in all regions of the world by shifting relative weight from younger to older groups. Many governments are now facing difficult decisions related to

pensions and health care for older persons.

Fifthly. Population distribution continues to be a concern for many countries, especially in the less developed regions. By 2007, 50 per cent of the world population will be residing in urban areas. More and more governments are expressing concern about high levels of migration from rural to urban areas and looking for ways to manage the growth of large urban agglomerations.

And sixthly, Mr. Chairman. As of mid-2000, approximately 175 million persons resided in a country other than where they were born, three-fifths of which are in the more developed regions. Although the vast majority of migrants are making meaningful contributions to their host countries, international migration entails the loss of human resources for many countries of origin and may give rise to political, economic or social tensions in countries of destination. The number of Governments adopting new measures to influence international migration has grown rapidly. In 2001, for example, 40 per cent of countries had a policy in effect to lower immigration

Mr. Chairman. As we look back over the past decade, national programmes to implement the Programme of Action have shown encouraging results. Much has been learned, including finding successful approaches, and arriving at improved national programme implementation.

In summary Mr. Chairman, while much progress has been made in implementation of the Programme of Action during the last ten years, there have also been shortfalls and gaps. The report shows that continued efforts and commitment are needed to mobilize human and financial resources, to strengthen institutional capacities, and to nurture partnerships among governments, the international community, non-governmental organizations and civil society. With such efforts and commitment, we can expect broader and deeper progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.