

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

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**CLOSING REMARKS AS DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF MR. WU HONGBO,
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

47th Session of the Commission on Population and Development

New York, 12 April 2014

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates and colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This session of the Commission was of historical importance, marking the 20th anniversary of the landmark Cairo conference, which set out an ambitious rights-based agenda for population and development. Allow me to read this short statement on behalf of Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo.

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“Distinguished delegates,

“You have deliberated on matters of utmost importance to the well-being of girls and women, and of boys and men, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized among them. You have focused on the centrality of individuals and their human rights in the implementation of the ICPD development agenda. These discussions are central to reducing poverty and advancing sustainable development, while at the same time protecting the dignity and human rights of all persons.

“Your deliberations will inform the General Assembly later this year, when it meets in a special session to reaffirm Cairo and to provide guidance on priorities for the ICPD beyond 2014 and the post-2015 development agenda.

“Over the past week, your statements on national experiences were rich and illuminating, and the inputs from civil society were strong, diverse and engaged. You reaffirmed overwhelming support for the Cairo agenda. You highlighted measurable progress that has been made on a number of goals and objectives of Cairo, including reduced poverty, increased education, improved maternal and child health, and increased participation of women in the labour force, among others.

“You have reiterated that respect for, and fulfilment of, human rights must be the guiding principle for advancing the ICPD goals beyond 2014 and the future development agenda. You also highlighted the unfinished agenda, emphasizing that progress has been uneven, with many vulnerable and marginalized groups left behind.

“We must reach out to all vulnerable and marginalized populations: to empower them, to end all forms of discrimination, to protect their rights and to ensure that they are equal partners in development.

“You have emphasized that advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights is central not only to the well-being of women, children and their families, but also for the broader development of societies and nations.

“You have affirmed that persistent gender inequality hampers women’s access to sexual and reproductive health care services, and that many harmful practices, such as child marriage, female genital mutilation, and violence against women, continue to compromise the health and well-being of women and girls, violating their human rights. *We must* re-commit to ending such practices.

“Your deliberations have also been useful to the work of my Department, and for the work of the Population Division in providing reliable data and analyses concerning population trends, including projections of future trends, which are vital for purposes of planning and monitoring of population policies.

“Of course we all know that renewed high-level political commitment to the Cairo agenda is necessary, but it is not sufficient on its own: it must be accompanied by the necessary resources and means for effective implementation.”

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Before closing, Mr. Chairman, let me thank you and other members of the Bureau for guiding both the preparation and the deliberations of this session of the Commission, and for the hard work contributed by all. I would also like to thank our colleagues from UNFPA for their close collaboration.

Mr. Chairman, I wish you, your colleagues in the Bureau, and all the delegates who participated in this session, a restful weekend, and a safe trip home to those who have come from afar.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.