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of the Secretariat in the field of population
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Madame Chairperson

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the quality of the work carried out by the Population Division. The year 2015 saw the release of the “World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision”, which has now become an indispensable data source for all those involved in population and development issues. Its comprehensive sets of data downloadable for free from the Division’s website facilitate access from everywhere in the world, and its detailed reports on methodology and data sources promote greater understanding of past and future population trends.

Other reports and databases, notably those on contraceptive use, fertility, marriage, urbanization, and ageing, are highly valuable and enable us to easily conduct international comparisons. In addition, we would like to emphasize the importance of data on international migration by country of origin and destination. The data published by the Population Division since 2013 and updated in 2015 provide the number of international migrants coming from each country to each country. Prior to this, the data on the international migrants were limited to movements to wealthy countries only. Not only do the data clarify the situation of South-South migration, it also yields interesting insights on the nature of international migration; for example, the number of Japanese overseas recorded by Japanese authorities differs significantly from the data of certain recipient countries provided by this dataset. This difference must be caused by differences in the definition of foreign national status as well as how data are collected, and it gives us valuable insight on the complexity of international migration.

Data on international migrants are often difficult to obtain when collected within one country’s boundary. The compilation of cross-border data is a particular strength of the Population Division and this practice is highly appreciated. By knowing these statistics, the nature of migration will be understood, and they may be useful for the promotion of human development through international migration.