

Speech for the General Debate at
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Population and Development

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Dear Madam Chairman,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, I would like to congratulate the chair and other bureau members on their successful election.

We think highly of the report submitted by the secretary-general, which has provided inspiration for our endeavor to achieve the sustainable development goals against the backdrop of global urbanization. We support the statement made by Egypt on behalf of G77 plus China.

Now, in association with robust population movements, the urbanization process worldwide has accelerated. It is estimated that some 3 million people move to cities every week. And by 2050, 70% of the world's population is expected to become urban residents. China hosts the world's largest migrant population which amounted to 244 million by the end of 2017, about 18% of the country's total. It is believed that three-fourths of the migrants are relocating to cities from rural areas. Large-scale migration has optimized the allocation of production factors in both urban and rural settings and improved the living standards of urban and rural residents.

The Chinese Government has long attached great importance to population problems. It has promoted orderly migration flows by adopting a balanced strategy for population development, advocating people-centered urbanization, and maintaining the balanced delivery of the public services such as employment, education, healthcare, housing and elderly care. But despite its vigorous population movement, China has entered a critical transition period in which its demographic inertia is weakening, the growth of its labor force is slowing and its aging population is increasing. We are faced with the daunting challenge of seizing the opportunity to achieve balanced population development in coordination with other factors including the economy, the society, natural resources and the environment.

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has formulated a blueprint for developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. We have adhered to the people-centered philosophy of development and strived to improve people's livelihood. The Healthy China initiative has also been unfolded after the event. In March 2018, the National Health Commission was inaugurated following the conclusion of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress. The new institution, which focuses on improving the overall health conditions of the Chinese people instead of just treating illnesses, is expected to promote the Healthy China initiative and to ensure the delivery of comprehensive lifecycle health services to the people.

In recent years, the Chinese government has given its utmost attention to access to healthcare for migrants and refugees worldwide by actively joining in relevant contract negotiations. In 2016 and 2017, the country provided the WHO with special financial assistance to support the organization's efforts to help refugees in certain country obtain medical services.

To strengthen the global cooperation in human mobility and sustainable development, I would like to propose the following three initiatives:

1. Pushing for a policy environment that favors population mobility and development. We should fully recognize the significance

of human mobility for achieving sustainable development goals, make our economic and social policies adaptable to population policies, guide the migration flow and population distribution in a orderly and reasonable manner and formulate policies to improve migrants' access to employment, education, health care and housing. We should also actively respond to the challenges brought by population mobility and agglomeration so migrants are able to settle down in cities.

2. Making the gains of sustainable development benefit more people. Every country should uphold the people-centered philosophy of development and make its citizens enjoy physical and mental health in a welfare society. We should also give our attention to migrants' developmental needs. While promoting equal access to basic public services, we should focus on safeguarding the health of the migrant population, particularly women, children and the elderly. We are expected to improve their health status by helping them deal with occupational hazards, infectious diseases and mental health problems.

3. Strengthening international dialogue and coordination. We should build an international exchange platform with multiple levels and a broad range of sectors for policy dialogues and experience sharing among countries. To grasp demographic trends, we should collaborate on strategies for population development and improve data collection and analysis of population flows. We should encourage civil society

organizations and the migrant population themselves to actively engage in urban governance so a positive interaction could be facilitated among parties including the government, the society and the residents.

Madam Chair, a fair, equitable, inclusive and open world cannot be created without the active participation of hundreds of millions of migrants worldwide. The Chinese government is willing to join hands with countries across the world to promote population mobility and development. Together we strive for well-rounded human development and all-round social progress! Together we will build a community with a shared future for mankind!

Thank you!