INTRODUCTION

All the United Nations international population conferences held since 1974 have emphasized the need to monitor the implementation of their goals and recommendations. Thus, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held at Cairo in 1994 recommended that actions be taken “to measure, assess, monitor and evaluate progress towards meeting the goals” of its Programme of Action.¹

The overriding goal of the ICPD Programme of Action, to improve human welfare and promote sustainable development, is fully consistent with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) contained in the Millennium Declaration of 2000.² Some goals in the Programme of Action are identical to the MDGs, including those pertaining to the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health and the achievement of universal primary education (United Nations, 2005).

The Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible for global monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the 1994 ICPD, as it was for that of the World Population Plan of Action of the 1974 World Population Conference. In carrying out this task, it adhered to the principles of objectivity and neutrality. Reports on advances made in the implementation of the Programme of Action have been descriptive and concise, focusing on analytical comparisons among countries and regions over time.

This report is part of the effort of the Population Division to disseminate the information resulting from its monitoring activities. It provides an overview of population policies and dynamics for the 195 countries for which data referring to the middle of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s decades are available — that is, data relate approximately to the times in which the United Nations population conferences were convened at Bucharest, Mexico City and Cairo — as well as for 2009.

Successive monitoring reports have documented significant changes since 1974 in government views on population issues as well as in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policy. Monitoring itself contributes to such evolution by increasing global awareness of population and development issues and the need for appropriate and timely policy responses.

Types of population policy questions addressed

The basic information relative to the monitoring of population policies encompasses three basic components. They are listed below together with the types of questions used to elicit the views of Governments.

Government views on population size and growth, population age structure and spatial distribution, and on the demographic components — fertility, mortality and migration — that affect them: For each variable, the following questions were posed to Governments: Is the level or trend viewed as a significant policy issue? Is the prevailing level or rate of change considered too high, too low, acceptable or satisfactory in relation to other social and economic conditions?

Government objectives with respect to each variable: Is the objective of the Government to raise or to lower the level of the variable or to maintain its current level?

Government policies concerning interventions to influence each variable: Does the Government consider intervention to alter levels and trends as a legitimate exercise of its authority? Has the Government actively intervened to influence the variable?

² General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/55/2.
Major sources of information

In order to compile the requisite information for monitoring the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and later the ICPD Programme of Action, the Population Division established the Population Policy Data Bank. The major sources of information contained in the Data Bank are of four broad types (see box 1).

The first type of information comprises official government responses to the United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development, of which there have been ten separate rounds since 1963. The first and second rounds of the Inquiry were conducted prior to the 1974 World Population Conference. The eighth Inquiry, the first directed towards the ICPD Programme of Action, was initiated in 1997. The Ninth Inquiry was sent to Governments in 2003. The Tenth Inquiry was sent to Governments in 2008. Each round of the Inquiry has consisted of a detailed request for information sent to all Member States and non-member States of the United Nations.

The second type of information consists of publications, documents, statements and other materials issued by Governments, including development plans, laws, regulations and proclamations. These materials are a particularly important source of data because they reflect the official positions taken by Governments.

The third category of information consists of materials provided by international organizations, such as regional commissions, funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as other regional intergovernmental organizations. Because countries collectively are the source of these materials, an official status is attached to them.

The fourth type of information consists of non-governmental materials, including clippings from the world press, articles in academic journals, proceedings of conferences and seminars, reports and studies prepared by research centres and non-governmental organizations, as well as correspondence and personal communications with experts.

Organization of the report

The report is divided into two parts. Part One provides a global perspective on the evolution of selected aspects of population policies between 1976 and 2009 with respect to each of the major population variables and is based on six major topics.

The first topic is government views and policies on population size and growth. The second topic covers government views and policies on the changing age distribution of population. The third topic is government views and policies on fertility, family planning and adolescent fertility. Government views and policies on health and mortality, including life expectancy at birth, child mortality and maternal mortality and the HIV/AIDS epidemic are included in the fourth topic. The fifth topic covers government views and policies on international migration, including permanent and temporary migration, family reunification and migration of skilled workers.

Special attention is given to the reduction of child mortality, improvement of maternal health and government responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic due to their importance in achieving the health-related MDGs. This chapter also provides useful information for the forty-third session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (12 to 16 April 2010) whose special theme was “Health, morbidity, mortality and development” and to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly (20-22 September 2010), which will focus on accelerating progress towards the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 (resolution A/64/L.36). The grounds on which induced abortion is permitted are also examined under the fourth topic. The views and policies of Governments on emigration and the return migration of citizens are also examined. Government views and policies on international migration are also a key focus of this report in order to document how Member States have reacted to the management of international
migration when faced with the ongoing global economic and financial crises.

Part Two presents for each country the evolution from 1976 to 2009 of government views and policies with respect to population size and growth, population age structure, fertility and family planning, health and mortality, the spatial distribution of the population, internal migration, and international migration. Country profiles are presented for each of the 192 Member States and three non-member States (Cook Islands, Holy See and Niue) of the United Nations. The material is presented in the form of data sheets, containing population policy information for each country referring to 1976, 1986, 1996 and 2009 or dates close to those years, as well as population indicators for those years.

The data included in this report are based on information available as of December 2009.

**Box 1. Sources for Monitoring Government Views and Policies on Population**

**Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United Nations Population Inquiries Among Governments</th>
<th>Government Publications, Documents and Other Sources</th>
<th>International Publications, Documents and Other Sources</th>
<th>Non-Governmental Publications and Related Materials</th>
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**Population Policy Database**

**Publications (Printed and Electronic)**

- **World Population Monitoring**
- **World Population Policies**
- **Special Policy Studies**
- **Wall Charts**
- **Other Population Reports**