



INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF FAMILIES  
15 MAY 2014

**International Day of Families\* 2014  
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***Families Matter for the Achievement of Development Goals  
International Year of the Family + 20***

***Background & Information Note***

The International Day of Families in 2014 marks the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1994 to raise awareness of the importance of families, promote knowledge of socio-economic and demographic trends affecting families and stimulate efforts to respond to challenges faced by families.

Over the years, the international community has recognized the importance of families for the achievement of development goals. Families remain active agents of development and their numerous contributions to development deserve more recognition and support.

In preparation for the anniversary, the following major development themes of importance to families and policy makers alike took centre stage:

- **Confronting family poverty and social exclusion**
- **Ensuring work-family balance**
- **Advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity within families and communities**

The research and international and regional reviews of these topics conducted as part of preparations for the anniversary, indicate that family-oriented policies contribute to poverty reduction, better outcomes for children, greater gender equality, improved work-family balance and stronger intergenerational bonds. We have ample evidence that policies in those areas are effective, contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and should be advanced further.

The observance of the International Day of Families this year is to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of the Family with an aim to encourage a more concerted action on the part of Governments and civil society to add families to post 2015 development agenda.

The Day is to sum up and illustrate recent contributions of civil society, Governments, academic institutions and the private sector to the well-being of families worldwide.

The event is open to the public and targets civil society, Permanent Missions, academics and practitioners as well as private sector representatives. It will feature inter alia:

- ***Families Matter*: a civil society led panel discussion reflecting on the role of civil society in support of families**
- ***Focus on Families in Development*: an academic panel discussion showcasing recent developments in family research and advocacy**
- **Interactive discussions and recommendations for future action on family issues**
- **Launch of *Family Futures*, a fully illustrated landmark publication by Tudor Rose commemorating the IYF +20**
- **Documentary showcasing examples of contributions of civil society to the wellbeing of families worldwide**
- **Declaration of Civil Society on the Occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Family**

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\*The annual observance of the International Day of Families reflects the importance the international community attaches to families and is an opportunity to demonstrate support to families. Governments, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and individuals are encouraged to organize observances of the Day to raise awareness of issues relating to families and increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families. Such observances can promote a better understanding of the functions, strengths and needs of families.