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**MR. WU HONGBO  
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

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**Closing statement  
49<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Population and Development**

**New York, 15 April 2016**

***Delivered by Mr. Lenni Montiel, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development,  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs***

I am pleased to deliver the following statement on behalf of Under-Secretary-General, WU Hongbo.

Madame Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates and colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to address the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Population and Development at its closing today. I did not have the privilege of being with you earlier this week, but I am aware that your discussions and deliberations have been extremely fruitful.

Under the theme ‘strengthening the demographic evidence base’ you have discussed the core systems that generate demographic data — in particular, censuses, civil registration, and household surveys — and highlighted gaps in the availability, quality and timeliness of these essential data. You have explored solutions to close the existing data gaps by highlighting new technologies, new sources of information, new commitments and new partnerships as part of the “data revolution”.

You have drawn attention to the growing demand for disaggregated data, which is crucial for ensuring that no one is left behind. You have also emphasized the growing demand for demographic data at smaller geographic levels, for sake of improved planning and accountability, as well as the multiple benefits of geo-referencing for use with all kinds of demographic data.

You have renewed commitments to strengthen data systems and to increase the use of demographic evidence for an accelerated implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda. I wish to applaud your efforts and accomplishments in all these areas.

Your statements on national experiences provided examples of innovative approaches to strengthen official data systems. These examples touched on the production as well as the uses of data to inform and guide policies and programmes. By sharing your national experiences, you have offered ideas to your colleagues from other countries and provided guidance for regional and international activities to assist countries.

A strong demographic evidence base will be essential for implementing many of the commitments made at the Cairo conference in 1994 and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is essential that choices about policy interventions be informed by solid evidence. Your work this week will help governments to prioritize the actions needed to strengthen national capacities to gather, disseminate and effectively make use of demographic data.

Madame Chairperson,

As you know, 2016 is a crucial year. Member States are now in the process of ensuring the UN system delivers on its promise to assist with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda over the next decade and a half. At the same time, this Commission continues with its mandate to support the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. We should keep in mind this broader context when considering the future work of this Commission.

I congratulate you for achieving consensus on a resolution on the Commission's methods of work and on a decision that lays out the revised provisional agenda for the next session in 2017. Your deliberations on the methods of work have reaffirmed that the Programme of Action from the Cairo conference remains central to the work of this Commission. At the same time, you have acknowledged that the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda should also be part of the Commission's future work. And, since the mechanisms linking the work of the functional commissions to that of ECOSOC and the high-level political forum are still being decided, you have recognized that there may be a need to revisit at least some aspects of this topic in future years.

I also commend your decision to focus attention on population age structures and sustainable development, as the theme of the 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission in 2017. By examining this topic, the Commission will give prominence to an important set of issues affecting Member States at all levels of development as they undergo the demographic transition.

Dear delegates,

You have persevered through sometimes difficult negotiations, and made space for a legitimate diversity of views. This is a very important achievement. I commend your efforts in this regard.

I also thank the Chair and other members of the Bureau for the overall success of this session. You have guided both the preparation and the deliberations of this session with admirable skill. In doing so, you have set an excellent example of good practice that will be helpful to future Chairs and Bureaus.

Let me especially thank the co-facilitators, who have guided the informal consultations with steady determination. Your successful stewardship of the negotiations this year has reinforced the importance of working towards a shared vision and unity of purpose.

We appreciate also the many contributions of UNFPA and the support they have given us as a partner in this endeavour. And finally, I wish to acknowledge the insights and contributions of the hard-working representatives of civil society who have participated in this session.

In closing, Madame Chair, I wish you and your colleagues in the Bureau, as well as all the delegates who participated in this session, a restful weekend, and a safe journey home to those who have travelled from afar.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.

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