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**STATEMENT
by the Representative of the Russian Federation
at the 13th Coordination Meeting on International Migration**

New York, 12 February 2015

Mr. Chairman,

The Russian Federation considers migration to be a complicated phenomenon that to a large extent has an influence upon development in times of globalization. We believe that in the foreseeable future the interdependence between international migration and a wide range of political, social, economic, demographic, cultural and historical challenges of our days will continue. Migration issues will play an important role in international relations including in the context of development.

The scale of migration flows not only seriously effects particular countries but largely defines general situation in the whole world. Migrants make considerable contributions to their countries of origin and destination. At the same time practically in all states adaptation and integration of migrants into receiving societies and promotion of their human rights are perceived as major migration problems.

Labour migration has become one of the basic elements of global economy and a factor of production growth. More and more states view labour migration as an important force shaping national politics in the field of labour and development. Remittances sent by

migrants to countries of their origin very often form an important profit of national economies. The overall value of such remittances is much bigger than international aid for the purposes of development and direct foreign investments into developing countries and countries with transitional economies. In accordance with the data of the United Nations today worldwide there are about 232 million international migrants and more than 740 million people migrated within their own countries. More than 100 million people in the world work outside states of their birth. Overall remittances of migrant workers to developing countries in 2013 amounted to 440 billion dollars.

We should never forget that because of different kind of conflicts, instability and other factors for millions of people on our planet migration is forced and is the only way to save their lives. By the end of 2013 as per data of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees over 51 million people were in displacement due to conflict and persecution. The number of refugees in the world reached 11 million people. Assistance to refugees is a particular area of international humanitarian action that requires considerable effort on behalf of the international communities and hosting countries.

Issues of migration have solidly taken their places in the agendas of many international and regional organizations and are actively discussed in various multilateral fora as well as bilaterally.

Most likely certain aspects of migration in this or that way will be included into the Global Post-2015 Development Agenda. We take into account, that explicit migration references are already made in the report of the UN General Assembly Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and consider this Report as the main basis for the ongoing in accordance with Modalities adopted by the GA intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. The Russian Federation is convinced that for the benefit of development it is crucial to maximize positive effects of migration, to minimize its negative ones and to promote lawful interests and rights of migrants themselves. The way to gain optimal advantages from migration for migrants and countries of their origin as

well as for receiving states may be found through a constructive international dialogue on issues of migration and development. Equally important to achieve this aim is an effective management of migration processes grounded on balanced and coherent national, regional and international migration policies.

Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me to outline major development related trends of the Russian migration strategy which is guided by the Concept of the State migration policy for the period up to 2025 approved by the President of the Russian Federation.

Russia is the second largest country in the world by the number of international migrants received. In 2014 about 17.5 million foreign citizens entered its territory.

According to the information of the Central Bank of Russia and the World Bank the system of money remittances for migrants in Russia is one of the cheapest and most accessible in the world. The cost of transfer is about 2%. For example in the first half of 2014 more than 2.8 billion USD was sent from Russia to Uzbekistan, to Tadzhikistan – about 1.5 billion, to Kyrgyz Republic – almost a billion. Such remittances considerably influence the GDP of certain countries. Money sent by migrants becomes a major source of foreign currency in countries of origin, makes their economies more flexible and resilient, helps to overcome hunger and poverty, provides opportunities for education, healthcare and entrepreneurship. On the other hand migrants coming to work to Russia greatly contribute to many spheres of its economy and positively influence upon the development of infrastructure.

Special attention is paid to adaptation and integration of migrants including through educational programs for them to study the Russian language and learn more about cultures and traditions of the peoples of Russia. Now there are more than 300 educational centers organized for these purposes.

Russian migration legislation is constantly being improved on the principles of promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms of both Russian and foreign citizens residing in Russia.

One of the most important recent novelties in the Russian migration law is the introduction from the 1st of January 2015 of a new system of special documents - labour patents – for foreign workers coming to Russia in a visa free regime. These patents to be purchased by migrants in favor of the federal and local budgets will allow them to work legally in all kind of commercial enterprises and private households. The new system will promote legal migration, reduce illegal migratory flows and allow many migrant workers to come out of the tax shadow.

Furthermore from 2010 there are in place simplified mechanisms to attract highly qualified foreign specialists needed in the Russian economy. Only in 2014 almost 29000 of such workers were employed. That is 20% more than in the previous year. Additionally the system of organized recruitment of foreign labour is being built.

Another topical area is the harmonization of migration and labour legislation within the Euro-Asian Economic Union where in fact there is a free labour market and citizens of member countries do not need special permissions to work within the Union.

Finally let me point out that the Russian Federation is ready to develop cooperation on a wide range of migration issues with all interested parties.

I thank you for your attention.