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**STATEMENT TO THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM 7. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE
PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT IN THE FIELD OF
POPULATION**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROGRESS OF WORK IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION IN 2004: POPULATION DIVISION,
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (E/CN.9/2005/9)**

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Mr. Chairman,

I am honoured to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2004. The report focuses on the activities of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The programme of work of the Population Division is geared towards the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the key actions adopted by the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly in 1999 for the further implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action, and the Millennium Declaration. Its main objective is to increase understanding of the nature of demographic phenomena, in particular the interactions between population and development, so that the necessary choices and policy options are made on the best possible evidence.

Please allow me to highlight selected activities and products of the Population Division in major areas of its programme of work in 2004.

In the area of **Fertility and Family Planning Studies**, the Division issued the final version of the *World Fertility Report 2003*. For each country, the report presents a profile showing data on marriage, contraceptive use, fertility and national policies with respect to family formation and family planning – a total of 43 indicators – at two points in time: in the early seventies and for the most recent period with data available. It is a

typical flagship publication of the Division, providing hard to obtain data for all countries, sifting through all available evidence, supplemented by authoritative estimates.

In the area of **Mortality and Health**, the Population Division has developed a database comprising mortality data and indicators for as many countries as possible and for several time periods. The information in the database serves as a basis for the further analysis and modelling of mortality, including the analysis of trends and their extrapolation into the future. Its use will enable a better understanding of the relationships between mortality and development, the impact of epidemics and the future of mortality as more populations achieve unprecedented levels of longevity.

In the area of **Migration**, the Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development for 2004, reviewing the work in this field by the United Nations system and other relevant organizations, and suggesting options for the United Nations with respect to addressing international migration and development issues. Another important contribution is the series of Coordination meetings on international migration organized by the Population Division, which bring together organisations from the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and other international and regional organizations active in the area of international migration. The third of such meetings was held in 2004, with the participation of some 40 experts, who debated the substantive issues that might be considered by the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly that will be held in 2006. The Division also issued a database on migrant stocks, showing the number of international migrants by sex in each country over the last forty years – thus helping to address the need for estimates of international migration worldwide. These and other activities of the Population Division in the area of international migration and development, as a package, are expected to play a significant role in laying the substantive foundations for a successful high-level dialogue in 2006.

Population Estimates and Projections are an area of activity where the Population Division plays a pre-eminent role, producing official United Nations sets of comprehensive and consistent demographic data, based on the best evidence and demographic estimation methodologies available. These figures are crucial for the formulation of sound population and development policies, particularly in countries where reliable demographic data are difficult to obtain. The high demand for such data, and the numerous references to our estimates and projections found in the literature, clearly suggest that these figures are seen as the most reliable and authoritative, not only within the United Nations system, but also among policy makers, scholars and the media. In 2004, the Division issued, among other products in this area, the 2003 revision of World Urbanization Prospects.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in the area of **Population Policies** I would like to highlight the work related to the United Nations Ninth Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development. This is a survey of the views and policies of Governments regarding the full spectrum of population and development issues and it is a unique instrument to assess the progress in Government awareness, understanding and readiness

to act on population and development issues. It is an exercise in which the cooperation of each and every government is essential to obtaining the best product. We are encouraged that 80 countries, representing about 80 per cent of the world's population, responded to the Inquiry. We would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to Governments to help us in this respect, by responding promptly and accurately to these Inquiries.

Mr. Chairman,

As I indicated this is only a selection of the Population Division's activities, which are more extensively presented in document /9. These activities result in a considerable volume of publications and other outputs. We are aware that our products need to reach users quickly and in the most useable manner. Hard-copy publications in the form of reports and wall-charts are thus only one aspect of our dissemination strategy: the Population Division has been an early adopter of the Internet for the speedy dissemination of our work and Division's website is one of the most frequently accessed in the economic and social sector of the United Nations. We estimate that one third of our users are in developing countries.

We look forward to your views on how we can continue to respond to your needs through our work.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.