

STATEMENT TO THE FORTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

AGENDA ITEM 6: 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 2012: POPULATION DIVISION,  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (E/CN.9/2013/6)

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE POPULATION DIVISION,  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS,  
FOR THE BIENNIUM, 2014-2015 (E/CN.9/2013/CRP.1)

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Mr. Chairman  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of introducing two documents this morning, which relate to the work of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The first document, E/CN.9/2013/6, is a report of the Secretary-General describing the activities of the Population Division in 2012, while the second document, E/CN.9/2013/CRP.1, is the draft programme of work of the Population Division for the biennium 2014-2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The mission of the Population Division is to use the methods and materials of demography to inform and support the intergovernmental process. This is accomplished in a variety of ways including by monitoring global population dynamics, by clarifying particular demographic phenomena, and by enhancing understanding of the relationship between demographic and other factors. In these ways, the work of the Population Division supports the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) as well as the key actions adopted by other relevant United Nations conferences and summits, such as the Millennium Declaration and the outcome of the 2005 World Summit.

Mr. Chairman,

The first document provides an account of the activities of the Population Division during 2012 in six thematic areas based on the current organisational structure of the Division: Fertility and Family Planning, Mortality, Migration, Population Estimates and Projections, Population and Development, and Population Policies. I am pleased to be able to report that the Population Division made important progress last year in all of these areas. But given the time constraints, please allow me to highlight just a few of the activities and products of the Division in 2012.

In the area of **Fertility and Family Planning**, the Division issued *World Contraceptive Use 2012*, a comprehensive data set on family planning indicators for 194 countries or territories. The Division has important responsibilities regarding the monitoring of certain Millennium Development Goals, specifically the monitoring of three reproductive health indicators: contraceptive prevalence, the adolescent birth rate, and the unmet need for family planning. Yet, lack of data and variability in data quality complicate the task of monitoring progress for these outcomes. For this reason the latest edition of *World Contraceptive Use* includes model-based estimates and short-term projections of contraceptive prevalence and unmet need for family planning. These are based on a new method developed by my colleagues within the Division, in

collaboration with academic researchers at the National University of Singapore. The methodology, which was published recently in *The Lancet*, provides consistent estimates and uncertainty assessments for 194 countries, as well as regions and sub-regions of the world, and shows that continued efforts and investment are necessary in order to meet the existing demand for contraceptive methods and to improve reproductive health worldwide.

In the area of **Mortality and Health**, the Division issued two major reports: *World Mortality Report 2011*, which provides an overview of estimated and projected trends in global mortality, and *Changing Levels and Trends in Mortality: the role of patterns of death by cause*, which assesses the contribution of major causes of death to differences in survival rates between various populations. In addition, the Population Division continued to contribute to the work of the United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, whose task is to monitor progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 4. Staff from the Division assisted in preparing the report *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality: Report 2012* and contributed to the group's methodological innovations in estimating child mortality, which were published in a collection of research articles last year in *PloS Medicine*.

In the area of **Migration**, the Division has been fully involved in the substantive preparations for this session of the Commission on Population and Development, as well as the upcoming High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development which has already been mentioned many times over the course of this week. The Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development for the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, which included estimates of the number and distribution of international migrants around the world as well as detailed proposals for the preparation and organization of the forthcoming High-Level Dialogue.

In the area of **Population Estimates and Projections**, the Division completed the 2011 revision of *World Urbanization Prospects*, which presents estimates and projections of urban and rural populations for 233 countries and areas as well as information on the size of urban areas and urban agglomerations throughout the world. These data are used widely throughout the United Nations system and beyond. An important improvement over previous revisions is that

the latest revision includes geographical coordinates for all 633 cities with more than 750,000 inhabitants. This information will allow researchers to link the estimates and projections of the population of urban agglomerations to various environmental characteristics, such as proximity to coastal areas, earthquake fault lines or climate zones. Preliminary analysis conducted by the Division using these data has already proved quite revealing: for example, we discovered that there are 450 urban areas with one million inhabitants or more located in regions that are exposed to the risk of one form of natural disaster or another.

Over the past twelve months, staff within the Division, in collaboration with researchers at the University of Washington, have continued to develop and refine the methodology used to produce probabilistic population projections as part of an ongoing commitment to ensure that our work conforms to the highest professional standards of demography and statistics. Following the publication of a number of innovative papers in leading scholarly journals earlier this year, the Division prepared a new set of probabilistic projections to 2100 which, for the first time ever, included stochastic projections of life expectancy. A key advantage of these new projections is that they convey more clearly how the level of uncertainty attached to different aspects of our projections varies by indicator, country or region. Thus, for example, our projections that population ageing will occur throughout the world or that there will be a decline in the total population of Eastern Europe are almost certain, whereas our projections of the demographic futures of certain countries in Africa that still have relatively high levels of fertility and mortality are far less certain.

In the area of **Population and Development**, the Division has produced several publications related to population ageing over the past 12 months. These publications underscore the point that population ageing will be an important social and economic force during the twenty-first century, bringing opportunities for societies but also challenges that need to be addressed in areas such as income security, social protection, and health care in later life.

Finally, in the area of **Population Policy**, the Division has just released updated information on Government views and policies on population-related topics in the report *World Population Policies 2011*. A pre-publication copy of this report is on display at the back of the

room. In this context, I note that preparations for the launch of the *United Nations' Eleventh Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development* are well underway. Later this year the *Inquiry* will be sent to all permanent missions in New York. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all Member States to respond to the *Inquiry* in a timely fashion.

As I indicated earlier, Mr. Chairman, this is only a selection of the Population Division's diverse and full portfolio of activities, which are more extensively presented in document E/CN.9/2013/6. In addition, the Division continues to be concerned with issues of ease of access and usability of our outputs. Increasingly we are moving towards electronic publication and are making all data sets and publications available online through the Division's redesigned website. We believe that this will result in the speedier dissemination of our work and will enable users to analyze our data in ways that were not possible in the past.

Finally, the second document under consideration, E/CN.9/2013/CRP.1, contains the draft programme of work of the Division for the biennium 2014-2015. The document contains the objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for the Population Subprogramme, and a list of proposed outputs. If you will recall, the programme narrative was reviewed by the Commission last year as part of the proposed strategic framework for the 2014-2015 biennium and was subsequently approved by the General Assembly. The Commission is invited to take note of the programme narrative and review the proposed outputs.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.