

STATEMENT
H. E. AMBASSADOR VLADIMIR DROBNJAK, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
AND VICE-PRESIDENT, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
TO THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

**Agenda item 5. General debate on the contribution of population and
development issues to the theme of the annual ministerial review in 2015**

New York, 15 April 2015

**Your Excellency, Ambassador Bénédicte Frankinet,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Economic and Social Council at this session of the Commission on Population and Development, which has been at the forefront of monitoring the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action on Population and Development.

As a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, this Commission has made effective contributions to the Council's work in the follow-up of the outcomes of the major conferences and summits, and it is poised to contribute further to the integration of population trends and issues into the broader development agenda in the transition to the post-2015 period, and in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Madame Chair,

The main theme of the Economic and Social Council for 2014- 2015 is "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the sustainable development goals (SDGs): What it will take". The theme of this Commission, "Integrating population issues into sustainable development, including in the post-2015 development agenda" addresses a closely related topic, and thereby contributes to the work of the Council as mandated in resolution 68/1.

Population issues are directly relevant to this year's discussions in the high-level segment of ECOSOC, including the high-level political forum, in several respects, including:

The role of demographic trends to development outcomes, including the enhancement of reproductive health and rights, as highlighted in the Cairo Programme of Action. The positive effects of increased contraceptive prevalence and reduced unmet need for family planning on maternal and child health and mortality are well recognized, as well as on the expansion of educational opportunities for women and children. These topics were included in the MDGs, and it only stands to reason that they have maintained priority consideration in the elaboration of the SDGs.

Reductions in fertility also open a window of opportunity for a "demographic dividend" brought about by the concentration of the population age structure in the more productive ages, especially if coupled with educational and decent work opportunities for the current and future generations of youth. It is indeed very timely that you will be dealing with these issues following the integration segment of ECOSOC on employment and decent work for all, that took place just two weeks ago. I urge you to take into account the conclusions of that dialogue in your deliberations.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report on the theme for this session of the CPD, the reduction in population growth rates will also help to attenuate the demographic pressure on resources in general, and on environmental sustainability in particular, an area that features much more prominently in the proposed SDGs than it did in the MDGs.

In transitioning to the SDGs, the global trend toward population ageing must be given the consideration that it deserves, for both the more developed countries and also for a large number of developing countries. Priority attention to the health, social participation, and income security of older persons are called for to ensure the well-being of the present and future generations of older persons.

In an increasingly interconnected and globalised post-2015 world, the expanding urbanization of the world population and the increasing scale and diversity of migration need to be explicitly addressed. It is gratifying to see that the respect of the rights of migrants and the facilitation of orderly, safe,

regular and responsible migration are contained in the proposed sustainable development goals.

Madame Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

In closing, let me put on record my satisfaction with the improved alignment of the substantive work of the functional commissions with the ECOSOC annual theme, and with the overall goal of promoting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development as we transition to the post-2015 development era.

I am confident that with the collaboration of functional commissions, the ECOSOC system will become a more effective unifying platform for the transformative and universal post-2015 agenda, and for better linkages between the normative and operational work of the UN system.

Thank you.