

Thirteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration

United Nations, New York
12 February 2015

Opening statement

John Wilmoth, Director, Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my distinct pleasure to welcome you to the thirteenth annual coordination meeting on international migration, organized by the Population Division of the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Since its inception in 2002, this meeting has been an important yet informal space to discuss policies, coordinate activities, and present evidence on migration. What started as a small, technical event focusing on interagency coordination, has evolved into a major multi-stakeholder platform on migration at the United Nations. Nevertheless, we remain committed to keeping the technical focus, and the emphasis on coordination of work, that have given this meeting its strength and its *raison d'être*.

Since the start of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in 2007, we have invited the GFMD leadership to present their plans during the coordination meeting and to engage in an interactive dialogue with various parts of the UN system.

The coordination meeting also offers an opportunity for Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration, to share his views and to encourage greater cooperation between all actors.

Further, in recent years we have invited leading figures from civil society to ensure that the perspectives of the private sector, trade unions, and migrants themselves are well reflected in these discussions.

With migration being a key global challenge, the risks of duplication and redundancy have increased. I am very pleased that so many international organizations have accepted our invitation. Let us use these two days to identify opportunities for synergies and collaboration.

Last but not least, this meeting seeks to share and disseminate the latest research findings. The need to underpin policy making and public discourse on migration with facts and scientific evidence is greater now than ever.

Indeed, as you may know already, the Population Division attaches great importance to evidence. We have played a major role in monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular for MDG 4 and 5 on child and maternal mortality and on reproductive health. We expect that we will continue to contribute in assessing the achievement of the sustainable development goals. And just as we have worked closely with many partners across the UN system in monitoring the health-related targets of the MDGs, we look forward to working with various partners in the monitoring of migration and related topics during the post-2015 era.

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Ladies and gentlemen,

In 2015, the world has an historic opportunity to reflect the contribution of international migration, migrants and mobility in a new global development agenda. It is perhaps for this reason that we are joined in this meeting by a particularly impressive array of speakers, panelists and moderators.

This morning, we will focus on means of integrating migration into the post-2015 development agenda and on ways to use dialogue, cooperation and partnerships to achieve this. We will hear how the post-2015 process is moving forward, and we will identify opportunities for engagement. We will be briefed on the priorities of the Global Forum, civil society and the Global Migration Group and on how they plan to contribute to the post-2015 development agenda and the third conference on financing for development.

This afternoon, we will discuss how migration can be leveraged as a means of implementation within a new framework on financing for development.

Then, we will consider practical proposals for measuring the targets related to migration, migrants and mobility proposed by the Open Working Group.

Tomorrow morning, we will follow up on three priorities put forward by the Secretary-General during the 2013 High-level Dialogue, namely (a) protecting the human rights of all migrants, (b) reducing the costs of labour migration, and (c) addressing the plight of stranded migrants, migrants in crises and migrants in need of protection at sea.

Tomorrow afternoon, you will be able to present and discuss new migration initiatives during our traditional "tour-de-table".

I am very proud that the Population Division is able to provide this neutral space to facilitate dialogue, to promote coherence, and to share evidence. I can assure you that your contributions will form an invaluable input to our work as the substantive focal point on migration within the United Nations Secretariat.

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Dear colleagues,

In closing, let me welcome you all once again. We look forward to your stimulating presentations and informative contributions and, above all, to a constructive debate.

Let me take this opportunity to thank my colleagues within the Population Division, in particular Bela Hovy and his migration team, for their hard work in preparing this event.

Please note that this meeting is being webcast.

Lastly, I would like to emphasise that you are all cordially invited to a reception this evening hosted by the Population Division and the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations. I understand that, thanks to the generosity of our co-hosts, there will be some delicious Turkish food to enjoy during the reception, which will take place at the premises of the Population Division, in the DC2 building on the 19th floor. The building is located across 1st Avenue on 44th Street, next door to the Millennium Hotel. The reception will start at 6:15 this evening and continue until 7:30.

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Let me now hand over the gavel to Mr. Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, who has kindly agreed to moderate the first panel. I invite Ms. Amina Mohammed, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning to take her seat on the podium. Mr. Sutherland is joining us via video link.

Thank you.