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**Press briefing on the High-level Dialogue on International
Migration and Development**

New York, 2 October 2013

Good morning,

Tomorrow and Friday, we will gather for the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. This will be the second time in its history that the United Nations General Assembly will devote a high-level meeting to global migration and to development.

Recent figures published by the United Nations confirm that international migration continues to increase in size, scope and impact. The overall number of international migrants increased from 175 million in 2000 to 232 million in 2013. Half of these migrants are women.

Evidence clearly shows that migration contributes significantly to development. In 2012 alone, migrant families in developing countries received about 400 billion US dollars in remittances, according to World Bank estimates. These remittances improve the access to i.a. health and education of migrant families. Thus, they contribute directly to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Migrant and diaspora communities can bring about innovation, trade and investment. Migrants contribute as entrepreneurs, creating business start-ups and employing others, and represent an important and growing force for innovation and entrepreneurship

Transformation in information technology has enabled migrants to strengthen their ties to their homelands. Migrants also play a role in the transfer of technology, skills and knowledge back to their countries of origin.

At the heart of migration are human beings who move. Indeed we can all trace our own background to migrants, be it in the near or far past. The term “migrant” describes what they do, but let us remember who they are: human beings with human rights.

The main theme of the High-level Dialogue is to identify practical measures to enhance the contribution of migration to global development and to mitigate migration challenges.

In his report, the Secretary-General has laid out an agenda to address the challenges of migration and to make migration be a catalyst for development. These measures range from protecting the human rights of all migrants and eliminating migrant exploitation, to reducing the costs of migration, addressing the plight of migrant workers stranded as a result of humanitarian crises, and enhancing migrant partnerships and cooperation.

Member States will use these two days to focus on migration issues in all their aspects and to move this agenda forward.

As the United Nations will adopt a new development agenda in 2015, the High-level Dialogue also provides an important opportunity for Member States to propose ways to integrate migration into the post 2015 development agenda.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration, for his contribution to the dialogue on migration and give him the floor.

Thank you.
