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Review of the functioning of the methods of work of the Commission

Statement submitted by NGO Committee on Migration, a member of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CoNGO), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council²

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

¹ E/CN.9/2016/1.

² The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on Population and Development — strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda, with a focus on migration

The NGO Committee on Migration, a member of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CoNGO) in consultative relationship with the United Nations, welcomes the opportunity for input into the preparations for the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Population and Development, with a focus on strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda and on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission. We hope our contribution will be helpful in finding effective ways and means to enhance the impact of the Commission's work and its contribution to the Economic and Social Council.

As the only non-governmental organization (NGO) at United Nations Headquarters entirely dedicated to the protection of the human rights of migrants in accordance with the United Nations Charter, the work of our Committee is deeply intertwined with the substantive concerns of the Commission, especially its mandate to review the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and, more recently, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As members of civil society we work to establish effective relationships with States as well as other relevant stakeholders to address situations of voluntary and forced displacement, and to ensure the social and economic integration of migrants, as set forth in chapter ten of the outcome document of the International Conference of Population and Development, and in the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Our recommendations on substance and process include the following:

Regarding themes and outcomes, we favour continuing the current practice of selecting special themes for each session, related to, but not exclusively on, the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Among urgent topics for the near future, we strongly recommend mainstreaming migration into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This would include a focus on goals, targets, and indicators, both those specifically related to migration (5.2, 8.8, 10.7, 10c, 16.2) as well as the much larger number of those relevant to migration when disaggregated by migratory status (17.18).

We hope that a satisfactory agreement can be reached by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators (IEAG) on the international migration policy index for Target 10.7, since safe and orderly migration, especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children, is a high priority issue for civil society. In our view, the notion of indicator indices needs further discussion, as does the effect of limiting to one or two indicators the measurement of most targets. Regarding the need for data disaggregation (17.18), civil society organizations, in collaboration with the Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE), have written to the IAEG co-chairs and to the

United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development urging such data disaggregation across the full range of social and economic groups set out in the 2030 agenda, in accordance with the principle of “no one left behind”.

While civil society is eager to continue its input into the formulation of international indicators being prepared by the IAEG, it is at the same time engaged in preparing a parallel set for input into national indicators. The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) has just prepared a draft overview of migration SDGs, targets, and indicators as a potential basis for advocacy on national indicators. Further, NGOs hope to engage in effective partnerships with States to ensure that the framework of SDGs and targets, especially those which are migration-related, such as 8.8 and 10.7, are integrated into national policy planning. They are also eager to be involved in projects that are part of SDG implementation at the local, national, and regional levels.

The NGO Committee on Migration expresses its concern about the lack of available migration related data and indicators in many parts of the world, in particular in developing countries, especially with regard to the conditions of migrants, the economic, social and environmental impact of migration, and relation between migration and development. We call on the international community to launch a global initiative dedicated to improve the production, analysis and use of policy relevant migration information by strengthening all relevant data sources, that is, population censuses, administrative information, and household surveys. Given that migration was not included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), there is no existing platform of indicators on which the migration community can build to monitor the implementation of migration related commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. National capacity building will be crucial for countries to integrate migration into their development plans and processes.

Both these products are intended as a contribution to a more effective review of the 2030 Agenda by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), yearly by the Economic and Social Council, and every four years by the General Assembly. The annual sessions of the Commission on Population and Development would, in our view, afford a good opportunity for substantive exchanges among all stakeholders about the status of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, based on these monitoring tools, which would take place before the annual/quadrennial reviews. For instance, should the HLPF review the issue of migration once every four years, it would be important to make migration the central focus of the session of the Commission that immediately precedes it. Such a periodicity should not restrain the Commission from considering the outcomes of the SDGs for migrants more often than on a quadrennial basis, given that most SDGs are of direct relevance to migrants and migration.

Our strongest recommendation regarding themes and outcomes, especially given the desperate global migration crisis and the urgent need for a shift to development tools, is that the sessions of the Commission on Population and Development put more emphasis on migration-related issues instead of the more traditional focus of the Commission on other types of population issues.

Regarding documentation, we think that the most effective means of supporting the Commission’s review of population-related Sustainable Development Goals would be to add a Secretary-General’s report dedicated to the review of

migration-related Sustainable Development Goals. We also recommend adding a civil society report dedicated to the review of migration-related Sustainable Development Goals.

With regard to the effective participation of civil society in the sessions, it has always been our view that successful outcomes require the participation of all relevant stakeholders, allowing multi-stakeholder interactive discussions and exchanges. We think that the engagement structure of the High-Level Political Forum provides an excellent model for the future participation of civil society in the Commission. With specific reference to civil society, the HLPF resolution states that relevant stakeholders at the international level shall be allowed to attend all official meetings of the forum; have access to all official information and documents; to intervene in official meetings; to submit documents and present written and oral contributions; to make recommendations; and to organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat ([A/RES/67/290](#), paragraph 15). Further, we encourage Member States to include NGO delegates in their national delegations. We welcome the initiative of the previous Commission Chair to organize an informal meeting with NGOs prior to the annual session of the Commission. In line with previous Commission practice, we also welcome the participation of NGOs, civil society and academia as speakers and panellists.

Regarding outcomes, despite the challenges encountered in recent years, the Commission should continue to strive for the adoption of a negotiated outcome in the form of a resolution combining the review, follow-up and implementation of both the ICPD Program of Action and the 2030 Agenda, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Such a resolution will send a strong message to the HLPF. The informal consultation of the Chair with NGOs mentioned above should provide civil society with an opportunity to express its views on the draft resolution put forward by the Chair.

We are submitting these recommendations in the hope that they will contribute to fruitful exchanges at the next session of the Commission on Population and Development on ways forward in adapting its work to meet the challenges of our changing, crisis-driven world.
