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Statement submitted by World Family Organization, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.



Declaration

Since year 2000, the World Family Organization in partnership with its members from governments, NGOs, academia, parliamentarians, private sector and media and with the support of the UNDESA decided to advocate for family policies in the context of development and on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. From 2004 to 2012, our annual World Family Summits concentrated its scientific programs on the Millennium Development Goals. In years 2013 and 2014, the Summits discussed the achievements of the MDGs and the proposed themes to be included in the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda and the subsequently proposed Sustainable Development Goals.

In the year 2004, the government of People's Republic of China through the National Commission for Family Planning hosted the first World Family Summit of the decade and the subsequent Summits were hosted by the governments of Brazil, Jordan, Poland, Egypt, Turkey, France, Germany and the United Arab Emirates. Holding yearly Summits focusing on one of the MDGs was a strong commitment done during the first Summit in China. The outcomes of the Summits took the form of Declarations, all of them presented to the UN-ECOSOC in written statements.

In the year 2014, the World Family Organization, its members and partners accomplished successfully the World Family Summit +10 in China, where it started, in the beautiful city of Zhuhai under the leadership of H.E. Mme. Liu Yandong, Vice-Premier of the State Council, People's Republic of China, H.E. Mme Li Bin, Minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission, People's Republic of China, H.E. Mr. Wang Peian, Vice Minister and H.E. Mr. HE Ningka, Mayor of Zhuhai Municipal People's Government.

Having ministers, representatives of governments at the national and local levels, non-governmental organizations, academia, parliamentarians, private sector, media, families and UN agencies and counting with 268 participants from 82 countries representing all continents of the world, the World Family Summit +10, successfully concluded its Agenda "Families in Balance: The Post-2015 Global Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals - Setting a New Course for the World Families Want" and unanimously approved the Zhuhai Declaration which included:

1. The recognition that the Millennium Development Goals helped to galvanize development efforts, improved the existence of many families, saved the lives of those threatened by extreme poverty, disease and hunger, reduced child and maternal mortality, improved the health of people with HIV/AIDs and other non-communicable diseases, decreased the number of children out of school, improved gender equality and participation of women, increased access to clean drinking water and sanitation, raised awareness on environmental issues and improved global partnerships for development.

2. Despite those achievement, it was recognized that many challenges still remain, progress in human development continue to be uneven, leaving many behind, therefore it is an urgent need to find new development pathways for transformative changes towards global, inclusive and people-centered sustainable development.

3. According to the discussions and the consultative process of the UN with a wide range of stakeholders it was recognized that the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda has to be built on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, the four core dimensions of development which are inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability, and peace and security and the three core principles which are human rights, equality and sustainability.

4. The Zhuhai Declaration also highlighted the United Nations outcome document on Sustainable Development of Rio +20 'The future we want' which led to the proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the ICPD beyond 2014 review that have many implications for families.

5. Acknowledging that the family - the basic unit of society - is a powerful agent for sustainable social, economic, environment and cultural development, including peace and security, bearing the primary responsibility for the care, development and protection of children, as well as instilling values of citizenship and belonging in the society, the Zhuhai Declaration also celebrated the outcomes of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 which provided an opportunity to draw further attention to the objectives of the celebrated Year for increasing cooperation at all levels on family issues and for undertaking concerted actions to strengthen family-centered policies and programs as part of an integrated comprehensive approach to development.

In the context of the Pos-2015 Global Sustainable Development Agenda and the proposed Sustainable Development Goals, the Zhuhai Declaration recommended the consideration of the following family related issues as the main topics for mainstreaming and actions at the local, national and regional levels:

1- Reduce family poverty by ensuring income and basic social security and social assistance – Ensure minimum income and acceptable standard of living for all families and households, through encouraging small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs, to offer equal opportunities to productive employment and decent work and through a variety of social protection schemes, including livelihood protection, universal pensions, social and micro-insurance schemes and through sound public policies pro-poor and gender sensitive strategies of income support such as conditional cash transfers and social assistance nets.

2- Strengthen families capabilities by enhancing access to education and training opportunities – Ensure that all family members are educated by encouraging and supporting local authorities, civil society organizations and the private sector in providing equal access to boys and girls to affordable and quality early childhood development services, parenting programs, pre-school services, primary, secondary, higher and vocational education, life skills, lifelong learning including peace and citizenship, gender equality and engaging families in the educational process of their children.

3- Promote family health by increasing family health coverage and access to public quality health care services – Ensure the establishment of accessible universal public health care systems with integrated curative and preventive quality primary, secondary and tertiary health care services, including sexual and reproductive health care services, to all members of the family, strengthening the improvement of the organization and management of the health care systems and

services with adequate infrastructure, equipment, commodities, information systems, referrals, confidentiality, research as well as qualified health professionals.

4- Reinforce family cohesion and intergenerational solidarity by supporting social integration strategies, specially targeting vulnerable families and communities - Ensure that interventions to support families and communities recognize generational interdependence and promote intergenerational interaction and healthy intra-family and community relationships. Family counseling, mediation services and social integration strategies contribute to developing positive relationships and strengthen the quality of ties between family members and communities.

5- Empower the family by supporting its caregiving functions - Ensure direct support to family caregivers in the form of economic and non-economic measures, such as personal income tax relief and subsidies for the care of children, older persons and persons with disabilities and put in place context-specific mechanisms and policies to facilitate the balancing of work and family responsibilities. Ensuring universal access to paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers, including adoptive parents and flexible working hour arrangements to help the family accommodate its caregiving functions.

6- Address violence and abuse within families and households – Enhance the family and community capacity to recognize and prevent all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect especially against children, girls and women ensuring the provision of services that can mitigate the consequences of violence and enable the full rehabilitation of those who experience it.

7- Reduce the influence of conflicts, wars and natural disasters on the family - Ensure that families become more resilient against emerging threats by timely providing emergency aid followed by continuous permanent economic and social assistance and promoting the cooperation and integration of the public and communitarian services.

8- Plan and build family-friendly cities and human settlements with sustainable consumption and production patters – Ensure urbanization inclusive and sustainable, resilient, safe, accessible, providing all families with adequate and affordable housing, quality public services, public transport system, adequate energy, water, soil, air and waste management, green public spaces, supportive to positive economic, social and environmental links with rural areas, efficient management and use of natural resources, sustainable consumption and production, reduce waste generation and environmental degradation by preventing, recycling and reusing. Support families to adopt sustainable development practices and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

9- Empower family-oriented public and civil society organizations to integrate a family perspective into national and local sustainable development – Enhance partnerships among public institutions and civil society organizations to improve national and local capabilities on family-oriented economic, social and environmental policy formulation, programs design, services delivery and good practices implementation strengthening its institutional structures and providing adequate capacity building and financing.

Concluding: The family is the basic unit of society and the driving force behind achieving many of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The World Family Organization with its members and partners, managing the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs, are strongly committed to work efficiently to help families to understand and exercise the proposed goals in their everyday life contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. That's what it will take.
