

**Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the
Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**

Bangkok, Thailand, 10-12 March 2021

**Video statement of Mr. John Wilmoth, Director,
Population Division, UN DESA, New York**

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this meeting.

The review that you are undertaking is linked closely with two important events taking place at the United Nations over the next two years.

The high-level political forum on sustainable development in July will include an in-depth discussion on 9 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 10 on inequality, which contains target 10.7 on facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people.

This year's forum provides an opportunity to discuss how migration contributes to development and to review progress toward attaining target 10.7. The HLPF will also address responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the need for international cooperation and strategies for putting the world back on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

In addition to the HLPF, this regional review will provide valuable inputs to the first International Migration Review Forum, to be held in 2022. Together with our partners in the UN Network on Migration, we stand ready to support your participation in next year's meeting.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Population Division of DESA, in collaboration with IOM and OECD, is now finalizing the latest round of data collection on migration policies. We gather such information periodically through the *United Nations Inquiry among Governments on Population and Development*, which serves as the data source for the global monitoring of SDG indicator 10.7.2.

For this work, it is critical to have broad national and regional representation. Therefore, I call upon all governments in the region to submit their responses to the current *Inquiry*, if they have not done so already.

The previous round of data collection through the *Inquiry* showed that most countries had adopted policies to regulate migration flows, promote the benefits of migration for development and address irregular migration. The greatest need for improvement concerned policies to support the human rights of migrants and ensure their access to basic services.

Earlier this year, the Population Division released its latest estimates on numbers of international migrants classified by age, sex, and countries of origin and destination. The data set was accompanied by the *International Migration 2020 Highlights* report.

That report noted that the number of international migrants worldwide had reached 281 million in 2020, up from 173 million in year 2000. However, we also estimated that, due to global restrictions on mobility in response to COVID-19, by mid 2020 the number of international migrants was about 2 million less than one would have expected in the absence of the pandemic.

Although international migrants account for just 3.6 per cent of the world's people, the number of migrants continues to grow faster than the global population. These migrants continue to provide much-needed labour in destination countries and to make important contributions to the development of their countries of origin.

In closing, I invite you to visit the Population Division's website, where you will find our latest data and analysis on international migration and other global population trends.

I thank you for your attention, and I congratulate our ESCAP colleagues for their skilful organization of this review conference.