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MESSAGE TO GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Dhaka, 10 December 2016

*Delivered by Mr. Wu Hongbo,
Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs*

I am pleased to send greetings to the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and I thank the Government of Bangladesh for hosting. Bangladesh has been a steadfast champion for safe, orderly and regular migration, working to make migration part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and playing an important constructive role in negotiating the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

Bangladesh also provides an example of the transformative impact of migration. Thanks to monies sent home by Bangladeshi workers living abroad, it has been possible for more children to attend school, more people to have access to health care, and more families to start their own businesses.

The inclusion of migration in the 2030 Agenda was a major step forward. And the Summit for Refugees and Migrants on the 19th of September provided a further breakthrough in our collective efforts to address the challenges of human mobility.

World leaders made commitments applicable to all persons on the move, regardless of their status. They agreed to develop a refugee compact in order to share burdens and responsibilities more fairly. They resolved to develop a migration compact to facilitate migration that is safe, orderly and regular. And they decided to address the plight of migrants in vulnerable situations.

Now, we must focus on implementation. For this, the ministries, departments, and agencies represented by delegates at this Forum are crucial. You have much experience and many good practices to share.

Also in September, we launched the TOGETHER campaign to counter the xenophobia faced by refugees and migrants. I count on the support of Member States, the business sector and civil society in implementing this campaign to change negative perceptions and attitudes.

The diversity of humanity is our greatest strength. Where ethnic or religious groups live side by side in harmony, diversity can spur creativity, learning and innovation. But, when identity politics, hate speech and violence prevail, instability follows. With current trends in migration, globalization and forced displacement, diversity will increasingly define societies around the world. We must manage these changing demographics wisely if we are to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda of a world of peace, prosperity, dignity and opportunity for all where no one is left behind.

I wish you a fruitful Forum.