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**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Gholamhossein Dehghani
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
at the Fourth Session of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly
on Sustainable Development Goals;
Health and Population Dynamics**

Tuesday, 19 June 2013

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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Co-Chair,

Let me first thank you and the other Co-Chair once more for convening this meeting of the OWG, which is to focus on “Health” and “Population Dynamics”.

I would also like to join others in appreciating the UN Technical Support Team for providing us with the related “Issues Brief”, and thanking you, Mr. Co-Chairs for the Guiding Questions.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The importance of “Health” as a determinant and an enabler in almost every pillars of sustainable development is a well-elucidated fact. It is also a truism that “promotion of health” should always be seen in tandem with “health risk reduction” in all development policies. Furthermore, in developing health-related targets, the issue of education should also be placed of high importance.

However, in designing the related policies and measures, the specificity of each society and country, including the principle of cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity should be fully observed.

In the same vein, although “health measures” are to be seen as country-specific, knowledge about the linkages between health and global issues such as pollution, climate change, communicable and non-communicable diseases, etc. are vital in terms of utilizing synergies or addressing the challenges ahead of each country.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The illustrative goal for health proposed by the High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda can be considered as the starting point for our discussion on this issue, only if we could emphasize more on its means of implementation, including capacity building in terms of information, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems, as well as training and financing mechanisms, which indeed should be addressed under unique circumstances of each nation.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Population Dynamics affect almost all development goals including poverty reduction, improving living conditions, consumption and production patterns, employment, social protection, health, education, and so forth. It encompasses a variety of challenges and/or opportunities, from growing population to the change in the population curve, to the most vulnerables, etc.

As it is mentioned in TST Issues Brief, the challenge in reducing poverty and promoting human wellbeing at all national, regional and international levels are inseparably linked to population patterns and trends.

On this account, my delegation believes that enhancing national capacities to collect and monitor the population data, patterns and trends should be put on the highest priority.

And, it is the responsibility of all countries, individually or in collaboration with the other countries, to address this issue by incorporating the population dynamics into almost all other sustainable development goals throughout the life cycle.

I thank you **Mr. Co-Chair,**