



**FORTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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Health and Population Dynamics

Key Notes on behalf of CROATIA and BULGARIA

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Mr. Co-Chair,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to make this statement on behalf of Croatia and Bulgaria and to present our views regarding the positioning of health and population dynamics into the framework of the future SDGs and Post-2015. development agenda in general.

It has been already widely supported and recognized that health is central to development. It is a precondition for, as well as an indicator and an outcome of progress in people-centered, right-based sustainable development and human well-being. Although the formulation of the future SDGs is likely to be highly competitive between the sectors and topic, **our two countries believe an overarching development goal should position health as a critical contributor to sustainable development and poverty reduction.** To this respect, we do see a stand-alone overarching health related goal. Such a goal would have to strengthen the linkages between health and development in more coherent manner than they are in the MDGs framework. It should be universally relevant by reflecting universal realities and values – as ensuring health as a human right, health equity and equality of opportunities, solidarity, as well as gender equality. Built on efforts and progress achieved, it should serve as **accelerator for the MDGs agenda** and for the achievement of internationally agreed health related goals, while at the same time recognize changes that have broadened the challenges of the health agenda and address the health sector weakness. Targets and indicators should be designed with the view to both **reaffirm ongoing activities on the MDGs health agenda, and capture social, economic and environmental determinants of health.** Namely, they should address the health security dimension, ensuring that all people can take advantage of quality and **efficient health services through universal**

health coverage and access. They should capture **health promotion, disease prevention and the growing burden of NCDs.** Particular targets should be designed to address specific needs of most vulnerable population, including women, children and youth. The importance of health services in crises situation (both natural and man-made) and for the countries emerging from conflicts, might also be addressed, by ensuring greater attention of both humanitarian and development community to health sector and fostering stronger and more resilient health systems. The achievement of health goals requires synergies among different sectors and responses that see health as an outcome of these policies. To ensure “**health-in-all-policies**” approach, which is needed on national levels and which should be adapted to individual country circumstances, **health-related targets should be included under other goals**, such on food security and nutrition, education, gender, energy and environmental sustainability etc, as a cross-sectorial targets.

Although the outcomes of health related policies are relatively easily measurable and health can therefore serve as an indicator of whether development and sector policies benefit individuals, **further strengthening of monitoring systems, including data collection is needed.** International cooperation and contribution of finding and applying innovative solutions for improving the quality, efficiency and sustainability of health systems, putting the emphasis on human capital and the exchange of internationally good practices, is crucial. To this respect, multidisciplinary approach to the activities and cooperation in strengthening national health systems between donor community, private sector and civil society, is needed, as well as prediction of technical assistance and access to technologies.

On population dynamics

The world is faced with unprecedented diversity in demographic situations across countries and regions, as well as within countries. Continuing population growth, depopulation, ageing, urbanization and migration constitute important developmental challenges and opportunities for human wellbeing and sustainable development at all levels. The post-2015 agenda will have to include forward-looking development goals that take into consideration population dynamics over the next decades. Our two countries firmly believe that **appropriate human rights-based policies** can ensure that **population dynamics aspects are considered as positive drivers of development.** To this respect, **population dynamics should be addressed as a key cross-cutting issue** for sustainable development in our progress towards SDGs.