



UNITED NATIONS **SECRETARY-GENERAL** NATIONS UNIES

by
MR. SHA ZUKANG
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE 2012 UN CONFERENCE
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

TO THE 44TH SESSION OF
THE COMMISSION FOR POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

New York, 11 April 2011

Mr. Chairman,
Executive Director Babatunde Osotimehin,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentleman,

At the MDG Summit last September, world leaders called for universal access to reproductive health by 2015, including integrating family planning and health-care services in national strategies and programmes.

Their appeal reflects the lessons of history. Lower levels of fertility are associated with higher

Although the decline in fertility has been nearly universal, its speed has varied among populations and fertility levels vary from country to country.

Both in the country and in the family, high fertility contributes to the perpetuation of poverty.

To compound the problem, it is precisely in high-fertility countries that women lack access to family planning.

Furthermore, in high-fertility countries and among high-fertility populations, maternal and child

mortality rates remain high.

As a consequence, development is stalled.

This interlocking nexus of high-fertility, high maternal and child mortality and high incidence of extreme poverty has been recognized in the preparatory process for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+20.

Delegations have called for addressing the population dynamics as a new and emerging challenge in a world of multiple crises. As Conference Secretary-General, I wish to take this opportunity to invite the Commission to contribute to the preparatory process of Rio+20. Your deliberations on population and development will help guide the discussion in Rio on this challenge.

