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THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOLLOW-UP AND
REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Population Division
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat
New York, 12 November 2018

Re: *Population and Development: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

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¹ The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Secretariat (the paper is

The global workforce is now at a tipping point (we are transitioning) out of a decades-long period of rapid growth in working-age populations and entering a new era of unprecedented population aging and slow workforce growth. Population aging is driven by three major demographic forces (first, due to improved health care and innovations, global life expectancy increased from 47 years in 1900 to 74 years in 2000² Second, total fertility rates fell drastically in the second half of the 20th century (the number of children per woman almost halved between 1900 when women had on average five children³ and 2000 when women had on average 2.1 children⁴), and finally, a surge in fertility rates in the middle of the 20th century observed largely in North America, parts of Europe, and Australia created a baby boom, a population bulge now entering the older ages.

Figure 10.1. The Global Workforce in 2010 and 2030. Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, "World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, Volume I: Total Population by Age and Sex," New York, 2010, Table A.1.1.1.

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