1. The undersigned organizations recognise the following facts:

A. Global population, increasing by 80 million per year (10,000 per hour), is now (2013) projected to grow to 9.6 billion (medium UN forecast) by 2050. The additional 2.6 billion, mainly in low-carbon countries, equates to two more ‘carbon USAs’. The range of UN projections for 2050, from 8.3 to 10.9 billion, varies by 2.6 billion – ie more than the total world population in 1950.

B. Past population growth from 1 billion in 1800 to 7.2 billion today, together with rising resource consumption per head, has already caused: climate change; increased pollution; raised sea levels; and expanding deserts.

C. This growth has been largely ‘funded’ by rapidly depleting natural capital (resources such as fossil fuels, minerals, groundwater, soil fertility, forests, fisheries and biodiversity) rather than sustainable natural income. Global food supply is heavily dependent on cheap and abundant oil and water, both of which are rapidly becoming more scarce and costly.

D. The Earth’s capacity to support life is physically finite. Global sustainability requires sustainable economies operating within environmental limits of natural income.

E. Each additional person increases total human impact on the natural environment and decreases natural resources per head; so that all environmental and resource (and thus many economic and social) problems are easier to solve with fewer people, and harder (and ultimately impossible) with more.

F. Environmental degradation, including climate change and resource depletion, is steadily reducing the number of people the Earth can indefinitely sustain.

G. Resource-intensive industrialisation, urbanisation and western consumption patterns are further reducing the ultimate carrying capacity of the Earth.

H. The GDP growth rate per head (‘development’) is the GDP growth rate minus the population growth rate; and is further hampered in the poorest countries by high birth rates, compounding resource depletion and growing environmental damage.

I. Indefinite population growth being physically impossible, it must stop at some point: either sooner, through fewer births by contraception and humane, pro-active population policy; or later, through more deaths by famine, disease, war, or environmental collapse; or some combination of these.

J. The optimum population (the best quality of life for all) is by definition much smaller than the maximum (bare survival).

Conclusion: Current population growth is both undesirable and unsustainable.

2. We recommend that the United Nations and intergovernmental organisations, governments, and non-governmental environment and development bodies should:

A. Recognise and acknowledge the factual truth of these statements.

B. Support, fund or ensure universal access to family planning information and services worldwide, as agreed at the 1994 Cairo Conference and in Millennium Development Goal 5 for 2015.

C. Support, fund or ensure women’s education and empowerment, giving them control of their own fertility.

D. Adopt non-coercive policies to stabilise or reduce populations at or close to sustainable levels, including planning for an ageing population.

E. Take firm measures, especially in high-consuming regions, to reduce per capita resource depletion and environmental degradation.
Signatory Organizations:

**Australia:** Sustainable Population Australia, Stable Population Party; **Bangladesh:** Bangladesh Society of One Family One Child; **Belgium:** One Baby; **Brazil:** Populacao Sustantavel; **Canada:** Gaia Preservation Coalition, Population Institute of Canada; **France:** Démographie Responsable; **Germany:** Herbert Gruhl Society; **Holland:** Club of Ten Million; **Hungary:** BOCS Foundation; **India:** Sairam Population Research Trust; **Italy:** Associazione Radicale Rientrodolce, Assisi Nature Council; **Kenya:** Kenya Young Greens; **Mexico:** HispanicAmerica for Demographic Reduction; **New Zealand:** Kea Conservation Trust; **Norway:** ACCOM; **Sweden:** Population Matters-Sweden; **Switzerland:** ECOPOP; **Tanzania:** Dept. of Social Studies, Abdulrahman Alsumait University, Zanzibar; **UK:** Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management, Population Matters; **USA:** Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy, Population Institute, Population Media Center, Scientists and Environmentalists for Population Stabilization, Overcrowded

The signatories are united in endorsing this statement, but do not necessarily endorse each other's policies.

Please contact Population Matters if your organization is interested in becoming a signatory to this position statement.

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