



UNITED NATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
STATISTICS DIVISION

**Expert Group Meeting on Industrial Statistics**  
**New York, 19-23 September 2005**

**Opening Statement**

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Dear Colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the Expert Group Meeting on Industrial Statistics. This meeting is organized with the objective to assist the United Nations Statistics Division in revising the various existing UN Statistical Commission's recommendations on industrial statistics.

The UN Statistical Commission issued the first international recommendations for the measurement of industrial activities as early as 1950s. In keeping pace with their policy relevance and continuous statistical developments, these recommendations have been revised from time to time till 1983. Since then, significant developments have taken place making it imperative to revise the international recommendations in this area.

Still valid today as it was in the fifties is the overall justification of formulating international recommendations for economic statistics; namely rendering policy-relevant and internationally comparable measurement of industrial growth and the structure of the economy. I see this aspect of policy relevance in a triangular relationship with on the one hand the frameworks of international statistical standards such as the 1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA), Balance of Payments Manual (BPM 5) and System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA 2003) and on the other hand the national and international integrated economic basic statistics program covering the complete range of economic activities.

In the global market place of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, maintaining policy relevance implies meeting the challenge of measuring new management and ownership structures of companies and innovative processes of production, financing and net wealth creation by enterprises. We know that these new economy phenomena of the global market are equally applicable to developed and developing countries alike.

In this context, I would like to make reference to the commendable work of the member states and international partners in the updates or revisions of the international

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classifications of International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) and product Central Product Classification (CPC) by 2007 and the statistical standards like the 1993 SNA and BPM5 by 2008 and SEEA 2003 by 2010. Without trying to provide an exhaustive list of the broad range of issues, these updates or revisions were mandated to address newly emerging products and economic activities; issues of valuation of non-financial produced and non-produced assets including research and development, natural resources and their related capital services; the valuation of new financial instruments including its property incomes; the definition of the public sector and its treatment of public-private partnerships; and the treatment of newly emerging institutional units like special purpose entities, etc. Similarly, the updates or revisions review the role of micro and small enterprises of the household sector and its informal sector next to the corporate sector as well as the link between the economy and the environment.

With the changing economic environments, adjusting international statistical standards and changing business accounting practices, it is the opportune time to make an assessment of our recommendations on industrial statistics. Moreover, our global consultation on industrial statistics has shown that new cost effective integrated data collection methods have been introduced by national statistical offices by applying integrated sample designs and increasingly using administrative source data.

This EGM on Industrial Statistics is not an isolated event to review an important set of basic economic statistics. The UNSD has embarked on a broad ranging dialogue with the members states and international partners on recommendations for basic economic statistics. For instance, UNSD has organized an international workshop on economic census held in Beijing in July 2005 and expert group meeting on distributive trade held in New York in August 2005. I am committed to further this international dialogue on basic economic statistics to ensure its consistency with the updated and revised international statistical standards.

It is expected that these comprehensive reviews will accumulate in an UNSD strategy paper on an integrated economic statistics program planned for submission to the

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United Nations Statistical Commission in 2007. Therefore, I would like to emphasize that the revision of the recommendations of the industrial statistics should be seen as a part of building an integrated economic statistics program taking into account the best international practices. This implies that revision of the conceptual framework, data sources and compilation methods of industrial statistics should be harmonized with the revisions currently underway or planned in the near future in other areas of basic economic statistics. The benefits of such an integrated approach will enhance country's capability to produce data in the most cost effective way and, at the same time, ensure maximum comparability with international standards and policy relevance of the economic statistics.

This Expert Group Meeting on Industrial Statistics thus has the following objectives: (a) to critically review the international recommendations on 'International Recommendations on Industrial Statistics' and 'Index Numbers of Industrial Production'; (b) make proposals for updating these recommendations; and (c) review the treatment of statistical units as part of the current work program on the update the 1993 SNA.

I am confident that the deliberations of the Expert Group would provide valuable inputs for the Programme Review of Industrial Statistics led by the National Statistical Office of Japan which, as you are aware, is on the provisional agenda of the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Statistical Commission in 2006.

Many of you have traveled long distances to attend this meeting and bring valuable technical expertise to the table. I am grateful for your time, support and expertise that you have accorded to this meeting. I would like to wish you success in the deliberations during this week and I am looking forward to the outcome of the meeting.

And I hope you will be able to find time to enjoy your stay at New York.

Thank you for your attention.