

## COORDINATION IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH STATISTICS

### Note by UNSD

At its 33th session in March 2002, the Statistical Commission considered an item on health statistics. WHO made an introductory statement and presented a background document where activities and plans of WHO in the area of health statistics were highlighted. These activities include: the collection of data on cause-of-death and death rates, the launching of the *World Health Survey*, the *Global Burden of Disease Study*, the design and testing of a standard survey module on responsiveness, national health accounts, and the work on the WHO family of international classifications.

At the discussion, the Commission requested WHO “to strengthen coordination of its statistical programme with the statistical work of the involved international organizations and countries; continue to improve the rigour of the methods used to generate statistics of the *World Health Report*; hold further consultations with countries on methodology for the *World Health Survey*; and improve coordination and intensify consultation with interested countries and concerned organizations on developing a system of health statistics, before launching the *World Health Survey*”.

The Commission also requested that an item on health statistics be included on the agenda of its 24<sup>th</sup> session in 2003 and WHO was requested to prepare the supporting documentation.

On 22 July 2002, Mr. Svein Longva, Chairman of the Conference of the European Statisticians (CES), wrote a letter to WHO expressing the concern of the CES about the WHO’s plans to embark on a new round of surveys in the health statistics field and “the extent to which the WHO’s new survey would be coordinated with similar work already being undertaken by both countries and several international organizations in the ECE Region”.

To respond to a proposal made by a member state and in agreement with the Chair of the Statistical Commission, UNSD wrote to Australia, Botswana, and Eurostat on 12 August 2002 to invite them to prepare a short paper on issues of health statistics to be presented at the Statistical Commission to complement the WHO documentation by country notes.