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MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED
CLASSIFICATIONS IN COUNTRIES

Report by UNSD

1. In January 1992 UNSD surveyed all countries on their use of classifications for international trade statistics, including the SITC. A limited set of questions was asked (9) covering current trade classifications used, intentions in relation to adopting the HS and possible recompilation of data into SITC and opinions concerning the future use of SITC.

2. In October 1992 UNSD, in cooperation with the Task Force on International Trade Statistics, surveyed all countries on their use of the United Nations concepts and definitions for international trade statistics including their use of classifications including SITC and HS. In May 1994 a follow-up questionnaire was sent out seeking clarification of some aspects of implementing the SITC, in particular, discriminating between "primary" and "secondary" classifications for analytical purposes. The results of the first survey are included in a draft report on country practices; the results of the second survey will be added in June 1995.

3. The Harmonized System is now the recommended primary classification for international trade statistics and the World Customs Organization monitors its implementation by countries twice a year.

4. Also in January 1992, a questionnaire was sent to all countries on ISIC and CPC (this questionnaire was combined with the SITC questionnaire mentioned in para. 1 above). In August 1993, UNSD prepared a follow-up letter addressing further questions on the part of the 1992 survey (17 questionnaire items) covering national activity classifications in relation to ISIC. This follow-up was superseded by a new questionnaire, developed by the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Industrial and Construction Statistics. The latter questionnaire was sent out by OECD (the convenor of the Inter-Agency Task Force) with a cover letter from OECD to national statistical offices, requesting those countries that had not yet

returned the UN Questionnaire to complete only the Task Force's Questionnaire.

5. Copies of responses to the UNSD 1992 questionnaire, as well as to the 1993 follow-ups that had been received, were forwarded by UNSD to the Task Force.

6. The Task Force reported to the Statistical Commission on their monitoring effort.