

*Honourable Deputy Executive Secretary-General of the State Council Mr. Wang Yang,*

*Commissioner of the National Bureau of Statistics Mr. Li Deshui,*

*Dear guests,*

*Good evening !*

It is a great pleasure for the United Nations Statistics Division to join hands with the National Bureau of Statistics of China in organizing the International Workshop on Economic Census. On this occasion, I'd like to express my appreciation to NBS for their elaborate preparations for this workshop. Also, on behalf of the statistical offices from 30 countries and regions that participate in this workshop, I'd like to thank to them for their warm hospitality.

China has been witnessing rapid economic development. As Mr. Wang mentioned, its GDP rose by 9.5% in the first half of the year. Moreover, the growth in each of its industries has had an impact on the world economy. This evidence demonstrates that the Chinese government policy of emphasizing on economic construction and building market economy has made great achievements. Such circumstances have generated more urgent needs for China to understand comprehensively the situation of its enterprises, and the status and transition of its economic structure. Therefore, the first National Economic Census of China is of vital importance to the understanding of the basic information about the country's economy. It will not only provide detailed information about enterprises and other economic units, but also serve as a baseline for the comparison and measurement of future economic development.

When I visited China last November, I already had an impression that China was well prepared for this census. This time, I saw that the data collection has almost been completed and China is now into a stage of data processing and analysis. I am very impressed by the fact that China can complete a complex census like this within such a short period of time. Commissioner Li and his work team should be proud of this achievement. I think the most important reason for the success of this census is the full support from the Chinese government to this programme. Both central and local governments have mobilized a great deal of human and financial resources as well as materials. The whole country is in full support of this statistical programme, this sets a good example for other countries.

Now I'll turn to English to say a few words about the programme of this workshop.

Mr. Deputy Executive Secretary-General, Dear Guests and Colleagues,

As I mentioned earlier, economic census is an important national statistical activity that provides comprehensive benchmark information on enterprises or other economic units. International recommendations on the conduct of an economic census have been in existence for over 30 years. Over this period, many countries have successfully implemented an economic census programme. However, in recent years, the changes in governmental and organizational arrangements as well as advances in informative technology have facilitated the development of alternatives in the collections of benchmark information on economic units. While many countries still conduct an economic census on a periodic basis in accordance to international recommendations, others have opted to use alternate sources of information.

This workshop is conducted with this duality in mind. We want to explore the complexities leading to the choice of different approaches being used for the collection of such data. In the first two days, we will examine the best practices in the conduct of economic census, using the China experience as the backdrop. In the second part of the workshop, we will examine the best way forward to building an integrated economic statistics programme where the contributions of economic censuses, surveys, and registers will be fully explored.

At UNSD, we hope this international workshop will help in the updating of the international recommendations. I hope you would find the discussions interesting and relevant to your work.

Again, on behalf of the international participants, I would like to thank our host, the National Bureau of Statistics, for their warm welcome and kind hospitality.

Thank you.