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Statistical Commission**Thirtieth session**

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Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

Programme questions and related matters**Medium-term plan of the United Nations Statistics Division
for the period 1998–2001****Note by the Secretariat**

1. The draft medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 for the United Nations subprogramme on statistics is contained in programme 28 (Economic and social affairs), subprogramme 28.5 (Statistics) (A/53/6 (Prog. 28), paras. 28.14 and 28.15), as amended by the Committee on Programme Coordination. The General Assembly will consider the medium-term plan at its fifty-third session.
2. The draft plan for the subprogramme is reproduced in the annex.
3. Any changes that may be introduced in the final approved version will be brought to the attention of the Commission orally during the thirtieth session.

* E/CN.3/1999/1.

Annex

Subprogramme 28.5 (Statistics)

28.14 The subprogramme, for which the Statistical Division is responsible, will focus on the following main objectives during the period covered by the plan:

(a) Over the years, the subprogramme has contributed to the significant progress in the international collection, standardization, analysis and dissemination of economic, social and related data. The first objective is to improve the usefulness and accessibility of international economic and social data to policy makers, both international and national. The availability of international statistics and their usefulness for policy purposes will be broadened and their quality enhanced to reinforce the United Nations role as a centre of excellence in statistics. For example, given the increasing globalization of the world economy, an increasing number of decision makers at all levels will require data on international transactions. Accordingly, an essential task of the subprogramme will be to sustain the function of the United Nations as a global centre for data on international trade. The same will apply to systems dedicated to environment, energy, transport, national accounts and demographic and social statistics;

(b) A milestone was passed with the finalization of the 1993 System of National Accounts. The objective now is to expand the number of countries that are in a position to implement the new System. To achieve this objective, the Secretariat, in close collaboration with other international organizations, will continue to improve economic statistics in general and to promote the System in particular, including through training and other forms of technical cooperation;

(c) Agenda 21 calls for the development and implementation of integrated environmental and economic accounting and indicators of sustainable development in order to provide the information necessary to formulate policies and strategies for sustainable development at the national and international levels. A third objective will be to improve the international community's ability to measure the environmental impact of human activity and expenditures related to the environment. The subprogramme will address relevant concepts and methods in order to obtain international agreement on their use and usefulness, compile environmental statistics and indicators and promote the implementation of integrated environmental and economic accounts at the national level;

(d) The global conferences held in recent years have highlighted the need for more and better statistics to describe and monitor progress in the human dimensions of development. A fourth objective will be to develop and promote the use of consistent and integrated sets of social statistics (including, in particular, demographic, housing, gender and disability statistics), to develop and disseminate social indicators and to enhance analytical capabilities in this area. The subprogramme will pay particular attention to the implementation of the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme and other activities aimed at improving country capability regularly to produce timely demographic and social statistics;

(e) To promote the use of geographical information systems for modern surveying and mapping activities at the national and local levels.

28.15 The subprogramme will also continue to emphasize the coordination and development of international statistical standards and classifications across a broad spectrum of statistics and provide for improved coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and other relevant statistics-producing intergovernmental organizations.

Legislative mandates

General Assembly resolutions

- 47/190 Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
- 47/191 Institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
- 48/121 World Conference on Human Rights
- 50/124 Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development
- 50/161 Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development
- 50/203 Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

- 1564 (L) Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system
- 1566 (L) Coordination of work in the field of statistics
- 1989/3 International economic classifications
- 1993/5 1993 System of National Accounts
- 1995/7 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme
- 1995/61 The need to harmonize and improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States
- 1997/221 Fourteenth and Fifteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for Asia and the Pacific
- 1997/292 Sixth and Seventh United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for the Americas
- 131 (VI) Coordination of cartographic services of specialized agencies and international organizations
- 715 A (XXVII) International cooperation on cartography
- 814 (XXXI) International cooperation in the standardization of geographical names
- 2014 (LXI) Strengthening of United Nations information services in the natural resources field
- 1992/62 Establishment of new subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council
- 1993/225 Fifth and Sixth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for the Americas
- 1993/226 Sixth and Seventh United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names
- 1994/228 Thirteenth and Fourteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for Asia and the Pacific