

UNITED NATIONS  **NATIONS UNIES**

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON OPEN DATA FOR THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

25 September 2017, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Opening remarks

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Distinguished Commissioner Hwang Soo Kyeong,

Dear Experts and Colleagues,

I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Korea for hosting this International Seminar on Open Data for the Sustainable Development Goals. This Seminar is part of the longstanding collaboration between our office and Statistics Korea. It highlights the continued dedication of Statistics Korea to the global statistical system and its willingness to step up to emerging challenges. Earlier this month, I was particularly pleased to virtually join the celebration for the 23rd National Statistics Day in the Republic of Korea. I wish to express, again, my gratitude to Commissioner Hwang Soo Kyeong for his support. I would also like to recognize the kind collaboration of the organizers of this event, especially Ms. Lael Lee, and the rest of the colleagues at Statistics Korea, for their work to ensure the success of this event.

I am pleased to virtually accompany this exceptional group of experts, who over the next three days will address the important topic of Open Data. (However, I must note that I see a lot of all-male panels on the agenda so we know that there is at least one area that we, as global statistical community, need to improve for scaling up open data in official statistics namely, to make this a more gender-balanced area of work). But on a serious note, this Seminar is an important stepping-stone in the dialogue on Open Data, how to balance openness with associated risks, especially security and privacy, and ensuring stakeholder engagement. Through presentations by the experts, you will examine how Open Data initiatives can support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

and you will focus on the role of national statistical systems in embracing Open Data initiatives.

Initiatives towards Open Data call for cooperation and collaboration among governments, civil society, and the private sector to add value to data by creating and maintaining data platforms that are easily accessible and exist in the public domain.

Strengthening Open Data initiatives is underscored in the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, which encourages national statistical offices to embrace Open Data initiatives and calls for exploring ways to adapt the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics to include relevant and appropriate aspects of Open Data initiatives.

This Seminar contributes to the ongoing dialogue on the importance of Open Data initiatives in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and, draws upon the Seminar on Open Data held prior to the 48th session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2017. This is an opportunity for statisticians and experts from around the world to formulate ideas and explore new ideas to promote the use of Open Data. The discussions at this Seminar will help illuminate best practices for making data more open and accessible.

Your recommendations and the outcomes of this Seminar will provide valuable inputs to the discussions on this topic at the 49th Session of the UN Statistical Commission.

I look forward to the outcome of your deliberations and wish you much success for your meeting.