

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “DIGITAL AGENDA FOR STATISTICS:  
TIMELINESS, QUALITY AND OPENNESS”**

Moscow, 15 November 2019

**Opening Remarks**

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address you through this video message. I like to thank Mr. Malkov, the President of the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), for providing me this opportunity and congratulate his agency and the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics for organizing the *International Conference on Digital Agenda for Statistics: Efficiency, Quality and Openness* in partnership with the Russian Association of Statisticians.

I would have liked to attend in person, but unfortunately prior travel commitments prevent me from doing so. The topics of this important event are dear to my heart and central to the delivery of the global statistical program; such as the measurement of the digital economy, the creation of digital ecosystems for official statistics, the openness of statistics, the SDG monitoring, as well as the development of statistical science and education in the digital era.

Digital technology has profoundly changed the way goods and services are produced, ordered, delivered and consumed. Measuring the digital economy, while challenging, is therefore essential in understanding its contributions to employment and GDP, its impact on the wellbeing of the population and its environmental implications. With the measurement of the digital economy being an integral part of the global statistical research agenda for the update of the economic statistics manuals, I like to encourage you to share your experience in measuring the Russian digital economy with the broader global statistical community.

As for the topic of the creation of a digital ecosystem for SDG monitoring, I again look

forward to your experience in setting up such ecosystem of data hubs based on open data principles. In this regard, you may benefit from our global experiences of setting up an Open SDG Data Hub, which offers a powerful tool for evidence-based decision making in bringing together trusted and geospatially explicit data sources for the SDGs.

I also like to invite you to possibly join another of our UN initiatives namely the UN Global Platform of Big Data for Official Statistics. This platform will soon consist of five regional hubs in the African, Asia Pacific, European, Latin American and West Asia region. It is designed to collectively offer a cloud-based data innovation environment for the global statistical community and the stakeholders from academia and the private sector to collaborate. Once fully established, the platform will deliver access to technology and global sources of big data. Moreover, it will be providing a digital platform for data science and research in the use of Big Data for official statistics. I am mentioning this initiative as you will discuss the topic of advancing statistical science and education in the digital era and may like to contribute to this global partnership and initiative.

Dear colleagues,

In closing, I would like to emphasize that we, as the global statistical community, have been given the task to produce statistics and indicators in support of evidence-based policy analysis and decision making and monitoring the progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

These Goals were adopted by all United Nations Member States in September 2015. They are an urgent call for action by all countries to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth while tackling at the same time climate change and working to preserve our marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals is an enormous challenge that the global statistical community can only address by updating internationally agreed statistical standards, providing access and applying digital technology, and exploring secure ways of sharing and exchanging data. I am confident that we will be able to achieve our task in monitoring the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals through close and fruitful partnerships within countries and among countries at the regional and global level.

Distinguished Delegates,

Again, I want to congratulate you for organizing this International Conference on the Digital Agenda for Statistics as it addresses essential topics for the national and global statistical community. I am certainly looking forward to receiving the results of your deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.