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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MONITORING OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Moscow, Russia, 30 November – 1 December 2017

Welcome statement
Mr. Stefan Schweinfest
Director
United Nations Statistics Division

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this conference on Statistical Capacity Building for Monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. I would like to thank ROSSTAT for organizing this conference on this very important and timely topic. As we all know, the range and depth of data demands emerging out of the SDGs are unprecedented. The global indicator framework contains 232 indicators, addressing each of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, the full implementation of the indicator framework to monitor the SDGs presents an enormous challenge for all countries. There is absolutely no doubt that significant efforts are required to strengthen national statistical capacities to provide the necessary data and statistics for the full implementation of the 2030 agenda.

Strengthening national capacities entails many things—collaboration among stakeholders, improved training, embracing and adapting to new data sources and technologies, to mention a few. However, in my opinion, its most salient feature is that it is a country-led process, with leadership of National Statistics Offices as the key driving force. I, therefore, would like to commend ROSSTAT for reaching out to national stakeholders for this initiative. This focus on country-ownership aligns with the principles of the SDGs, which emphasize sustainable integrated national information systems under the leadership of NSOs.

ROSSTAT's own history and leadership roles are exemplary in this context. It is an organization with a long history and has shown itself to be a resilient organization capable of transforming to respond to new policy demands. The leadership that ROSSTAT has demonstrated through their role in the important work of CIS, BRICS and more recently as a very active member of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators is noticeable and laudable.

With this, I would like to wish all of you best in your discussions and sessions. I really look forward to seeing the outcomes of this meeting, confident that ROSSTAT is a key partner in the development of the global statistical system and that this conference will be able to deliver important recommendations.