

**United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Improving Migration
Data in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the
Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration**
1-3 July 2019

Opening Statement

Mr. Stefan Schweinfest
Director, United Nations Statistics Division
(delivered by Ms. Francesca Grum, Chief Social and Gender Statistics Section, United Nations
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Dear Colleagues,

I would like to welcome you to the 2nd meeting of the Expert Group on Improving Migration Data.

We gather again in New York after our first meeting in the summer of 2017 with an ambitious task: the revision of the UN recommendations on international migration statistics. This is a high priority for the UN Statistical Commission and is very timely. Indeed, while new migration patterns have become more visible and a key issue in the global agenda, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the recently adopted Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; statistical concepts, definitions and tools to measure the migration phenomenon have not been fully identified, yet.

This is what brings us together today! In the next few days we expect to advance on key aspects of the revision of the UN recommendations, including on data and indicators to address policy needs; concepts and definitions; integrated and innovative methods to produce international migration data as well as national practices on data dissemination and communication.

(UNSD's and the Expert Group work on international migration statistics)

I am very proud that as a group, we have already accomplished a lot over a short period of time. Since summer 2017, we worked on SDG data disaggregation by migratory status and identified around 20 SDG indicators as priority for global monitoring. In March 2018, our work

was acknowledged by the Statistical Commission, that formalised the Group composed of experts from 20 countries, 18 international and regional statistical offices and 4 independent experts.

Since then, and as mandated by the UN Statistical Commission, we have (a) initiated the revision of the *1998 United Nations Recommendations on Statistics for International Migration*, that is, as I mentioned, at the core of our discussion over the next three days; (b) we have developed a toolkit to assess data gaps and national needs for capacity development on international migration statistics; Finally as a group, (c) we have also developed a standard set of questions to identify migrants in various contexts – to improve data quality and comparability.

Coming back to our meeting, over the next three days, you will have the opportunity to share your experience on international migration data and to learn from each other. Together we expect to advance normative work in this important area of official statistics and to identify countries' needs for capacity building, that will ultimately guide the future work priorities for the Group.

Looking ahead, our group will focus on identifying the key elements of a global programme to strengthen international migration statistics and will continue in its role as coordination mechanism to ensure alignment in priorities and optimization of resources among international and regional initiatives and programmes.

Let me conclude by thanking the co-chairs of the Group-IOM and Statistics South Africa, and the co-chairs of the 5 task forces for their leadership and dedication to advance the ambitious work the Expert Group has been asked to focus on.

Dear colleagues,

Once again, a very warm welcome to you All and I look forward to a very fruitful discussion and agreed conclusions and recommendations!