

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**MR. STEFAN SCHWEINFEST  
DIRECTOR  
UNITED NATIONS STATISTICS DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

-----

**Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Modern  
National Statistics System in Mongolia**

**Ulaanbaatar, 2-3 October 2014**

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests and colleagues from the National Statistical Office of Mongolia,

It is a great pleasure for me to address you today from the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and to congratulate you on this special occasion of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the Modern National Statistics System in Mongolia. I wish to put on record my gratitude to Mr. Mendsaikhan, Chairman of the National Statistical Office of Mongolia, for providing me with this opportunity. Regretfully, prior commitments prevent me from being with you in person today, but I certainly hope to have another opportunity of visiting you soon. My predecessor as Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, Mr. Paul Cheung, has often told me about Mongolia's wonderful hospitality, so I am looking forward to getting to know better this country's rich history, unique geography and of course to taste its famous cuisine.

On this day of celebration, I would like to use this short greeting address to share with you two simple messages: (i) I am grateful for the close cooperation between our offices in the past and (ii) I look forward to working with you on the challenges of the future.

Mongolia is currently a member of the United Nations Statistical Commission for the period of 2012-2015. As there are only 24 elected members of the Statistical Commission worldwide (and only four from Asia), this implies that Mongolia has accepted a special responsibility for shaping the Global Statistical System. One specific way in which the National Statistical Office of Mongolia has contributed to the work of the Statistical Commission is through the establishment in 2012 of the Ulaanbaatar City Group on Statistics for Economies based on Natural Resources. This joint initiative of Mongolia and Australia plays a leading role in developing methodological and practical guidelines and recommendations, in order to track mining industry activities and accurately measure the industry's contribution to the economy and

its impact on the social sectors and the environment. Under your leadership, the group now regularly organizes side-events to the Statistical Commission in New York and recently held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting at UNIDO in Vienna. I thank you and commend you for this initiative, which is a laudable example of information sharing and cooperation between a group of countries with similar structural interests. This is the spirit and the essence of the United Nations.

Looking forward, there are many challenges for our National Statistical Systems and for the Global Statistical System. There are calls for a data revolution. At the national level, our political leaders and the public at large have an increasingly voracious appetite for reliable and timely information, and I dare say – rightfully so! We, the professional statistical community, will have to continuously strive to transform and modernize our statistical systems in order to satisfy these new demands. And at the global level, the United Nations is working closely with its international partners to formulate a new development agenda beyond 2015. Our statistical community will be called upon to play a central role in the monitoring of the goals and targets of this new development agenda. To put it in a simple phrase: Sustainable Development will need to be supported by Sustainable Statistics.

Therefore, our joint project for the future is to continue to build strong National Statistical Systems under the leadership of the National Statistical Offices. This can only be successful if the statistical community has strong support and full political backing from the highest national authorities. I am very pleased, that through the endorsement of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics earlier this year by the most important political body of the United Nations, the General Assembly, governments around the world have officially put on record their commitment to supporting national statistical systems.

Distinguished guests,

With the organisation of the Seminar on Global Assessments to Implement the Quality Frameworks in Statistics for National Statistical Institutes of Asia and with your important work on a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics for the period 2015-2019, the National Statistical Office of Mongolia is demonstrating that on this celebratory occasion you are not only proudly looking backward, but most importantly you are looking forward. I would like to reiterate that my office, the United Nations Statistics Division is committed to be your partner on this journey forward.

Let me conclude by congratulating you once again and thanking you very much for your attention.

\*\*\*\*\*