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Report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2017/228 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics. In accordance with the agreed terms of reference, the Praia Group is expected to report to the Statistical Commission at its sessions in 2016, 2018 and 2020. The first report of the Praia Group ([E/CN.3/2016/16](#)) was considered by the Commission at its forty-seventh session, in March 2016. In the present report, the progress made in the implementation of the activities in the 2016–2020 road map and the actions taken to develop the handbook on governance statistics are described. The progress made on the technical and methodological work undertaken on the tier III global indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 16, on peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, is also described. The Praia Group recognizes that although the scope of its endeavours is broader than Goal 16, it is necessary to contribute to and advance the discussion on the indicators through the member countries of the Group, the custodian agencies for the indicators and other members of the Group.

As stated in the road map, which was welcomed by the Statistical Commission at its forty-seventh session, the Praia Group will submit the handbook to the Commission for its consideration at its fifty-first session, to be held in March 2020. An update on progress in the development of the handbook is provided in the present report. The Commission is invited to take note of the report.

* [E/CN.3/2018/1](#).



Report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics

I. Background

1. At its forty-seventh session, the Statistical Commission, in its decision 47/113 (see [E/2016/24-E/CN.3/2016/34](#)), expressed its appreciation to the Praia Group on Governance Statistics for its report ([E/CN.3/2016/16](#)). In that report, the Praia Group presented its 2016–2020 road map, including priority activities and rough deadlines, for the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices, which is the longer-term task of the Group. At the second meeting of the Praia Group, held in Paris from 4 to 6 July 2016, members of the Group discussed strategies to implement the activities set out in the road map, resulting in the issuance in 2017 of a workplan containing detailed tasks for each activity, time frames and resource implications.

2. In its decision 47/113, the Statistical Commission welcomed and expressed its support for the proposed road map and actions to be taken towards the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices, stressed the importance of identifying best practices and developing common standards, and requested the Praia Group to report back to the Commission at its forty-ninth session, in 2018.

3. The principal output of the Praia Group until 2020 is to produce “a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices, which will cover the conceptualization, measurement methodology and dissemination of governance statistics”. The aim is that the handbook be a reference framework for the production of governance statistics.

II. Implementation of the 2016–2020 road map

A. Mapping of existing approaches and actors on governance statistics (activity I of the road map)

4. The implementation of actions contained in the 2016–2020 road map has been taken forward with annual workplans. The first annual workplan was developed at the end of 2016 to cover activities for 2017. The 2017 workplan was discussed and approved with some modifications in March 2017 by the steering committee of the Praia Group during a side event organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the forty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission.

5. Activity I of the 2016–2020 road map, also covered in the 2017 workplan, is to produce “a mapping, critical assessment and synthesis of available instances of the conceptualization and measurement of governance by various countries and continents, research institutions, agencies of the United Nations system and other actors using different approaches”. According to the decision taken at the second meeting of the Praia Group, the purpose of the mapping is to ground the work of the Group in existing initiatives, capitalize on the data revolution for sustainable development and provide users with documentation referring to relevant work on governance statistics. The work of the Praia Group on this activity was informed by an in-depth review of governance statistics in Europe prepared by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of

Mexico (INEGI) and discussed by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its meeting held in Ottawa on 11 and 12 October 2016. The review summarized international activities related to governance statistics and noted the increasing demand for governance statistics, particularly in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Goal 16. Given that the Economic Commission for Europe and OECD had mapped initiatives and activities in the field of governance statistics, the Praia Group decided to focus its attention on a mapping and literature review of governance concepts and of how governance is conceptualized by different institutions.

6. In order to achieve this objective and proceed with activity I of the road map, the Praia Group took advantage of existing research competencies and activities and promoted a broad technical discussion among specialists in governance statistics, which resulted in the issuance of a technical note on the components, concepts and data priorities of governance data.¹ The note brought about relevant modifications and improvements to the recent OECD Statistics Working Paper entitled “Governance statistics in OECD countries and beyond”² (completing the Ottawa review of the Conference of European Statisticians). The Praia Group noted that there is no agreed precise definition of the governance concept. Moreover, the mapping showed a broad range of existing approaches for the measurement of governance that were directly associated with the scope of application. The Praia Group adopted a pragmatic approach to the mapping of concepts of governance by focusing on components. To that end, in the technical note prepared for the Praia Group, the concept of governance is disaggregated to refocus attention and analysis on its various components (for example, democracy, human rights and public sector management).

7. Nine dimensions of governance statistics to be covered in dedicated chapters of the handbook were proposed in the technical note. These dimensions include:

- (a) Participation;
- (b) Human rights;
- (c) Openness;
- (d) Rule of law;
- (e) Accountability;
- (f) Responsive institutions;
- (g) Government effectiveness;
- (h) Absence of corruption;
- (i) Safety and security.

B. Development of the handbook (activity IV of the road map)

8. A draft structure and outline of the handbook has been developed using the nine dimensions mentioned above as the basis (see box below). Lead authors of the

¹ United Nations Development Programme Oslo Governance Centre, “The components, conception and data priorities of governance data”, technical note submitted in June 2017 to the Praia Group on Governance Statistics for its consideration of the conceptualization of governance statistics.

² Santiago González, Lara Fleischer and Marco Mira d’Ercole, “Governance Statistics in OECD countries and beyond: what exists, and what would be required to assess their quality?”, OECD Statistics Working Paper, No. 2017/03 (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2017).

chapters and contributors from members of the Praia Group have been identified, and the focus for 2018 will be on the drafting of the chapters and consultations to inform their development.

Draft handbook structure

Introduction and summary

- Objectives of the handbook
- Structure of the report
- What is governance and why is it important?
- Existing international norms and standards

Part 1: cross-cutting themes

- Concepts and dimensions (for example, review of the frameworks in use, the framework used for the handbook, key domains and dimensions and the remit of the handbook)
- Statistical sources (for example, censuses, surveys, administrative data, expert assessments and crowdsourcing/web-scraping)
- Operationalization (for example, challenges in data collection, data quality, comparability, disaggregation and best practices)
- Uses (for example monitoring, uses in policymaking process and key indicators)

Part 2: measuring various governance dimensions

(a) Participation

- Civic engagement
- Representativeness of organizations
- Political efficacy

(b) Human rights

- Rights to life, liberty and security
- Fundamental freedoms and participation in public and political life
- Rights to an adequate standard of living, health, education, social security, work and just and favourable conditions of work
- Right to a fair trial and access to justice
- Cross-cutting issues: equality and non-discrimination and right to development
- Rights of specific groups or persons, including women, children, persons with disabilities, minorities, indigenous peoples and migrants

(c) Openness

- Media freedom
- Access to information

- Open government provisions
- Trust in State/private media
- Other matters

(d) Rule of law

- Access to justice
- Constraints on executive power
- Independent judiciary
- Policing
- Trust in the courts/judiciary

(e) Accountability

- State capacity, independent oversight institutions, performance criteria and trust in President/parliament

(f) Responsive institutions

- Inclusive decision-making, satisfaction with services and trust in institutions (summary of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development guidelines)

(g) Government effectiveness

- Cost-effectiveness, bureaucratic autonomy and regulatory quality
- Trust in public administration and in local government

(h) Absence of corruption

- Public and private sector governance
- Sound administrative procedures
- Trust in tax and customs authorities

(i) Safety and security

- Absence of violence
- Functional defence system
- Functional criminal justice system
- Trust in security and armed forces

C. Support by the Praia Group to Sustainable Development Goal 16 (activity V of the road map)

9. In its decision 47/113, the Statistical Commission welcomed the support of the Praia Group for the relevant development of indicators for the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 16. The Praia Group stands ready to assist the Inter-Agency and

Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the custodian agencies for Goal 16 with regard to governance indicators for the Goals.

10. At its second meeting, held in Paris in July 2016, the Praia Group acknowledged the urgent nature of the methodological development of the seven tier III indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 16. In this regard, the Praia Group set up working groups for each of the tier III indicators to respond to requests from the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for information, provide methodology and technical guidance and respond to other relevant concerns and needs. The Chairs of the working groups for each tier III indicator include the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (indicators 16.1.2, 16.10.1 and 16.b.1), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (indicator 16.5.1) and UNDP (indicators 16.6.2, 16.7.1 and 16.7.2). In accordance with the workplan and time frame agreed at the fourth meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group, the Chairs of each working group should facilitate discussion promptly in order to produce a workplan and metadata sheet to be submitted to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group.

11. Work on the tier III indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 16 is included in the 2017 workplan of the Praia Group and is reflected in the establishment of the dedicated working groups for each of the seven tier III indicators. The Chairs of each working group are required to share information on relevant processes and ongoing work in the methodological development of the indicator. In most cases, the Chair of each working group is also the custodian agency for the indicator.

12. An expert group meeting of statisticians and governance experts was convened in Oslo on 9 and 10 May 2017 by UNDP and the secretariat of the Praia Group, and hosted by Statistics Norway (a Praia Group member), to further the methodological development of three tier III indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions: indicator 16.6.2, proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services; indicator 16.7.1, proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions; and indicator 16.7.2, proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group. The meeting was focused on conceptual, definitional, methodological and practical issues to be considered in the development of the methodology for each indicator, and areas of consensus and aspects requiring further research and/or consultation were identified. Critical areas for further research and consultation were also identified at the meeting and advanced through detailed workplans. A second expert group meeting to validate the activities undertaken above was held in December 2017, with concerted efforts made on the tier reclassification of the three indicators.

13. On 5 and 6 September 2017, OHCHR convened a multi-stakeholder consultation in Geneva that helped to validate the main elements of the conceptual, definitional, methodological and data collection frameworks for three tier III Sustainable Development Goal indicators for which OHCHR is custodian under Goal 16. These indicators are: the proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law (indicators 10.3.1 and 16.b.1); the number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months

(indicator 16.10.1); and the number of conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause (indicator 16.1.2). The meeting brought together members of the Praia Group, in particular, senior-level experts from national statistical offices (Cabo Verde, Colombia, Kenya, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the State of Palestine), national human rights institutions (from the same countries, plus Denmark), international human rights mechanisms, United Nations agencies (the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNDP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, UNODC and the World Health Organization), and a number of other international and regional institutions and civil society organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Trade Union Confederation, Front Line: International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance of the United Republic of Tanzania, the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, the Human Rights Data Analysis Group and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. On the basis of the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting, OHCHR started submitting requests to the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for the tier reclassification of the indicators.

14. UNODC is the custodian agency for tier III indicator 16.5.1, the proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months, and is a member of the Praia Group. Work on indicator 16.5.1 is being taken forward within the UNODC project on the measurement of corruption to meet the objectives of the road map to improve the quality and availability of crime statistics at the international and national level (see [E/CN.3/2013/11](#)). For this purpose, a task force has been established by UNODC and UNDP, in partnership with and with the support of the INEGI-UNODC Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Government, Crime, Victimization and Justice, located in Mexico City, to develop a manual for the measurement of corruption through surveys. The task force comprises representatives of national statistical offices, international organizations, private sector and non-governmental organizations and individual experts and held two meetings in 2016 and 2017. The manual will be finalized by mid-2018. The above work is being undertaken with the active participation of several members of the Praia Group.

D. Praia Group promotion activities (activity VI of the road map)

15. To raise awareness of the importance of governance statistics, as well as the role of the Praia Group in developing guidance on governance statistics, and in accordance with the 2017 workplan, the Praia Group has already carried out a series of promotional activities. In this regard, it is essential to make the Group more visible on the national, regional and international stages and to disseminate its products, including the handbook.

16. The secretariat of the Praia Group has published a brochure in English, French and Portuguese, containing a brief introduction and history of the Group, a summary of its road map and the main aspects of the 2017 workplan, in digital and paper format. The brochure was delivered to members of the Praia Group and distributed at various national and international conferences.

17. In the restructuring of the website of the National Statistical Institute of Cabo Verde (INE), a web page for the Praia Group was created, which provides all of the information and monitors the progress of the Group's activities.³ The development of the page allows for the promotion of better information-sharing among the national and/or international members of the Praia Group, as well as collaborative work, enabling the members to access all relevant information and share knowledge on governance statistics.

18. The Praia Group also participates in national and international conferences and presents papers on its activities. In Cabo Verde, several meetings were held at universities and public and private institutions to raise awareness of the Group's initiatives and to promote the engagement of national stakeholders. At the international level, Praia Group members have engaged in several conferences and meetings to advance the development of international standards in governance statistics and promote the work and role of the Group, including:

(a) The first meeting of the task force on corruption measurement, held in Vienna from 12 to 14 October 2016;

(b) A conference on the theme "Understanding effective access to justice", held in Paris on 3 and 4 November 2016;

(c) The meeting of the Expert Group on International Trade and Economic Globalization Statistics held in New York from 29 November to 1 December 2016;

(d) The first United Nations World Data Forum, held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 15 to 18 January 2017;

(e) A meeting on the theme "Understanding civil justice through person-based survey methodologies", held in Paris on 24 May 2017;

(f) The second meeting of the task force on corruption measurement, held in Vienna from 4 to 6 April 2017;

(g) The fourth Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development, held in Stockholm on 3 and 4 May 2017;

(h) The third meeting of the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, held in Kunming, China, from 8 to 10 May 2017;

(i) The expert group meeting on tier III indicators for targets 16.6 and 16.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, held in Oslo on 9 and 10 May 2017;

(j) A seminar on accounting for global value chains, held in Luxembourg from 6 to 8 June 2017;

(k) The seventh statistical conference of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, held in São Tomé from 12 to 14 June 2017;

(l) The sixty-first World Statistics Congress, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 16 to 21 July 2017;

(m) A multi-stakeholder consultation on human rights indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, held in Geneva on 5 and 6 September 2017.

³ See www.ine.cv/praiagroup/.

III. Future activities of the Praia Group

19. The Praia Group will submit the final version of the handbook to the Statistical Commission in March 2020.

20. To this end, the Praia Group will develop a workplan for 2018 that is focused on the development of the handbook and informed by active consultations across the membership. A meeting of the Group will be held in 2018.

IV. Action required by the Statistical Commission

21. The Statistical Commission is invited to take note of the present report.
