



**United Nations**

# **Statistical Commission**

**Report on the fifty-first session  
(3–6 March 2020)**

**Economic and Social Council**

**Official Records, 2020**

**Supplement No. 4**





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United Nations • New York, 2020

*Note*

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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## Chapter I

### Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

#### A. Draft resolution for adoption by the Council

1. The Statistical Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

#### **Strengthening coordination of the statistical programmes in the United Nations system**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recognizing* the importance of reliable statistical information for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

*Recalling* that in its resolution 71/313, the General Assembly urges that communication and coordination among international organizations be enhanced in order to avoid duplicate reports, ensure consistency of data and reduce response burdens on countries, and urges international organizations to provide the methodologies used to harmonize country data for international comparability and produce estimates through transparent mechanisms (Para 7);

*Recalling* that, in the same resolution, Member States indicated that the United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, the Secretariat, including the regional commissions should intensify their support for strengthening data collection and statistical capacity-building in a coordinated manner (Para 11);

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 68/261 of 29 January 2014, by which the Assembly endorsed the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and in which the Assembly stressed that, in order to be effective, bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributes to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries (Principle 10);

*Recognizing* that the United Nations statistical system has grown significantly, reflecting the increasing complexity of the development phenomena with which the United Nations is concerned and demonstrating that solid and high-quality statistical information is an indispensable prerequisite for global and sustainable development;

*Further taking note* of the Statistical Commission's decision 50/103 in which the Commission "(e) Recognized the urgent need for a better coordinated and more efficient United Nations statistical system, to reduce the reporting burden and to raise the standing of official statistics within the United Nations system, and, to that end, supported the following recommendations: (i) to immediately strengthen the existing coordination mechanisms, (ii) to then take the issue of official statistics to the higher political level, including the Economic and Social Council and (iii) to ensure the active involvement of the statistical community, as presented in the background document prepared by the High-level Group, as appropriate;

*Recognizes* that coordination between the statistical programmes of the UN System requires streamlining and improving in order to better support the efficiency of the



UN statistical system, to provide harmonized, reliable statistical information for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to minimize reporting burden, support national ownership and improve coordination of capacity building.

*Further recognizes* that the United Nations Statistical Commission remains the primary body for the coordination of statistical programmes of the United Nations system;

***Requests:***

- a. the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the UN System (CCS-UN) to more effectively strengthen coordination of statistical programmes within the United Nations system guided by and in support of the work of the Statistical Commission;
- b. the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as the secretariat of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the UN System (CCS-UN) to provide adequate support to the coordination function of the Statistical Commission as well as related activities of the CCS-UN by considering pursuing a range of activities that could include the following:

***[Improved functional coordination]***

- o Well-coordinated activities, including a roadmap and action plan for UN statistical programme with target and performance indicators to monitor the development of UN statistical governance towards strengthened and efficient UN statistical system to be considered by the Statistical Commission;
- o Improved coordination in the area of data collection in collaboration with organizations at all levels to avoid duplication in this area and thus reduced response burden for Member States;
- o Modernized statistical processes at the United Nations as well in Member States, upon their request, by improving efficiency of data collections, implementing new methodologies and emphasizing the impact of statistics under the leadership and coordination of the national statistical offices, as applicable;
- o Improved dialogue with the statistical community and decision makers, and to review the relevance of the current data requests in relation to changing information needs to facilitate with more optimal statistical services to meet the information demands;
- o Improved coordination in the area of capacity building (in line with the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data), especially in capacity building of developing countries, including through the facilitation of South-South cooperation;

***[Improved regional and national coordination]***

- o UN regional commissions and country offices supported in facilitating the work of regional and national coordination structures in the field of statistics as appropriate;

***[Improved coordination in thematic areas]***

- o Improved knowledge sharing and establishment of common practices in adopting new data sources through workshops, the development of technical material and a knowledge base;
- o Established policies and standards of achieving open data with required data protection for sensitive data in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and national laws and regulations;

- o UN Statistics Quality Assurance Framework implemented by CCS-UN members inter alia through the conducting/facilitating of peer reviews of UN agencies upon request;

***[Improved coordination with other professional networks]***

- o Established and maintained collaboration and cooperation between the CCS-UN and the United Nations Geospatial Network in the area of statistical and geospatial integration;

- o Improved knowledge sharing between the CCS-UN members in the area of the use of geospatial information in the collection, processing and dissemination of data;

***[Improved system/secretariat coordination]***

- o Improved communication through the continued production and distribution of CCS-UN documents and joint statements for the relevant bodies in the United Nations system, including the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB); and

Decides that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions.

## **B. Draft decision for adoption by the Council**

2. The Statistical Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

### **Report of the Statistical Commission on its fifty-first session and the provisional agenda and dates for the fifty-second session of the Commission**

The Economic and Social Council:

- (a) Takes note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its fifty-first session;
- (b) Decides that the fifty-second session of the Commission shall be held in New York from 2 to 5 March 2021;
- (c) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-second session of the Commission, as set out below:

#### **Provisional agenda for the fifty-second session of the Commission**

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

##### **Documentation**

Provisional agenda and annotations

Note by the Secretariat on the provisional programme of work and timetable

3. Demographic and social statistics:

- (a) Demographic statistics;

##### **Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (b) International migration statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (c) Culture statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- (d) Household surveys;

**Documentation**

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys

- (e) Ageing-related statistics and age-disaggregated data.

**Documentation**

Report of the Titchfield Group on Ageing-Related Statistics and Age-Disaggregated Data

4. Economic statistics:

- (a) National accounts;

**Documentation**

Report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts

- (b) Business registers;

**Documentation**

Joint report of the Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers and the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics

- (c) Energy statistics;

**Documentation**

Joint report of the Secretary-General and the Oslo Group on Energy Statistics

- (d) International trade and economic globalization statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (e) Digital trade and e-commerce statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics

- (f) Tourism statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the World Tourism Organization

- (g) Finance statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the International Monetary Fund

- (h) International Comparison Programme;

**Documentation**

Report of the World Bank

- (i) Informal sector statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the International Labour Organization

- (j) Future of economic statistics.

**Documentation**

Report of the Friends of the Chair group on economic statistics

5. Natural resources and environment statistics:

- (a) Environmental-economic accounting;

**Documentation**

Report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting

- (b) Climate change statistics;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (c) Disaster-related statistics.

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

6. Activities not classified by field:

- (a) Coordination of statistical programmes;

**Documentation**

Report of Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

Report of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System

- (b) International statistical classifications;

**Documentation**

Report of the Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications

- (c) Common open standards for the exchange and sharing of data and metadata;

**Documentation**

Report of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange sponsors

- (d) Presentation of statistical data and metadata;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (e) Statistical capacity-building;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (f) Dissemination of statistics by the Statistics Division;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (g) Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

**Documentation**

Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators

Report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Report of the Secretary-General on the work for the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

- (h) Follow-up to the policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

- (i) National quality assurance frameworks;

**Documentation**

Report of the Expert Group on National Quality Assurance Frameworks

- (j) Integration of statistical and geospatial information;

**Documentation**

Report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information

- (k) Big data;

**Documentation**

Report of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics

- (l) Regional statistical development;

**Documentation**

Report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

- (m) World Statistics Day.

**Documentation**

Report of the Secretary-General

7. Programme questions (Statistics Division).

8. Provisional agenda and dates for the fifty-third session of the Commission.

**Documentation**

Note by the Secretariat containing the draft provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Commission

Note by the Secretariat on the draft multi-year programme of work of the Commission

9. Report of the Commission on its fifty-second session.

### **C. Decisions brought to the attention of the Council**

2. The following decisions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the Council.

#### **51/101**

#### **Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and expressed appreciation to the Group for its continued work to review and improve the global indicator framework to effectively monitor the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (b) *Expressed* its appreciation for the progress made on the methodological development and upgrading of many tier III indicators in advance of the 2020 comprehensive review of the global indicator framework;
- (c) *Expressed* its appreciation for the open and transparent process conducted for the 2020 comprehensive review in order to improve the indicator framework without adding burden to countries to help the global monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, including for the guiding principles of the review process itself;
- (d) *Agreed* to and adopted the proposed major changes and minor refinements put forward in the 2020 comprehensive review while noting concerns regarding specific indicators and recognized that the work on SDG indicators is in progress; Asked the Group to continue its annual refinement, research and methodological work to improve the global indicator framework; including addressing important policy issues such as sustainable tourism, climate change, etc.;
- (e) *Reiterated* that the application of the global indicator framework is a voluntary and country-led process and that alternative or complementary indicators for national and subnational levels of monitoring will be developed at national level on the basis of national priorities, realities, capacities and circumstances;
- (f) *Expressed* support for the establishment of a United Nations working group to further develop and refine the measurement of development support in line with the 2030 Agenda and welcomed the inclusion of member States representing all geographic regions, both donor and recipient countries, in the working group; and asked the group to build on relevant, previous work in this area;
- (g) *Welcomed* the background document on interlinkages and the release of the data structure definition for SDG indicators which facilitates the automation of data exchange and improves data validation and dissemination and stressed the importance of the System of Environmental Economic Accounts for SDG monitoring;
- (h) *Welcomed* the identification of data disaggregation as one of the Expert Group's main areas of work for 2020 and agreed that the Group should develop guidelines and build capacity on disaggregated data to measure progress for those that are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations;

- (i) *Encouraged* further work on a better integration of geospatial and statistical information to better monitoring the 2030 Agenda through the working group on Geospatial Information;
- (j) *Highlighted* the need for methodology guidelines to strengthen national statistical systems in order to be able to produce the required indicators; and also highlighted the need to continue to strengthen the cooperation between countries and custodian agencies; and
- (k) *Approved* the proposed work programme of the IAEG on SDG Indicators, as described in section VI of the report.

## 51/102

### **Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Report of the Secretary-General on the work on the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Secretary-General on the work for the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and took note of the proposed programme of work of the Statistics Division in cooperation with the United Nations system;
- (b) *Expressed its appreciation* for the work of the Statistics Division, in cooperation with the United Nations system, in support of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019 and the Global Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Database; requested to ensure transparency as to the data being made available;
- (c) *Requested* the Statistics Division to continue leading the coordination with the UN statistical system in the preparation of the annual progress report;
- (d) *Expressed its appreciation* for the capacity development activities by the Statistics Division and its partners to assist Member States in making SDG data available and welcomed the coordination of efforts at the national level;
- (e) *Strongly supported* the Data for Now initiative to build capacity in countries to utilize new data sources for timelier and disaggregated statistics and indicators and requested to focus the efforts on less developed countries;
- (f) *Welcomed* the scaling-up of the federated system initiative by including more countries and increasing capacity at the national level; and stressed the need to mobilize funding while ensuring coordination with related efforts;
- (g) *Took note* of the common Internationalized Resource Identifiers (IRIs) for sustainable development goals, targets, indicators and related data series and encourages the dissemination of data in linked open data format;
- (h) *Stressed* the importance for statistical training and welcomed the efforts of the Global Network of Institutions for Statistical Training; requested the group to continue the work and to further expand its membership; and
- (i) *Welcomed* the efforts of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Household Surveys and stressed the need for an integrated and harmonized household survey programme within countries, including by integrating new data sources and household survey data; and requested the ISWG-HS to focus on countries' priorities, to include representatives of national statistical institutes in its membership, to

coordinate its work with related groups and to develop guidance in innovative solutions and capacity building for scaling-up these approaches in countries.

### **51/103**

#### **Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity- Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the HLG-PCCB and expressed its appreciation of the work conducted;
- (b) *Welcomed* the work of the High-level Group and the Programme Committee in preparation for the third United Nations World Data Forum, to be held in Bern, Switzerland, in October 2020, and asked the Secretariat to continue to support the organization of the UN World Data Forum as the critical space for constructive exchange among different data communities and users for the launch of solutions and new initiatives and partnerships;
- (c) *Welcomed* the way forward to achieve a better coordinated and more efficient United Nations statistical system which should also aim at reducing the response burden of countries;
- (d) *Welcomed* the way forward in the area of financing for data and statistics and the proposed financing mechanism around three pillars (to secure domestic funding; to improve the efficiency of existing resources through better coordination; and to increase the overall amount of funding); stressed that more statistical capacity building and financing for statistics are needed and welcomed the efforts by the HLG undertaken in cooperation with all stakeholders, including the private sector and the Bern Network on Financing Data for Development, which is mobilizing commitments for more and better funding, to be announced at the World Data Forum in October 2020;
- (e) *Approved* the proposed programme of work for the HLG-PCCB and asked the Group to report back to the Commission at its 52nd session on the implementation and outcome of the 3rd UN World Data Forum.

### **51/104**

#### **Coordination of statistical programmes**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the UN System (CCS-UN) and thanked the Committee for its work in the area of coordination since its establishment by this Commission in 2015;
- (b) *Recognized* that the role of statistical units in the UN system has expanded significantly through the data needs of the SDGs;
- (c) *Reiterated* the need for a better coordination of the UN statistical system in order to strengthen the voice of the statistical community in dialogue with policy makers; to reduce the data reporting burden and eliminate data discrepancies across the UN system; to better integrate UN capacity building efforts at the country level; to jointly develop methodologies especially for the SDG indicators and to modernize the UN statistical system;



- (d) *Stressed* that investments into an effective coordination mechanism in a highly decentralized system could and should lead to efficiency gains in the long run;
- (e) *Recalled* its earlier decision to bring the issue of effective coordination urgently to the attention of ECOSOC;
- (f) *Agreed* that similarly to the situation at the national level UNSD as the secretariat of the Statistical Commission had a special responsibility in supporting coordination efforts throughout the UN statistical system; and
- (g) *Requested* the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the UN System (CCS-UN) to provide bi-annual updates on its work to the Statistical Commission.

## **51/105**

### **Future of economic statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Friends of the Group on Economic Statistics and confirmed that the work of the Friends of the Chair Group is already positively influencing the working methods and collaboration amongst existing groups for the update of the system of economic statistics in support of the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with links to the environment and well-being;
- (b) *Commended* the Group for its efforts to undertake extensive consultations with existing statistical groups and with countries through regional seminars on the future of economic statistics on user-identified priority areas of development, existence of gaps in priority areas, and the current governance and working methods of statistical groups;
- (c) *Requested* the Group to further consider the need for a responsive, comprehensive and harmonized system of economic statistics, encompassing macroeconomic accounts, statistical business registers, international classifications, and granular data from household, business and trade statistics;
- (d) *Agreed* that the proposed work programme of the Group in its second and final year will cover four dimensions: documenting the operations of the current system of statistical groups and the proposed future state; improving connections between statistical groups by establishing networks; challenging statistical groups to operate in new ways, with a focus on experimentation and capacity-building; and increasing engagement with a broad range of users and other potential partners to determine global priorities for the updated system of economic statistics such as those related to globalization, digitalization, well-being and sustainability, informal economy and human capital.
- (e) *Supported* the work of the Group on the review of the working methods of the existing statistical groups based on common principles and requested the Group to explore new working arrangements to improve the mechanisms of coordination and interactions between the statistical groups in sharing information, setting priorities and avoiding gaps;
- (f) *Requested* existing statistical groups to collaborate with the Group to undertake the review of the governance and working methods and trial new action-oriented networking methods to explore their benefits;
- (g) *Agreed* to dissolve the statistical groups that are no longer active in the domain of economic statistics, as listed in paragraph 30 of the report: the Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance Statistics, the Expert Group on International Trade and Economic Globalization Statistics, the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on International Trade

and Economic Globalization Statistics, the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics and the Inter-Agency Working Group on Debt Statistics;

(h) *Requested* the Group to challenge the statistical groups with a limited number of short-term projects building on the needs of developed and developing countries to trial new working methods and networking of statistical groups to support the update of the system of economic statistics;

(i) *Encouraged* the implementation of mature new conceptual issues in Member States based on detailed guidance notes and welcomed the interest of Member States to participate in the experimentation;

(j) *Welcomed* further initiatives on consultations like a United Nations Global Forum on Economic Statistics to obtain user feedback on the update of the system of economic statistics and to discuss new working methods to make the system of economic statistics more agile and responsive; and

(k) *Requested* a final report of the FOC Group on Economic Statistics for the 52nd session of the Statistical Commission in 2021.

## **51/106**

### **National accounts**

The Statistical Commission:

(a) *Welcomed* the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts, expressed its appreciation for the activities undertaken by the members of the Working Group, the regional commissions, other regional organisations and countries to facilitate the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) and supporting statistics, and endorsed the programmes of work for 2020 of the Working Group and the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts;

(b) *Also welcomed* the progress of dedicated work streams on resolving the priority issues on the SNA research agenda related to digitalization, globalization, and wellbeing and sustainability and expressed support for a broad user-centred consultation, including the UN Global Forum on Economic Statistics, on the development of the SNA;

(c) *Endorsed* the option of a continuous SNA revision cycle that provides for the drafting of guidance notes on emerging research issues for experimentation by both developed and developing countries with implementing the new guidance before a major update of SNA and noted the interest of several Member States to participate in the experimentation and testing of the forthcoming guidance notes;

(d) *Requested* the Working Group to submit, for consideration by the Commission at its 52nd session in 2021, a road map for the revision of the SNA for adoption by the Commission in 2025, including the resource requirements, taking into account the required alignment of the revision cycles of other major statistical manuals and relevant classifications standards for purpose of consistency between the manuals and classification standards;

(e) *Requested* the Working Group to continue to develop practical guidance on such issues as the informal economy and Islamic finance and facilitate the implementation of the 2008 SNA through manuals, handbooks and guidelines;

(f) *Welcomed* the establishment of the sub-group on communication by the Working Group to develop a more user-friendly terminology, communication about the revision cycle and sharing of research results, and compliance with SNA recommendations;

- (g) *Acknowledged* that the approach for updating the System of National Accounts, presented in the report, is aligned with the recommendations of the Friends of the Chair Group on Economic Statistics for establishing a more agile and responsive system of economic statistics;
- (h) *Expressed concern* that there are still a relatively large number of Member States that do not comply with the minimum required scope and detail of national accounts data, and urged those countries with a low level of compliance to develop basic source data for the compilation of national accounts, while recognising the role of the international and regional organizations in continued capacity building; and
- (i) *Noted* the progress of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) data transmission mechanism for national accounts; recognized that the implementation of the SDMX protocols by countries will facilitate data transmission and thereby significantly reduce the response burden in submitting data to international organizations; and requested the Working Group to continue supporting the implementation of SDMX.

## **51/107**

### **International trade and business statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the Joint report of the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics and the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics and expressed its appreciation for the activities undertaken by the Committee and the Inter-Agency Task Force;
- (b) *Welcomed* the proposed strategic view on Business statistics, and encouraged the Committee to further elaborate and promote it;
- (c) *Commended* the Committee for its efforts to coordinate the activities with relevant statistical groups and encouraged the Committee to continue seeking cooperation with other groups on areas of common interest;
- (d) *Recognized* the progress made by the Committee in advancing the work in its thematic areas and requested the Committee to complete relevant guidelines for the implementation of its recommendations;
- (e) *Recognized* the importance of Statistical Business Registers (SBR) as an essential statistical infrastructure to support the coherence and consistency of statistics; and to derive detailed data on businesses and their relation to global value chains, globalization, digitalization, the environment and wellbeing. An exhaustive SBR should include small and medium enterprises and, to the extent possible, the informal sector;
- (f) *Welcomed* the proposed capacity building programme on SBR and requested UNSD to report its progress to the Commission at its fifty-second session;
- (g) *Welcomed* the creation of a task team on communication for business and trade statistics;
- (h) *Took note* of the progress of work for the development of a global group register and encouraged UNSD to advance this project in collaboration with national and international institutes; acknowledged the difficulties of building such register from public records and suggested to consider a model, like the EGR, building the GGR from country data;

- (i) *Agreed* to the establishment of a central data repository for business and trade statistics to make these statistics more accessible to users and to allow for a virtual connection and dialogue with users; and
- (j) *Took note* of the activities of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics and the Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade, version 1, and stressed the importance of statistics of international trade in services.

## **51/108**

### **Price statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics;
- (b) *Endorsed* the forthcoming Consumer Price Index Manual: Concepts and Methods as an international statistical standard and requested the Manual to be made available in all six official languages of the United Nations as soon as possible;
- (c) *Noted* that in order to comply with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the compilers of the CPI should be independent from the users of these statistics such as the monetary authorities;
- (d) *Recognized* that the updated Manual should remain relevant and responsive by adopting a more continuous update cycle;
- (e) *Welcomed* the international coordination mechanism used in preparing the updated Manual through the collaboration of international agencies, countries and experts, and encouraged the coordination mechanism to be sustained;
- (f) *Encouraged* countries to use the updated Manual in the compilation of their national consumer price indexes (CPIs); and make use of new data sources and techniques such as scanner data and web-scraping when compiling these CPIs;
- (g) *Recognized* its role in improving the quality of national CPIs and improving their international comparability.

## **51/109**

### **International Comparison Programme**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report and commended the International Comparison Programme (ICP) stakeholders in successfully completing the ICP 2017 cycle;
- (b) *Took note* of the imminent release of the results from the 2017 cycle, and the plans to communicate and promote the use of the results in national policymaking, socioeconomic analyses and development agendas;
- (c) *Impressed* upon ICP stakeholders the need to conduct ICP 2020 cycle activities in a timely manner;
- (d) *Reiterated* the need for national, regional and global agencies to incorporate the ICP into their regular statistical work programmes, to ensure its sustainability as a permanent programme; and

- (e) *Urged* national statistical systems and international development partners to make available resources for the ICP 2020 and future cycles of the ICP.

## 51/110

### Environmental-economic accounting

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the work done thus far on mainstreaming the SEEA as a statistical framework to support various initiatives, including the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, circular economy, the ocean agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and sustainable tourism; commended current usage of the SEEA for country-level reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals; and welcomed the integration of the SEEA into Sustainable Development Goal indicators 15.9.1, and 12.b.1;
- (b) *Stressed* that good quality environmental accounts can be based on good quality environment statistics;
- (b) *Stressed* the importance of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting in supplying a common measurement framework for the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and related indicators that are currently being negotiated and to be adopted at the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (c) *Commended* the Committee of Experts for the substantial progress made on the revision of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting; expressed appreciation for the inclusive and transparent revision process; noted the high demand and interest from the statistical, scientific and policy communities; emphasized the urgency of providing a standardized methodology for ecosystem accounting that reflects the revision and reinforces the role of national statistical offices as data stewards; and supported the aspiration to elevate the revised SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting to SEEA Ecosystem Accounting;
- (d) *Acknowledged* the importance of developing compilation materials in parallel with the revision of the ecosystem accounting methodologies to support their implementation, including materials on biophysical modelling, valuation, scenario modelling, and ocean accounting, in order to meet increasing country demands;
- (e) *Supported* the proposal to consider a revision of the SEEA Central Framework, which integrates updates from the revised SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, aligns with the revision of the 2008 System of National Accounts, and responds to new demands for environmental-economic information and welcomed the continued collaboration between the Committee of Experts and the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts and the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts, in particular the subgroup on wellbeing and sustainability;
- (f) *Welcomed* the release of the SDMX global data structure definitions for the SEEA and requested the Committee of Experts to disseminate global databases from the UN SEEA website using a step-wise approach that minimizes duplication of efforts among international agencies and adopts a fully transparent process, including review of the methodology, country communication and consent before dissemination; and furthermore encouraged the Committee of Experts to explore possibilities to use earth observation combined with national data to develop experimental ecosystem accounts;

- (g) *Welcomed* the progress made towards the 2020 implementation targets of 100 countries implementing the SEEA Central Framework and 50 implementing the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts, and noted the importance of regional collaboration, communities of practice, blended learning workshops, country technical support and taking a stepwise approach to ensure that the implementation targets are met within the year ahead, while also acknowledging that regional gaps remain and encouraging the Committee of Experts to prioritize implementation in Africa;
- (h) *Took note* of the contribution of the EU-funded project, Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services, in advancing the implementation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting in the partner countries, namely Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa, and in supporting the development of methodologies and practical guidelines on ecosystem accounting;
- (i) *Commended* UNESCAP on the Technical Guidance on Ocean Accounting for Sustainable Development, acknowledged the progress made through country piloting in the region and recognized that the technical guidance provides a solid foundation for integrating ocean accounts into the revision process of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting; and
- (j) *Commended* UNWTO on the work done thus far on the development of a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism, which integrates the SEEA and the Tourism Satellite Accounts; acknowledged the continuing progress made through country pilots; and encouraged finalization of the document in the near future.

## **51/111**

### **Agricultural and rural statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations on recent developments in agricultural and rural statistics, and expressed appreciation regarding the comprehensive set of measures that FAO and its partners have implemented over the last 10 years to improve internal governance, as well as the availability and quality of food and agriculture statistics worldwide;
- (b) *Endorsed* the main principles of the proposed strategy for renovating FAO's work in statistics, which is aligned with the road map for the modernization of the United Nations statistical system and which will guide FAO's efforts to further improve agricultural and rural statistics in the next five years;
- (c) *Expressed* its support for the FAO integrated strategy of statistical capacity development, which is articulated in three main components: (i) technical assistance to improve the capacity of countries to monitor the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators; (ii) the funding and implementation of an integrated programme of agricultural surveys through the "50 x 2030" initiative; and (iii) the action plan for the second phase (2020–2025) of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics;
- (d) *Reiterated* the call to development partners and countries to urgently increase the allocation of resources to statistics, in order to improve data generation and use, in particular for food and agricultural statistics, and to strengthen the coordination of statistical capacity building activities in this area; and

(e) *Approved* the terms of reference and the proposed work programme of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Food Security, Agricultural and Rural Statistics (IAEG-AG) for the period 2020-23, as described in Section E of the report and as will be further refined through the written consultation that will take place in the next few weeks, which includes: (i) the development of national data quality assurance frameworks for agricultural statistics; (ii) the development of methods and standards for the use of alternative data sources in producing food and agricultural statistics at the national and international levels; (iii) the development of innovative methods for producing real-time statistics at the country level; and (iv) conducting methodological research in the domain of food security statistics to further improve their relevance and accuracy.

## 51/112 Demographic statistics

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report on the implementation of the 2020 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses;
- (b) *Urged* all Member States to ensure completion of population and housing census or otherwise produce census-like small area statistics at least once in the period 2015 – 2024;
- (c) *Requested* the continuation of capacity building through regional and sub-regional activities to exchange experiences and lessons learnt and to address emerging issues, like functional population;
- (d) *Requested* the development of standard guidelines on the use of administrative sources for generating census and other relevant statistics;
- (e) *Called upon* UNSD to prepare and disseminate the list of countries with census dates and main census-taking method used, thus enabling direct consultation between Member States;
- (f) *Expressed* appreciation for the support provided by UNSD and UNFPA in census-taking and requested a continuation of support throughout this 2020 census round;
- (g) *Requested* more detailed elaboration of the methodology for assessing census over- and under-enumeration as these affect censuses worldwide;
- (h) *Outlined* the need for an increased and active promotion of population and housing census at national and sub-national level, thus ensuring full cooperation of the population to be enumerated;
- (i) *Endorsed* the methodology for delineation of cities, urban and rural areas for international and regional statistical comparison purposes, as presented in the report, while emphasizing that this methodology is not intended to replace national definitions of urban and rural areas but to complement them;
- (j) *Urged* the release of the technical report on the implementation of the methodology for delineation of cities, urban and rural areas as early as possible; and
- (k) *Requested* to review the implementation of the methodology for delineation of cities, urban and rural areas and report back to the Commission in one of its future sessions.

(l) *Requested* to update the handbook on measuring the economically active population in the population census and to include a chapter on measuring the informal sector.

### **51/113**

#### **Civil registration and vital statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* and supported the introduction of the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda as an expansion of the existing methodological framework for civil registration and vital statistics;
- (b) *Urged* Member States to implement the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda as a matter of priority;
- (c) *Expressed* appreciation for the work of UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force;
- (d) *Commended* the current implementation of UN Legal Identity Agenda in Africa and requested to consider expanding the implementation beyond the current pilot countries, in Africa and in other regions as well;
- (e) *Emphasized* the critical role that the national statistical office occupies in this holistic model of the Legal Identity Agenda;
- (f) *Reiterated* the importance of the full implementation of the 2015 revision of the UN Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics system particularly from the point of view of collecting information on place of residence, enabling more information on the migrations of the populations;
- (g) *Requested* the UN Legal Identity Agenda Task Force to develop guidelines on ethical management of information on individuals; and
- (h) *Requested* UNSD to continue the existing dissemination of vital statistics and explore possibilities of improving it.

### **51/114**

#### **Health statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the World Health Organization and accompanying background document on recent and current work being undertaken by the WHO on health statistics and on strengthening statistical systems to track health related SDGs;
- (b) *Appreciated* the work that has been initiated by WHO towards the modernization and digitization of classifications and related terminologies, noted the challenges that Member States face in the implementation of the eleventh revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11); and called upon the WHO to continue to provide support to countries towards ICD-11 effective implementation and enhanced interoperability;
- (c) *Noted* that monitoring health and health-related Sustainable Development Goals continues to present major challenges to many countries and welcomed WHO's commitment to strengthen the capacity of countries to improve health data and health information systems;



(d) *Stressed* the importance of coordination and consultations between national statistical offices, ministries of health and national authorities responsible for civil registration and vital statistics to strengthen the national statistical systems for health that enable robust monitoring of the SDGs health-related Goals; and

(e) *Called upon* WHO and all relevant stakeholders in the field of health statistics, including the African Development Bank, UNECA and the African Union Commission, to work together to ensure a harmonized and coordinated approach for national capacity building, including data disaggregation to inform progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

## 51/115 Gender statistics

The Statistical Commission:

(a) *Welcomed* the report of the Secretary General on gender statistics and expressed appreciation to the Statistics Division and the members of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, including UN Women, UN Regional Commissions and other key partners, for the work undertaken to strengthen gender data;

(b) *Requested* to adopt and integrate a gender perspective into all the agenda items of the Commission, as is for example the current practice in the Statistical Conference of the Americas;

(c) *Endorsed* the work of the Statistics Division and the Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics; approved its terms of reference; and congratulated the group on the progress made in developing a conceptual framework to modernize time-use surveys;

(d) *Emphasized* the need to build capacity and provide technical and financial assistance to national statistical offices in the area of time-use statistics, to inform and monitor policies on unpaid work, non-market production, well-being and gender equality in line with SDGs;

(e) *Supported* the update of the Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use, taking into account relevant guidelines developed at the regional level, and noted the relevance of the Guide to the work of the Inter-secretariat working group on National Accounts; took note of the extensive interest expressed by countries in using the proposed methods and in contributing to their finalization; and requested the translation of the International Classification of Activities on time-use Statistics (ICATUS 2016) into all UN languages;

(f) *Expressed appreciation* for the new online format of The World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics, and endorsed its innovative products including short gender narratives and related gender story maps; requested the inclusion of an assessment of the status of the girl child; took note of the expression of interest by many countries to contribute to the publication; welcomed the collaborative approach, including countries, regional and international entities; and recognized the coordinating role of the Statistics Division at the global level to ensure an inclusive and data-driven assessment of the progress achieved towards gender equality;

(g) *Welcomed* and supported the work priorities of the Statistics Division and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics under the umbrella of the Global Gender Statistics Programme, including the ongoing work on the use of administrative data to close the gender data gaps; requested the Group to further its methodological work on measuring gender equality, by adopting a life-cycle approach and taking into account intersecting inequalities; commended the organization, in

collaboration with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, of the eighth Global Forum on Gender Statistics, contributing to "the Road to Bern" initiative, leading to the 3rd World Data Forum.

## **51/116**

### **Refugee statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (EGRIS), commended the work undertaken by the group to strengthen statistics on forced displacement; and endorsed the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons statistics; translations in all UN languages, will be needed for the implementation of the Recommendations;
- (b) *Welcomed* the work being done so far on the Compilers' Manual, presenting best practices and noted that further technical work and a concise and practical guidance, adopting a gender perspective;
- (c) *Approved* the terms of reference of the Expert Group; agreed on the continuation of the Expert Group until 2025; and requested the Expert Group to report back to the Commission in 3 to 5 years; and
- (d) *Stressed* the need for statistical capacity-building to support Member States in improving the quality and availability of statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons; and invited international and regional organizations to support Member States in this regard, upon their request.

## **51/117**

### **Governance, peace and security statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics and congratulated the group on the progress made in providing guidance on governance statistics;
- (b) *Endorsed* the Handbook on Governance Statistics to be used by member states as practical guidance in the compilation and dissemination of governance statistics, recognizing that the Handbook encourages the monitoring and implementation of SDG 16;
- (c) *Supported* the continuation of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics and its work under the proposed revised terms of reference while requesting that the group further develops conceptualization of governance statistics, further improves methodology and standardization, adds practical experiences, including experience in Africa, reviews use of administrative data, and develops a strategy for capacity development in this statistical area;
- (d) *Requested* to strategically increase the membership of the Praia Group, while recognizing the interest of some countries to join; and
- (e) *Requested* the Praia Group to report to the Commission at its 52nd session in 2021.

## 51/118 Regional statistical development

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the comprehensive report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and strongly commended the significant collaborative work undertaken by countries, regional and subregional organisations, in particular CARICOM, and the United Nations system to advance statistical development in the region, including by making resources available in English language and by working together within the Knowledge Transfer Network;
- (b) *Welcomed* the changes made to the working groups mechanism of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, in order to increase their relevance and effectiveness, and commended the new and improved geographical representation of the Executive Committee of the Conference;
- (c) *Expressed appreciation* for the coordination within the regional United Nations system, under the leading role of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean that has resulted in the development of the Sustainable Development Goal Gateway web-based platform for the Latin America and Caribbean region; and recognized it as a key tool for supporting countries in the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda;
- (d) *Noted with appreciation* the opportunities highlighted for the interregional exchange of experiences and encouraged all stakeholders, including UN regional commissions, to take advantage of each other's strengths in order to enhance statistical and geospatial capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean and across the globe;
- (e) *Took note* of the declaration on the integration of geospatial and statistical information between the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas, adopted by the Statistical Conference of the Americas at its tenth meeting; and
- (f) *Supported* the call by this declaration to establish national governance mechanisms to facilitate the joint work of national statistical offices, national statistical systems and national mapping agencies to consolidate national spatial data infrastructures.

## 51/119 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Friends of the Chair Group on the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and expressed appreciation for the work of the Group;
- (b) *Welcomed* the work by the group on the development of two additional chapters for the implementation guide for the Fundamental Principles, focused on a compliance and maturity framework for FPOS implementation, and guidance for the

application of the FPOS when using new data sources for the production of official statistics;

(c) *Endorsed* the maturity model as a diagnostic tool that can aid national statistical organizations and national statistical systems to identify actions to improve compliance with the FPOS and welcomed the practical recommendations and country examples included in the guidance and mapping of the FPOS with non-traditional data sources as a resource for this emerging area in data and statistics. Recognized that there is space for further development such as linking these tools with other existing resources and tools, and acknowledged the need for technical and financial support for the implementation of these recommendations.

(d) *Noted* with appreciation the redesigned FPOS website and agreed with the proposed strategy to update and maintain the country profiles and documentation of good practices in national statistical systems as outlined in part B of the report and requested open data principles be applied to ensure reduced burden to countries; and

(e) *Agreed* that the work of the Group has concluded for the current round of reviews and that further work on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics will be resumed in time for the next appraisal, in 2024, and requested to ensure representative membership of the group.

## **51/120**

### **Management and modernization of statistical systems**

The Statistical Commission:

(a) *Welcomed* the report of the Secretary-General on Management and modernization of statistical systems and acknowledged the progress achieved in drafting the next edition of the Handbook;

(b) *Supported* the coordination and consultation mechanisms in place, and appreciated the valuable role of the Advisory Group in sustaining and guiding the overall drafting process;

(c) *Reiterated* the importance that the Handbook will be a living document, which is updated at regular intervals to address common challenges and grasp innovative solutions, including those relating to the production and utilization of the indicators for monitoring progress towards the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a fast changing data ecosystem; and agreed that these updates are initially to be marked as preliminary subject to later confirmation by the UN Statistical Commission;

(d) *Stressed* the need for the overview chapter, to be available in hard copy version in all UN official languages to reach the widest audience possible;

(e) *Agreed* with the proposed updated structure of the Handbook, subject to further adaptations and refinements to be duly considered during the editorial phase of the document;

(f) *Acknowledged* the importance of the regional and sub-regional thematic conferences in informing the Handbook on regional and national contexts, common challenges and national best practices, as well as existing initiatives; and recognised the expression of interest to organise or contribute to the thematic conferences;

- (g) *Supported* the name change of the Handbook from “Handbook of Statistical Organization” to “Handbook on Management and Organization of National Statistical Systems”;
- (h) *Took note* of the discussions of the High-level Forum on Official Statistics which discussed the role of a data steward; and
- (i) *Requested* the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to establish a working mechanism open to other stakeholders and linked to existing initiatives at global and regional levels to address the issue of data stewardship and the role of statistical offices in the new data ecosystem; the work should consist of a stock-taking exercise and specific recommendations on the way forward, to be provided to the fifty-second session of the Commission.

## **51/121**

### **Information and communications technology statistics**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Congratulated* the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development on its progress made regarding the availability and comparability of ICT statistics;
- (b) *Welcomed* the revised guidelines to produce ICT statistics; recognized the importance of ICT statistics for sustainable development and for building resilience; and requested additional guidance on the compilation of statistics on ICT services in relation to e-commerce, the digital economy and the sharing economy;
- (c) *Endorsed* the thematic list of ICT indicators for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; and requested to possibly expand the list, for example with indicators regarding cyber security; and
- (d) *Expressed* support for the continuation of the work of the Partnership.

## **51/122**

### **Big data**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Congratulated* the Global Working Group on Big Data for official statistics on the progress made regarding the UN Global Platform, the Regional Hubs and the active collaboration in the area of new data sources, methods and training; especially thanked the United Kingdom and the UN Statistics Division for their efforts in this regard;
- (b) *Endorsed* the UN Global Platform as a collaborative environment for data innovation by the global statistical community and all its partners, including a broad spectrum of stakeholder communities;
- (c) *Endorsed* the presented governance structure and business model of the UN Global Platform under the overall auspices of the Commission, while requesting further work on the funding aspects of the business model, requesting coordination of the activities of the Regional Hubs with those of existing initiatives at the regional level, and requesting reporting back to the Commission regularly, especially on the activities of the Regional Hubs;

(d) *Supported* the planned data solutions projects and methodological guidance on the UN Global Platform through the GWG task teams, and requested that the GWG would focus on developing guidance for harmonization of methods and developing appropriate quality assurance frameworks for use of Big Data with application to the production of official statistics and SDG indicators in conformity with national laws and regulations;

(e) *Supported* the envisioned training programme delivered at scale by the GWG and the UN Global Platform on topics related to Big Data and Data Science for the purpose of developing necessary capacity in statistical institutes, while requesting to include also other stakeholder communities in this training initiative; and

(f) *Urged* the UN Global Platform Network, including the global statistical community, private sector, civil society and academia, to promote and mobilize resources and support for the UN Global Platform as well as for the related training activities.

## **51/123**

### **Integration of statistical and geospatial information**

The Statistical Commission:

(a) *Welcomed* the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information and commended the Expert Group on its significant body of work to advance the development and completion of a global statistical geospatial framework so that there is increased information available to support social, economic and environmental policy and decision making, including at regional, national and sub-national levels;

(b) *Noted* the increasing relevance of and need for the integration of statistical and geospatial information as an important bridge to enable the production of harmonized, standardized and integrated, geospatially enabled statistical data to facilitate data-driven decision-making, in particular with regard to the implementation of the 2020 Round of Population Censuses and the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c) *Endorsed* the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework as adopted by decision 9/106 of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, and welcomed its adoption and implementation by Member States as a result of a broad and inclusive global consultation process;

(d) *Encouraged* Member States to continue to implement the Framework and, in this regard, called for increased institutional coordination and collaboration between national statistical and geospatial agencies and other relevant stakeholders, especially in developing countries, to ensure more targeted interventions on, and informed understanding of, socio-economic data within a geospatial context; and

(e) *Noted* the Expert Group's revised terms of reference, workplan for 2020-2022, and welcomed their continuing efforts to provide guidance to Member States to support the adoption and implementation of the Framework, inclusive of continuing the development of key statistical standards and processes to strengthen the integration of statistical and geospatial information.

## 51/124

### Open data

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Working Group on Open Data and expressed appreciation for the work of the Group;
- (b) *Welcomed* the proposed guidance on the application of the principle that data are open by default in the context of official statistics, including open data licenses as a priority in the pursuance of open data and requested its further development and clarification in relationship with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, particularly Principle 6 on the protection of statistical confidentiality and in conformity with national laws and regulations;
- (c) *Took note* of the need to streamline user-engagement and user feedback in the design of open data strategies of national statistical offices to develop an open data culture and the importance of developing further guidance on the incorporation of open data and interoperability across Statistical Business Processes;
- (d) *Welcomed* the guidance and good practices provided by the Working Group on the dissemination of local-level statistics as open data by national statistical offices, and encouraged its further development; and
- (e) *Approved* the proposed terms of reference, including the definition of objectives and tasks, membership and methods of work, as contained in the Annex to the report with the recommendation to ensure it is representative and asked the Working Group to report back to the Commission at its 53rd session.

## 51/125

### Working methods of the Statistical Commission

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Bureau and accompanying background documents;
- (b) *Warmly thanked* the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics for its significant contribution to the field, recognised that it has fulfilled its original mandate and reiterated its decision to dissolve it;
- (c) *Thanked* the Chairs of groups for their responses to the consultation on governance; and acknowledged the actions taken by the Secretariat and the groups in response to its decision on working methods from last year;
- (d) *Commended* the groups that have established formal means of engagement, and encourages all groups currently active to follow suit;
- (e) *Welcomed* the potential linkages identified by the chairs of groups, presented in a background document, and encouraged groups to reach out to one another and realise or advance these natural synergies;
- (f) *Highlighted* the efforts being carried out in the economic pillar, and requested the Chairs of groups in the environmental, social and cross-cutting pillars to initiate similar self-assessments as soon as possible;

- (g) *Reiterated* that a streamlined architecture, an improved oversight function and greater synergies among groups and pillars are needed, and noted that a smaller number of types of groups could be achieved;
- (h) Therefore, *endorsed* the reference framework formulated by the Bureau as useful and flexible guidelines for existing and future groups in terms of naming conventions, duration, timelines, periodic reporting, key elements for web pages, core technical focus, outputs, activities and membership;
- (i) *Requested* the Chairs of each active group to thoroughly review the reference framework, encouraged them to make the relevant modifications and to strive to achieve equitable geographical distribution;
- (j) *Decided* to allocate an explicit time frame to each group it establishes from now on, as described in the framework; and
- (k) *Requested* the Chairs of each active group to maintain an updated web page containing at least the group's mandate and terms of reference, the year it was established, information concerning its secretariat, members, Chair(s), meetings, reports to the Commission and points of contact.

## **51/126**

### **World Statistics Day**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) *Welcomed* the report of the Secretary General and thanked the Bureau and the Secretariat for the preparations made so far for World Statistics Day 2020; in particular the slogan "Connecting the world with data we can trust", which is globally relevant, as well as the logo presented;
- (b) *Took note* of planned national, regional and sub-regional events and requested the secretariat to continue the preparations for World Statistics Day 2020 by promoting national, regional and global events on the dedicated website [worldstatisticsday.org](http://worldstatisticsday.org) and appropriate social media and by taking into account suggestions made during the discussion.

## **51/127**

### **Programme questions (Statistics Division)**

The Statistical Commission took note of the oral statement by the Director of the Statistics Division concerning the work programme of the Division, including the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division. It requested the Bureau to review substantively the programme proposals for 2021.

## **51/128**

### **Information items**

The Commission took note of all the reports issued under information items. (see chap. VII, para. 7).



## Chapter II

### Items for discussion and decision

1. The Commission considered item 3 (a) – (x) of its agenda at its 1<sup>st</sup> to 8th meetings, on 3 and 6 March 2020. The Commission took action on all related draft decisions (draft decisions 51/101 – 51/126) contained in an informal paper introduced by the Rapporteur under items 3 (a) – (x) of its agenda at its 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> meetings on 6 March 2020.

#### A. Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2. The Commission considered item 3 (a) of its agenda at its 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8th meetings, on 3 and 6 March 2020. At its 1st meeting, on 3 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2020/2), report of the Secretary-General on the work for the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/CN.3/2020/3), and the report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (E/CN.3/2020/4). The Commission considered those reports in turn.

3. At its 1st meeting, on 3 March, the Commission heard a statement by the representative of Sweden, who introduced the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 14 States members of the Commission and 22 observer States, as well as by the representatives of 4 international organizations.

4. At its 2nd meeting, on 3 March, the Commission continued its consideration of the sub-item and heard a statement by the Chief of the Development Data Section of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the work for the review of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 6 States members of the Commission and 12 observer States.

5. At the same meeting, the Commission heard a statement under item 3 (a) by the observer for Angola, who introduced the report of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 6 States members of the Commission, 11 observer States, as well as by the representative of 2 international organizations.

#### B. Coordination of statistical programmes

6. The Commission considered item 3 (b) of its agenda at its 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4th and 7th meetings, on 3, 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 2nd meeting, on 3 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System on coordination within the United Nations statistical system (E/CN.3/2020/5) and heard a statement by the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund, who introduced the report. The Commission also had before it the report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (E/CN.3/2020/6). Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 11 States members of the Commission and 19 observer States.

### **C. Future of economic statistics**

7. The Commission considered item 3 (c) of its agenda at its 3rd and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 3rd meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Friends of the Chair group on economic statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/7](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of Canada, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 9 State members of the Commission and 13 observer States, as well as by the representative of one international organization.

### **D. National accounts**

8. The Commission considered item 3 (d) of its agenda at its 3rd and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 3rd meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts ([E/CN.3/2020/8](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the European Statistical Office of the European Commission (Eurostat), who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 10 States members of the Commission and 20 observer States.

### **E. International trade and business statistics**

9. The Commission considered item 3 (e) of its agenda at its 3rd and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 3rd meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the joint report of the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics and the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/9](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the Netherlands, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 4 States members of the Commission and 9 observer States, as well as by the representative of 1 international organization.

### **F. Price Statistics**

10. The Commission considered item 3 (f) of its agenda at its 3rd, 4th and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 3rd meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/10](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the World Bank, who introduced the report.

11. At the 4th meeting, on 4 March, the Commission continued its consideration of item 3 (f). At the two meetings, discussions on the sub-item were held by the representatives of 5 States members of the Commission and 12 observer States, as well as by the representatives of 2 international organizations.

## **G. International Comparison Programme**

12. The Commission considered item 3 (g) of its agenda at its 4th and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 4th meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the World Bank on the International Comparison Programme (E/N.3/2020/11) and heard a statement by the representative of the World Bank, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 5 States members of the Commission and 16 observer States, as well as by the representatives of 2 international organizations.

## **H. Environmental-economic accounting**

13. The Commission considered item 3 (h) of its agenda at its 4th and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 4th meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (E/CN.3/2020/12) and heard a statement by the representative of the Netherlands, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 5 States members of the Commission and 15 observer States, as well as representative of an international organization.

## **I. Agricultural and rural statistics**

14. The Commission considered item 3 (i) of its agenda at its 4th and 8th meetings, on 4 and 6 March 2020. At its 4th meeting, on 4 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on recent developments in agricultural and rural statistics (E/CN.3/2020/13) and heard a statement by the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 3 States members of the Commission and 17 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.

## **J. Demographic statistics**

15. The Commission considered item 3 (j) of its agenda at its 5th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 5th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme and the methodology for delineation of cities and urban and rural areas for international comparison purposes (E/CN.3/2020/14) and heard a statement by the Chief of the Demographic Statistics Section, United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 10 States members of the Commission and 24 observer States, as well as representatives of 5 international organizations.

## **K. Civil registration and vital statistics**

16. The Commission considered item 3 (k) of its agenda at its 5th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 5th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the introduction of the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda: a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management ([E/CN.3/2020/15](#)) and heard a statement by the Chief of the Demographic Statistics Section, United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 5 States members of the Commission and 11 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.

## **L. Health Statistics**

17. The Commission considered item 3 (l) of its agenda at its 5th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 5th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the World Health Organization on health statistics and strengthening statistical systems to track the health-related Sustainable Development Goals ([E/CN.3/2020/16](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO), who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 4 States members of the Commission and 14 observer States.

## **M. Gender statistics**

18. The Commission considered item 3 (m) of its agenda at its 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on gender statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/17](#)), and heard a statement by the Chief of the Social and Gender Statistics Section, United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 8 States members of the Commission and 17 observer States, as well as representatives of two international organizations.

## **N. Refugee statistics**

19. The Commission considered item 3 (n) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it report of the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/18](#)) and heard by the observer from Norway, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 7 States members of the Commission and 10 observer States, as well as by the representatives of 4 international organizations.

## **O. Governance, peace and security statistics**

20. The Commission considered item 3 (o) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/19](#)) and heard a statement by the observer from Cabo Verde, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 6 States members of the Commission and 12 observer States, as well as representatives of 2 international organizations.

## **P. Regional statistical development**

21. The Commission considered item 3 (p) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on cooperation for regional statistical development ([E/CN.3/2020/20](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 3 States members of the Commission and 5 observer States, as well as by the representatives of 3 international organizations.

## **Q. Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics**

22. The Commission considered item 3 (q) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Friends of the Chair group on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/21](#)), and heard a statement by the observer from New Zealand, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 6 States members of the Commission and 10 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.

## **R. Management and modernization of statistical systems**

23. The Commission considered item 3 (r) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on management and modernization of statistical systems ([E/CN.3/2020/22](#)) and heard a statement by the Inter-Regional Adviser of the United Nations Statistical Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 3 State members of the Commission and 10 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.

## **S. Information and communications technology statistics**

24. The Commission considered item 3 (s) of its agenda at its 6th and 8th meetings, on 5 and 6 March 2020. At its 6th meeting, on 5 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communication Technology for Development ([E/CN.3/2020/23](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on behalf of the

International Telecommunication Union (ITU), who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by 8 observer States and a representative of an international organization.

## **T. Big data**

25. The Commission considered item 3 (t) of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it report of the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics ([E/CN.3/2020/24](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of Denmark, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 6 State members of the Commission and 13 observer States.

## **U. Integration of statistical and geospatial information**

26. The Commission considered item 3 (t) of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information ([E/CN.3/2020/25](#)) and heard a statement by the representative of Namibia, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 5 State members of the Commission and 7 observer States, as well as representatives of 3 international organizations.

## **V. Open data**

27. The Commission considered item 3 (v) of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Working Group on Open Data ([E/CN.3/2020/26](#))

and heard a statement by the representative of New Zealand, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 3 State members of the Commission and 11 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.

## **W. Working methods of the Statistical Commission**

28. The Commission considered item 3 (w) of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Bureau on working methods: towards more coordinated and coherent structure and functions of groups ([E/CN.3/2020/27](#)) and heard a statement by the Chair, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representatives of 2 State members of the Commission and 5 observer States, as well as a representative of an international organization.



## **X. World Statistics Day**

29. The Commission considered item 3 (w) of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on World Statistics Day (E/CN.3/2020/28) and heard a statement by the representative of the Office of the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, who introduced the report. Thereafter, statements were made by the representative of a State member of the Commission and 6 observer States, as well as representatives of 2 international organizations.

## **Chapter III**

### **Items for information**

1. The Commission considered item 3 (b) and item 4 (sub-items (a)–(g)) of its agenda at its 2nd, 7th and 8th meetings, on 3 and 6 March 2020.
2. At the 7th meeting, on 6 March, statements were made by the representatives of 2 States members of the Commission and 5 observer States, as well as by the representative of one international organization.
3. At its 7th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission took note of all the reports under items for information (see chap. I, sect. C, decision 51/128, also see chap. VIII, para.7).



## Chapter IV

### Programme questions (Statistics Division)

1. The Commission considered item 5 of its agenda at its 8th meeting, on 6 March 2020, and, in that context, heard an oral report by the Director of the Statistics Division concerning the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division.

#### **Action taken by the Commission**

2. At its 8th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission took note of the oral report presented by the Director of the Statistics Division concerning the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division. The Commission requested the Bureau to review substantively the programme proposals for 2021 (see chap. I, sect. C, decision 51/127).

## Chapter V

### **Provisional agenda and dates for the fifty-first session of the Commission**

1. The Commission considered item 6 of its agenda at its 8th meeting, on 6 March 2020. It had before it the following documents, which were introduced by a representative of the Office of the Director of the Statistics Division:

(a) Note by the Secretariat on the draft provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-first session of the Commission ([E/CN.3/2020/L.2](#));

(b) Note by the Secretariat on the draft multi-year programme of work of the Statistical Commission, 2020–2024 ([E/CN.3/2020/36](#)).

#### **Action taken by the Commission**

2. At its 8th meeting, on 6 March, the Commission approved the draft provisional agenda for its fifty-second session, as outlined in document [E/CN.3/2020/L.2](#) and entrusted the Bureau with streamlining and finalizing it. The Commission also decided to recommend the provisional agenda to the Economic and Social Council for approval (see chap. I, sect. B).

3. At the same meeting, the Commission decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that its fifty-second session be held from 2 to 5 March 2021 (see chap. I, sect. B).

4. Also at the same meeting, the Commission approved its draft multi-year programme of work for 2020–2024 ([E/CN.3/2020/36](#)).

## Chapter VI

### Report of the Commission on its fifty-first session

1. The Commission considered item 7 of its agenda at its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March 2020.
2. At the 8th meeting, on 6 March, the Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Commission on its fifty-first session (E/CN.3/2020/L.3), together with two-part informal paper containing the draft decisions of the session.
3. At the same meeting, statements were made on the text of the draft decisions by the representatives of 7 States members of the Commission and 17 observer States, as well as by the representative of 1 international organization.

#### Action taken by the Commission

4. At its 7th and 8th meetings, on 6 March, the Commission adopted the draft report on its fifty-first session, including the draft resolution and decisions contained therein, as orally revised, and entrusted the Rapporteur with streamlining and finalizing it.

## Chapter VII

### Organization of the session

#### A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Statistical Commission held its fifty-first session at United Nations Headquarters from 3 to 6 March 2020. The Commission held 8 meetings. .

#### B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by the representatives of the 24 States members of the Commission. Also in attendance were observers for other States Members of the United Nations and for non-Member States, representatives of United Nations system organizations and observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations. A list of participants is contained in document [E/CN.3/2020/INF/1](#).

#### C. Election of officers

3. At its 1st meeting, on 3 March, the Commission elected the following officers by acclamation:

*Chair:*

Shigeru **Kawasaki** (Japan)

*Vice-Chairs:*

Irina **Kangro** (Belarus)

Julio Alfonso **Santaella** Castell (Mexico)

Anil **Arora** (Canada)

*Rapporteur:*

Osman **Sankoh** (Sierra Leone)

#### D. Agenda and organization of work

4. At its 1st meeting, on 3 March, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document [E/CN.3/2020/1](#).

5. At the same meeting, the Commission approved the provisional programme of work and timetable of the session ([E/CN.3/2020/L.1](#)).

6. Also at the same meeting, the Commission invited the following intergovernmental organizations to participate as observers at its fifty-first session: the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics; the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre; the Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa; and the European Free Trade Association.

## E. Documentation

7. The documents before the Commission at its fifty-first session are available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/51st-session/documents>.

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