

## United Nations Statistical Commission

### Fifty-second session

1–3 and 5 March 2021

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda

### Items for discussion and decision: coordination of statistical programmes

## Document E/CN.3/2021/5 – Report of the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System on coordination within the United Nations statistical system

#### *Statement provided by:*

CANADA

#### *Statement:*

In today's world, data is clearly a strategic asset and Canada commends the work done within the UN to lead by example and commit to the ambitious data strategy as envisioned by the Secretary General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere, with insight, impact and integrity.

A strategy is only as good as its implementation and the *Data and Statistics Road Map*, as a complementary strategic plan, contributes to this vision. We believe well-designed modern data infrastructure and data processes within the UN inner system could bring efficiencies and benefits throughout the system.

We note that the Roadmap goes beyond the focus of the Strategy – which is more centered around the internal functioning of the United Nations itself—but that the Roadmap also aims to support National Statistical Systems by providing coordinated support to member states and we support this commitment to member states.

In an effort to pursue the goals in a timely fashion, the Committee has started to work on 4 priority areas as outlined in the report before us, while also continuing its regular coordination activities in the geospatial area. We recognise these priorities as important ones and the efforts of the Committee to be agile and responsive.

Related to target 2.1 on the transformation of the UN portal, including the report of the Secretary-General on data and metadata presentation and dissemination which proposes a way forward for the implementation of the Data Strategy as it concerns statistical data and metadata and related visualizations, including the creation of a global United Nations data hub based on modern interoperability standards and a federated data governance architecture we note the call for the establishment of an interagency mechanism for the full development and implementation of a new UNdata Hub which is further outlined in item 3(m).

Canada also supports the establishment of the Inter-agency and expert mechanism that includes member country representation. We believe such representation can help provide expert advice based on national experiences in addition to a stakeholder point of view as user of the external facing data hub and a direct or indirect data contributor. A diversity of voices from this set of stakeholders would be beneficial. We express our interest in being a part of this group as noted in our statement on Agenda item 3(m).

Target 2.3 in the roadmap seeks to embed predictive analytics, including nowcasting and forecasting, into United Nations system data/statistical programmes so as to ensure the provision of timely

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information in order to address emerging policy issues. The report notes that an informal network comprised of UN agencies has been formed to examine nowcasting and forecasting methodologies and that this network will also evaluate the inclusion of nowcast estimates in the main Sustainable Development Goals progress reports, as well as the organization of a training course open to all agencies on how nowcasting methodologies could be applied in the context of Sustainable Development Goal.

We agree that data and statistics are critical for the measuring and monitoring of the SDGs, but at the same time the 2030 Agenda should be country-led. In this context, should nowcasting and forecasting be used for country estimates, the informal group must be opened to member states wishing to participate and countries will need to have the detailed methodologies used to derive estimates to be able to validate.

As the roadmap extends beyond the inner data working of the UN system, we recommend the Committee continue to enhance the mechanism by which member state priorities are considered in the way forward. Member state focus could be facilitated by more frequent communication and closer collaboration with member states through member state membership in various sub-groups, task teams or workstreams where appropriate, or through formalized member state consultations in specific areas of work.

Submitted on:

2/19/2021