

## 52<sup>ND</sup> Session of the Statistical Commission (virtual) Logistical Note

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- The 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Statistical Commission will be held from 1-3 and 5 March 2021 on a virtual platform. Owing to the constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the continued risks and restrictions associated with international travel, the Commission could not organize its formal session this year. The Member States, therefore, endorsed the Bureau's proposed modalities<sup>1</sup> on convening the informal virtual meetings to go forward with the work of the Commission while ensuring business continuity and the fulfilment of the responsibilities attributed to it.
- As reflected in the programme of work (E/CN.3/2021/L.1), there will be four informal virtual meetings of the Commission. To accommodate the time difference affecting the participants, the virtual meetings will begin at 9 a.m. EST sharp. Each virtual meeting will be held for two hours: 9 -11 a.m EST on virtual platform of 'interprefy' with remote simultaneous interpretation in the six official languages. Delegations were provided training (onboarding) sessions on using the virtual platform, and its user guide was also circulated electronically. Speakers at the meeting are requested to be mindful of the additional difficulties experienced by interpreters when working in remote mode and of the increased likelihood of disruptions to the audio feed to the interpreters.
- Delegations are requested to use the following naming convention when logging into the 'interprefy' platform: COUNTRY- FirstName LastName.
- Participants may select the preferred language to hear the interpretation or choose the "none" option to hear the original language of the speaker.
- Speakers will not be able to unmute their microphones or engage their video until given the floor. When called upon to speak, the speakers will receive a message indicating that their streaming is approved. Please press the "video" button appearing in that message in order to share your video and audio. Most importantly, if you are not speaking, please remember to mute your microphone.
- In case participants face audio or video issues during the meeting, they can use the "RESTART ALL LINES" button above the hand icon on interprefy. Should the problem persist, reload the browser, or contact the technical moderator in the chat box.

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Chair of the Statistical Commission dated 21 December 2020

- Due to the unique circumstances of convening the virtual meetings, the Bureau invited delegations to submit written statements<sup>22</sup> ahead of the meetings, offering an opportunity for all delegations to contribute to the substantive discussions of the agenda items. In response, the Secretariat received an over 470 statements submitted by delegations and uploaded on the website of the 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Statistical Commission.
- In accordance with the established practice of the Commission, the provisional agenda (E/CN.3/2021/1) makes a distinction between documents “for discussion” and “for information”.
- Regarding items for decision and discussion, the Commission will hear a brief oral introduction by the respective authors of the reports before the Commission. Thereafter, the floor will be given to delegations who previously informed the Secretariat of their intention to speak in advance of this meeting, for very brief remarks. Once deliberations are concluded on each of these items, they will not be re-opened at a later stage.
- Should there be additional points to make towards consensus building, participants are encouraged to use the chatbox of the virtual platform ‘interprefy’ for making their comments. If you still wish to take the floor, please click on the green hand next to the microphone button. However, we would not encourage you to do so since the written statements are already recorded and that the comments in the chatbox will also be duly noted as your additional input to the summary.
- Speakers are requested to remain mindful of the time constraints, make only brief interventions and avoid in their interventions detailed expositions of methodology or the reporting of routine activities and national practices.
- As stated in the modality paper, the time limit to be observed when speaking on behalf of a group of states is 3 minutes and when speaking in national capacity is 2 minutes. This time limit could be further reduced to 1 minute or less depending on the time available for the discussion of specific agenda items. The Bureau has decided to strictly enforce the time limits for interventions, especially if the unplanned requests for the floor exceed the time available for the discussion of specific agenda items.
- Information items will not be introduced, and the Commission would normally be expected to take note of the information documents without further debate. In the interest of time, and in accordance with past practice, the Commission will take note of the large number of information items ‘en bloc’.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/52nd-session/documents/#statements>

- Delegations intending to provide additional clarification on information sub-items can do so by putting their comments in the chatbox.
- In the absence of formal in-person meetings during this session, the Commission will proceed with decision making on its draft report, as well formalizing the agreement on election of Bureau, provisional agenda and programme of work, and approval of participation of entities (IGOs), by silence procedure in accordance with ECOSOC decision 2021/213 of 24 February 2021. Accordingly, the Chair will circulate the draft report containing the draft decisions, together with draft proposals<sup>3</sup> already informally agreed, under silence procedure following the fourth and last virtual meeting on Friday 5 March.

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<sup>3</sup> Letter from the Chair of the Statistical Commission dated 25 February 2021 on the below proposals:

- (i) Election of the Bureau;
- (ii) adoption of the provisional agenda contained in document E/CN.3/2021/1;
- (iii) adoption of the provisional programme of work contained in document E/CN.3/2021/L.1 and;
- (iv) approval of the entities (Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)) listed in document E/CN.3/2021/CRP.1 to participate in the session as observers.