

Statement by

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President of Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Statistical Commission

New York, 7 March 2017

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address all of you at today's event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Statistical Commission. My working life has been related to the development of the field of statistics, and the opportunity to be on this podium is a tremendous honour. The persons from our country to speak from here in the past have most often held the position of President of the Republic of Latvia.

The Statistical Commission performs a very important role in the development of national statistical institutes. It aims at developing national statistics and improving its comparability, as well as promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods in general. It brings together the leading statisticians of the Commission's member states from all around the world. Through collective work, it guides and monitors the progress in strengthening and developing the global statistical system.

Data and information represent great value in the everyday life our society. During modern times, the role of statistics is of utmost importance in increasing the respective value, as we regularly come across such economic and social phenomena as globalisation, social inequality, poverty, climate change, demographic shifts and many more.

I have been extremely fortunate to be a part of the global team of statisticians, taking part in the activities of the UN Statistical Commission for many years and representing Latvia, as well as providing my contribution towards resolving various significant and topical issues.

After regaining its independence, Latvia started to work on the modification of the national statistical system to meet international standards. At that time, Latvia gained a lot from the support provided by international organisations and the leading experts of other countries. National accounts and price statistics were the domains, the evolution of which was greatly facilitated by the professional assistance provided by the UN high-level experts. They shared their experience with our specialists, thus contributing significantly to the development of the Latvian statistical system.

Since knowledge is the greatest treasure of all, the specialists of our statistical institute have always given one of the top priorities to the active participation in the methodological work of UN statistics, aimed at providing data users with high-quality information at the national, as well as international level. This has surely increased the expertise of our specialists, and I am also sure that the work carried out by our statisticians has made a positive contribution towards the development of the global statistical system.

The scope of work of the UN is far more extensive than that of any other international statistical organisation. I believe that the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics are one of the best-known UN products of global significance. The Fundamental Principles are surely a huge achievement in the history of international statistics. Although they were adopted long ago, they still are as topical as always. The principles serve as basic framework, which must be followed by all national and international organisations when carrying out statistical activities, for the official statistics to serve the public in the best way possible. Besides being respected by professionals, the Fundamental Principles have the highest recognition at the global political level.

The significance and popularity of the Fundamental Principles will increase even further in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. Agenda 2030 is a format in which all stakeholders communicate in a shared language. Multi-stakeholder partnership is key in achieving SDGs that will provide a better future for everyone around the world. The statistical community plays a major role in monitoring the progress, to make sure that no one is left behind.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Stefan and UN SD team,
Dear Ms. Bivar,

Let me congratulate all of you on the 70th anniversary of the Statistical Commission. It is my pleasure to work with you and I am sure that the future of our statistical community is destined to be bright with such outstanding colleagues as you in the Statistical Commission.

Thank you.