

**Statement by Mr. Walter Radermacher, head of the German delegation
on the occasion of the
60th anniversary of the United Nations Statistical Commission**

The 60th anniversary of the Statistical Commission is a happy occasion. If we were to recount the many achievements of the Commission we would need days instead of minutes. As the representative of Germany which presently holds the presidency of the European Union, I would like to focus on how the work of the Statistical Commission has influenced the statistical work in my country and in Europe, my region. Likewise, German and European statisticians have made valuable contributions to the work of the Statistical Commission.

From the beginning in 1947, the Statistical Commission has promoted an awareness of our common responsibility for the development of statistical methods and standards to be applied in official statistics world-wide. For 60 years the Statistical Commission has been the driving force and the forum for our joint efforts to constantly improve the methodological means of statistical observation and comparison. In many fields of statistics, the work of the Statistical Commission has laid the ground for the further development of statistical standards and methods also within the European Statistical System. This work has gone on quite unaffected by the political turbulences of the times because it was always focused on our common statistical language, our common tasks and methods and not on our differences. May the Statistical Commission continue in this spirit for many years to come.

We, the statisticians of Europe, have also contributed to the work of the Statistical Commission throughout the years. I recall the early initiatives to establish a *System of Environmental Accounts* as the result of the European experience of diminishing resources and threatened natural environments. Hopefully these initiatives will lead to an international statistical standard for environmental economic accounting in the near future. I also recall the initiative to establish the *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics* as a result of the European transition experience in the course of which statistical systems emerged as objective and user oriented information providers for democratic and market oriented societies.

Now we are facing new challenges as the Statistical Commission plays a focal role in connection with the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If the Statistical Commission is the driving force of world-wide development in statistical standards and methods, then the United Nations Statistics Division is the station master. We take this occasion to thank our colleagues at the United Nations Statistics Division, under Mr. Paul Cheung's inspiring leadership, for their dedication and tireless work to keep us on track. Best wishes for the next 60 years!