

Intervention of OHCHR, agenda item 3 (d) on Refugee statistics 4.3.2015:

*Dear colleagues,*

*I feel honoured and humble as this is the first time that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is addressing the UN Statistical Commission. I would like to start, chair, by congratulating you on your election and wish you full success. OHCHR is the principal human rights office of the United Nations. It has received a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights. As part of its mandate, our organisation has become increasingly involved in the field of official statistics, in strengthening their use and quality to advance human rights. I would like to welcome the report on refugee statistics and congratulate Statistics Norway, and the High Commissioner for Refugees. This work is essential in making more visible particularly vulnerable populations groups and supporting protection efforts. If populations are not counted, not included and revealed in our statistics, they tend to be simply ignored. They are left behind – to refer to a central challenge and call for leaving no one behind in the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Producing disaggregated statistics, including by vulnerable, marginalised or at risk of discrimination groups – will impact on human rights, and will also require protection of rights in data collection. But not producing this information, reporting mainly on national averages, will also impact human rights, hinder their realisation. We have been discussing about the content of the data revolution. There are different interpretations and views on the data revolution, including among ourselves, among specialists, statisticians and data experts. We may need to ask the question beyond ourselves, to those who are still left behind what would a data revolution mean to them? The true test of the success of the data revolution will be measured by what it will have achieved in contributing to improving the life of all population groups, without discrimination. We need big data, but we also need “small data”, if I may say, to match the ambition of the new agenda. We need to strengthen and a combined use of vital registration (the right to be registered is a human right!), inclusive censuses and household surveys as well as robust administrative records. To match the challenge, national and international statistical systems need to engage in new partnerships and involve other stakeholders, including civil society organisations and human rights institutions that can support NSOs in reaching other relevant population groups. Thank you.*