

REMARKS

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Economic and Social Council
Coordination and Management Segment

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address the Economic and Social Council in my capacity as Chairperson of the Statistical Commission. I thank you for the opportunity to summarize the most recent outcomes of the Statistical Commission as well as update you on the work undertaken by the statistical community to implement the decisions of the Commission's last session and plans for the months ahead.

The Statistical Commission held its 47th session from 8-11 March 2016 in New York. The session was attended by an unprecedented number of close to 800 delegates, including representatives from about 135 countries, as well as representatives from over 50 international and regional agencies.

The key topic of the Commission most certainly was "Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". As mandated in the 2030 Agenda, the Statistical Commission considered a proposal for the global indicator framework developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), a group established by the Statistical Commission in 2015 with the task of developing the indicator framework and addressing related methodological issues.

Over the last year, the Commission has worked very intensively on the development of the global indicator framework through its IAEG-SDGs. Much like the process of developing the 17 SDGs, the process to develop this initial set of indicators was inclusive and transparent and involved, through many consultations, a large number of stakeholders. It is important to highlight that all through the process, the statisticians from Member Countries led the work.

Distinguished Delegates of the Council,

I am proud to announce that the Commission agreed, as a practical starting point, with the proposed global indicator framework, containing 230 indicators, for the Goals and targets of

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the Commission recognized that the development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process that will need to continue over time.

The Commission also emphasized that the 230 global indicators are intended for global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are not necessarily applicable in all national contexts.

National ownership remains key to achieving sustainable development and the Commission reiterated that national reviews are voluntary and country-led. These reviews will take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and will respect the policy space and priorities of the country.

It is important to highlight that the Commission also agreed that improving data disaggregation is fundamental for the full implementation of the indicator framework and to respect fully the principle of leaving no one behind.

Moving forward, countries will have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review of progress made in implementing the SDGs, which will require high-quality, accessible and timely data.

The implementation of the indicator framework will present a challenge in most countries and appropriate efforts to strengthen national statistical capacities – especially of developing countries, including African countries, the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries, the small island developing states and other countries in special situations – will have to be significantly increased and effectively coordinated between the various actors to have maximum impact and be effective.

High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a group that was also established by the Commission last year, has the task to consider the data needs and advise on the actions to be undertaken to enable countries to produce and utilize the necessary data for the full implementation of the 2030 agenda. The group has undertaken the preparation of a Global Action Plan for the Modernisation and Strengthening of Statistical Systems for Sustainable Development and decided to organize a UN World Data Forum to engage with public and private measurements experts, statistical producers, information system specialists, and users as well as all other key stakeholders facilitating discussion on data for sustainable development.

The Group has already met once since the last session of the Commission and agreed on the further development of the Global Action Plan for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building and on plans for the first UN World Data Forum, which I am pleased to announce, will take place in Capetown, South Africa, on January 2017.

Distinguished Delegates of the Council,

Allow me also to mention that the HLG and the IAEG-SDGs have established a joint sub-group to address the specific data needs identified in the preparation of the indicators and to ensure that the two groups work in an effective and coordinated manner.

The work of the IAEG-SDGs has continued with a 3rd meeting held in Mexico only two weeks after the last session of the Commission. The meeting reviewed the tier system for the global indicators, discussed the mechanisms for future refinements and reviews of the global SDG indicators, and examined data flows from the national to the global level. IAEG-SDGs members agreed to work on the subject of data disaggregation and to create three working groups on geo-spatial information, SDMX and interlinkages between indicators and targets. As Chairperson of one of the few national organisations around the world where statistical and geo-spatial information are completely integrated, I would like to highlight the importance of geo-spatial information for the 2030 agenda, and express my recognition of the important work carried out by United Nations through its GGIM Committee.

The IAEG will continue its work based on a work plan agreed in Mexico, which highlights the main steps to finalize the classification of the indicators in Tiers, the refinements of indicators where necessary and the revisions of the indicator framework over the years, as requested by the Commission.

Meanwhile, the statistical community, with statisticians all over the world, from National Statistical Offices and various parts of national statistical systems, and experts from the international agencies, are already working intensively to compile data where already available in order to ensure that all goals and targets are appropriately reviewed and that data are appropriately used for the full implementation of the agenda, so that no individual or group will be left behind.

In conclusion, I would thank ECOSOC for its support of the work of the Statistical Commission. By taking note of the report of the Statistical Commission you will allow us to use the agreed upon indicator framework as a starting point and continue with our technical work programme as outlined in the Commission report. Taking action on the report the Council will also fulfil the mandate given by the 2030 agenda and allow the agreed upon indicator framework to move forward to the GA for consideration.

The Statistical Commission and I, as its chair, look forward to working for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you.