

## **FIRST EVER WORLD STATISTICS DAY CELEBRATED IN 100 COUNTRIES ON 20 OCTOBER 2010**

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*New York, 18 October 2010* — World Statistics Day, celebrated for the first time on 20 October 2010 worldwide, will pay tribute to statisticians' outstanding work in producing and disseminating the necessary data to respond to the every day new challenges and to measure progress in people's lives. Statistics are a daily part of national and international life and policy-making, but never before did the international community officially to pay tribute to Official Statistics through dedicating them an international day. Over 100 countries and territories and 40 international agencies will mark this Day with special events and activities.

Acknowledging that the production of reliable, timely statistics and indicators is indispensable for informed policy decisions and monitoring implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the General Assembly designated 20 October as World Statistics Day in Resolution A/64/267. Official statistics are data produced and disseminated by national statistics offices, other government departments' statistical units and indeed by many UN, international and regional statistical units.

"Statistics are a vital tool for economic and social development, including our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. For development to succeed, we need data collection and statistical analysis of poverty levels, access to education and the incidence of disease," states Secretary-General BAN Ki-moon in his Message on World Statistics Day.

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang stresses that there is much to celebrate after more than 60 years of work on official statistics at the United Nations: "That official statistics from countries around the globe are produced in a reliable, accurate, scientific and comparable manner is a great collective accomplishment. It is the result of the service, professionalism and integrity demonstrated on a daily basis by dedicated experts in the national statistical systems across the world."

"The notion of a global professional statistical family, that transcends political, economic and cultural differences among countries, is perhaps the biggest achievement of all," says UN Statistics Division Director Paul Cheung,





in his own Message for the Day. "We, at the UN, are committed to assisting countries so that every citizen in the world can rely on a well-functioning system that regularly produces, analyses, and disseminates relevant and quality statistics — statistics that respond to users' needs and concerns, statistics that can help us respond to new challenges and bring about policy changes," he adds.

#### Key activities scheduled to mark World Statistics Day:

- Public events such as conferences, seminars, round-tables, lectures, press briefings, messages by senior officials (including Heads of State), TV quiz, information in schools on upcoming Census, commemorative stamps, exhibits, etc. are being organized in over 100 countries and territories (see annexed list), by national statistical offices, international organizations, civil society organizations or universities.

- *The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics* will be launched at UN Headquarters in New York and at the World EXPO in Shanghai (at a joint UN-China ceremony). This report illustrates the direct contribution of Official Statistics to social progress. *The World's Women 2010* presents a state of both progress and shortcomings in the path towards gender equality, from health and education to decision-making and gender-based violence.

- Many international entities and UN agencies are organizing joint conferences or round-tables to mark World Statistics Day, notably in Geneva, Santiago, Vienna and Washington. In Barbados, UNICEF will brief school children on its statistical work. In Brussels, Eurostat will brief the media on how the European statistical community supports statistical institutions in developing countries.

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