

MANAGEMENT SEGMENT, 5 – 6 JUNE 2024

5 June 2024, 10AM

Item 18 (c) Statistics

Introduction of the Report of the Statistical Commission on its fifty-fifth session (E/2024/24 E/CN.3/2024/36) by the Chair of the UN Statistical Commission, Mr. Georges Simon Ulrich, Switzerland

Word count: 866 words

Dear Mr. Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council,

Ambassadors, distinguished colleagues,

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 present the work of the Statistical Commission

The Statistical Commission has a long history as a gathering place for the global statistical community to exchange technical knowledge and expertise, set standards and develop methodologies. Reflecting on the equitable geographic representation and ensuring that no one is left behind, the report of the Statistical Commission includes a draft resolution which supports an inclusive and representative Commission.

Over the past 77 years, the breadth and scope of the topics covered has expanded to include emerging issues, such as sustainable development, climate change, wellbeing, as well as handling diverse new information systems, data protection and privacy, and technological innovations which address all facets of the global development agendas. The larger focus, reflected in the 2022 ECOSOC resolution (E/RES/2022/3), giving the Statistical Commission a new mandate, encompasses the shift from solely focusing on statistics to addressing the growing demands for data and statistics.

The Statistical Commission is committed to engage with other intergovernmental bodies under ECOSOC and data and statistical communities The Commission also seeks to strengthen coordination of

the various organs and agencies' statistical programmes of the United Nations to increase synergies and provide reliable statistics and data for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With this in mind, we value the commitment of UN organs and agencies to the topic of data and actively offer to make an active professional contribution in initiatives such as the United Nations Data Strategy and the Global Digital Compact.

The annual session of the Statistical Commission was attended by over 550 delegates coming from 108 countries and around 50 international agencies and NGOs. The high level of attendance continues to reflect a strong professional commitment to support the important role that the Commission is playing for global data and statistics. Over 350 written comments on all agenda items were submitted and uploaded to the Commission's website. There were also 28 virtual side events, and 58 in-person ones, held at the margins of the annual session.

We successfully concluded with 23 technical decisions, which will guide the global statistical system as well as the future work of the Statistics Division of DESA.

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to draw your attention to some important decisions by the Commission:

First, as initially mandated at its 53rd session, the Statistical Commission successfully negotiated the draft resolution "An inclusive and representative Statistical Commission to leave no one behind" and the Commission took a historical step in its unanimous adoption. Through an open transparent process including global consultation and informal meetings, the views of Member states were incorporated into the agreed upon text of the resolution. Over the next three years, membership in the Commission will be incrementally increased from 24 to 54 members.

Intent on preserving the technical nature of the Statistical Commission, the resolution requests for a review and report on the progress towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the resolution.

The Commission was very satisfied with the work on the SDG indicator methodologies and data sources. It recognized the importance of the 2025 comprehensive review in improving the SDG indicator framework, being undertaken by the Commission's "Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs – created in March 2015), which works in close cooperation with the Statistics Division of DESA, to better monitor progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Commission endorsed the specific criteria and detailed submission requirements for the review.

The Commission also endorsed the recommendations for the update of the (current) 2008 "System of National Accounts", except for the recommendation on marketing assets, and affirmed that it stands ready to technically support a political process that defines the dimensions to be measured of "Beyond GDP".

After being interrupted by the Covid pandemic, the Commission recognized increased modernization of census operations, requested a draft resolution to launch the 2030 World population and housing census programme to be prepared for the 56th session and expressed its appreciation for the preparations of the ongoing work on the principles and recommendations for the population and housing censuses for the 2030 round.

Finally, the Commission invited all data stakeholders to the UN World Data Forum being held in November 2024 in Colombia, where a renewed "Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data" and key commitments will be highlighted.

Distinguished delegates,

You will also find in the Commission's report decisions on such relevant cross-cutting topics as fundamental principles of official statistics, international statistical classifications, data science, and the integration of statistical and geospatial information. Moreover, you will find decisions upon such important topics as agricultural and rural statistics, environmental-economic accounting, tourism statistics, and climate change statistics, to name only a few.

Distinguished delegates,

The Statistical Commission is fully dedicated to supporting ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present the Statistical Commission's report and decisions to you and look forward to your continued and strong support in the Commission's work.

Thank you.
