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DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING STATISTICS

Progress report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Housing and related statistics

1. As a supplement to the reports on demographic statistics set forth in E/CN.3/413, this addendum contains a brief account of progress achieved with respect to housing and related statistics.
2. At its fifteenth session, the Commission received a detailed report<sup>1/</sup> on the development of housing statistics during the period 1964-1967. The report dealt with (1) the need for housing statistics at the national and international levels, (2) development in connexion with the principal methods of collection (housing censuses, housing sample surveys and a system of current housing statistics), (3) standardization of definitions and classifications, (4) improvements in housing statistics at the national level, (5) collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination of housing statistics at the international level and (6) development assistance activities.
3. The present report covers progress in respect of housing statistics since the fifteenth session and draws attention to statistical series in addition to housing statistics which may be required for urban planning.

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<sup>1/</sup> "Progress report on improvement in housing statistics, 1964-1967" (E/CN.3/379).

A. Promotion of national housing censuses

4. During the period covered by this report, efforts have been directed mainly towards the promotion of the 1970 World Housing Census Programme. This has been effected through seminars and training courses dealing with the organization and conduct of population and housing censuses, the deployment of experts in the field and the preparation of methodological material for the use of census takers. Activities for the promotion of housing censuses are generally combined with those aimed at promoting population censuses. These activities are described in the "Progress report on the 1970 world population census programme" attached to document E/CN.3/413. Some additional information concerning the World Housing Census Programme not covered in that report is included in the following paragraphs.

1. Interim report on housing censuses carried out or planned, or both

5. The success of efforts in relation to the 1970 census decade cannot be measured until the end of the decade in 1974, but an indication of the probable outcome is given in the annex to the "Progress report on the 1970 world population census programme" which shows the dates of national population and housing censuses taken in the 1960 census decade ended 1964 and those already taken or planned, beginning in 1965. The list reflects the information available to the Statistical Office of the United Nations as of 30 June 1969.

6. The table below summarizes the information on housing censuses, showing for each region: the total number of countries (column 1); the number of countries which have taken a housing census between 1965 and 1968 (column 4); the number which have not yet held a census in the 1970 decade but have confirmed their intention to do so (column 5); the number for which it has been assumed, on the basis of the anticipated continuation of the observed tendency towards recurrent quinquennial or decennial censuses, that a census will be held during the period, but which have not yet confirmed this (column 6); the number which have stated that they have no plans at the moment for holding a census during the decade (column 7) and the number of countries for which no information is available (column 8). For comparison, the number of countries which took a census during the 1955-1964 decade is also shown (column 2).

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Number of countries which have taken at least one housing census during the periods 1955-1964 and 1965-1968, and national plans for 1969-1974

Continent	Total number of countries in the world	1955-1964	1965-1974					
		At least one census taken	At least one census taken or planned			Intention to take a census assumed but not confirmed <sup>a/</sup>	No present plans for a census	Information not available
			Total	Census taken (1965-1968)	Intention to take a census confirmed <sup>a/</sup>			
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Total .....	225	137	139	45	94	8	61	18
Africa ..	53	21	26	5	21	-	26	6
America, North...	36	32	27	4	23	2	6	1
America, South..	15	13	9	-	9	4	2	-
Asia.....	47	21	28	9	19	1	10	8
Europe...	41	34	34	15	19	1	4	2
Oceania..	28	15	14	12	2	-	13	1
USSR.....	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-

a/ Excluding countries which have already taken a census during the period 1965-1968.

7. The information available for the timing of housing censuses suggests that the 1970 round of housing censuses may cover more countries, and therefore a greater proportion of the world's housing than was included in the 1960 censuses. A total of 137 countries carried out a housing census during the years 1955-1964. Up to the present date, 139 countries have either taken a housing census during the period 1965-1968, or have confirmed that they plan to hold a census before the end of 1974. As is true also of population censuses, it is not entirely certain that all of these 139 countries will in fact succeed in taking a census of housing, but it is also probable that at least some of the eight which by tradition should participate in the programme, and some of the sixty-one with no present

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plans, will come into the group, thus pushing the number of countries participating in the 1970 censuses to more than 139.

8. In terms of estimated mid-1967 population, the housing conditions of 423 million persons have been investigated by means of housing censuses during the period 1965-1968. Since censuses confirmed to be taken between 1969 and 1974 will cover another 1,850 million persons, the censuses carried out during the 1970 census decade will probably cover the housing of at least 2,273 million persons constituting 66 per cent of the world's population.

9. It should be noted that the above analysis does not take into consideration sample surveys which may provide national housing data, either in place of census results or supplementary to them. Neither does it take into account a large number of housing censuses of less than national scope, for example, censuses which cover urban areas, the principal cities or cities of a certain size.

## 2. World and regional recommendations for the 1970 housing censuses

### (a) World recommendations

10. At its fifteenth session, the Commission was informed that the English version of Principles and Recommendations for the 1970 Housing Censuses<sup>2/</sup> had been issued and widely distributed. During 1968, the French, Spanish and Russian versions of the housing census recommendations were published and distributed, thus completing the initial circulation of all language versions of this publication.

11. As a result of the large demand for copies of the publication, a second edition was issued in English, French and Spanish. The new edition contains some non-substantive changes, the majority of which were rendered necessary by the 1968 revision of International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) and the 1966 revision of International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), neither of which was available in time for the preparation of the original edition of the census recommendations. All references to the ISIC and the ISCO have been brought up to date and each change made in this respect has been identified by a foot-note explanation which indicates the nature of the change and

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<sup>1/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.XVII.4.

the reason for it. The opportunity was also taken to effect minor editorial changes. For the convenience of users of the publication, the new edition will be distributed to all national census and statistics offices and to other potential users who had been provided with complimentary copies of the original edition.

(b) Regional recommendations

12. The Commission was informed at its previous session that regional recommendations, consisting of variants of the parts of the world recommendations concerned with topics and tabulations, making special provision for regional needs and capabilities that cannot be adequately dealt with on a world-wide basis, had been approved by the Conference of African Statisticians, the Conference of Asian Statisticians and the Committee on the Improvement of National Statistics (COINS) of the Inter-American Statistical Institute, and that the Asian regional variant had already been published.<sup>3/</sup> In the interim, the European regional variant was approved by the Conference of European Statisticians (Conf. Eur. Stats/269, para. 49) and the African,<sup>4/</sup> the American<sup>5/</sup> and the European<sup>6/</sup> regional variants have been issued.

3. Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods

13. Progress with respect to the Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods is described in "Progress report on the 1970 world population census programme" attached to document E/CN.3/413.

4. Dissemination of national housing census results

14. The dissemination of housing census results, which is a continuing activity of the United Nations, is primarily accomplished through the United Nations

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<sup>3/</sup> Asian Recommendations for the 1970 Housing Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.II.F.9).

<sup>4/</sup> "African recommendations for the 1970 housing censuses" (E/CN.14/CAS.6/2).

<sup>5/</sup> "Programa del censo de America de 1970 (COTA-1970)", pp. 20-121 in Informe de la IX Sesión de la Comisión de Mejoramiento de las Estadísticas Nacionales (COINS) (IASI document 5679b).

<sup>6/</sup> European Recommendations for the 1970 Housing Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.II.E/Mim.25).

Statistical Yearbook, each issue of which contains the most recent census data available. Published tables include information on number of dwellings, levels of occupancy, number of rooms and availability of basic facilities; number, average size and tenure of households; number of dwellings constructed by number of rooms and type of builder. Data are shown separately for urban and rural areas.

15. Questionnaires used to collect information for publication in the Statistical Yearbook have been revised to reflect changes in the world recommendations for carrying out the 1970 housing censuses. The tables published in the 1969 issue of the Yearbook will be similarly revised to bring them into line with the 1970 census recommendations.

16. The Compendium of Social Statistics, 1967,<sup>7/</sup> issued in 1968, contains housing census data in more detail than those published in the Statistical Yearbook and designed to indicate more clearly housing deficiencies. The Compendium is a revised and up-dated edition of the 1963 Compendium, which comprises basic statistical indicators required for describing the major aspects of the social situation in the world and regions.

17. At the present time, work is in progress on the computerization of housing census data according to a data retrieval system which, it is hoped, will facilitate the preparation of the "United Nations Yearbook of Housing Statistics" called for by Economic and Social Council resolution 41 (IV) and permit wider dissemination of housing census information.

#### B. Current housing statistics

18. With respect to current housing statistics, the Commission may recall that efforts have been made to encourage development of these series at the regional level. However, only in Europe have specific recommendations for a regional system of current statistics been formulated. In Asia, recommendations have been made by the Conference of Asian Statisticians which could serve as a basis for a more specific programme to assist countries in developing these statistics. Regional programmes have not yet been formulated in the Americas or in Africa, although in both areas a tentative basis for such programmes already exists.

19. Information which reflects changes in the housing inventory, and particularly the volume of dwelling construction being achieved, is essential for planning and

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<sup>7/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.XVII.9.

other purposes. Therefore, it is suggested that a conceptual and methodological framework, within which current housing statistics might be developed at the national level, should be prepared in those regions lacking such a framework, namely, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

C. Methods of estimating housing needs

20. In connexion with the improvement of housing statistics at the national level, the English version of a manual entitled Methods of Estimating Housing Needs<sup>8/</sup> had been issued prior to the fifteenth session. Subsequently, this manual was issued in both Spanish and French.

D. Statistics required for urban planning

21. Without minimizing the importance of information which describes the housing situation and the activities which bring about changes in this situation, it is becoming increasingly evident that housing information represents only one aspect of the information required for an over-all approach to a planned urban environment. The following paragraphs outline developments in the field of urban planning and suggest a parallel development with respect to the statistical data required as a basis for such planning.

1. Background

22. In recent years, increased emphasis has been placed on planning for urban development. The mass movement of rural populations to urban areas is now recognized as inevitable and irreversible and, in spite of the problems which it poses, as a necessary and therefore desirable aspect of the process of over-all social and economic growth. Also recognized is the need to provide at least a broad framework within which urban environments may be enabled to make the necessary adjustments to accommodate and subsequently assimilate the rural influx and to accomplish this with the minimum disruption of those essential economic and social functions typically performed in urban areas.

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<sup>8/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 67.XVII.15.

23. Until recently, urban planning was considered in terms of urban renewal or urban housing projects more characteristic of developed than developing countries. However, it is become apparent that during early periods of development the pattern of the urban environment frequently becomes permanently established and that certain precautions should be taken to ensure that development and growth take place within at least a broad planned framework aimed at avoiding costly restructuring of the area at a later stage. Such plans normally determine the location of commercial, industrial and residential areas as well as the areas to be reserved for facilities such as ports, air and rail terminals, highways etc.

24. Unplanned urban development can be unnecessarily costly in the long run if it results in conditions which impede or disrupt the efficient functioning of the area or if it leads to a situation which ultimately requires substantial re-ordering of the area involving relocation of industry, replanning of residential areas, relocation of squatter settlements etc. Since it is the developing countries which can least afford these additional costs, there would appear to be advantages in examining their urban problems and planning requirements during the initial stages of development and, at the same time, considering the statistical information which would most effectively serve as a basis for the formulation of urban policy and programmes.

2. Activities within the United Nations in the field of urban planning

25. Recognition by the United Nations of the need for urban planning has resulted in the development of basic principles for the planning of urban areas, the provision of expert advice as requested by Governments and the direct support of a number of projects connected with urban development. As of 30 June 1969, there were twenty-seven projects under way devoted exclusively to urban planning (not including projects in over-all economic or physical planning which also encompass urban areas or projects related to urban planning such as those dealing with the construction industry or the formulation of housing programmes or traffic planning). Nine of the twenty-seven projects are taking place under the United Nations Development Programme, fifteen are financed under the technical assistance programme and three are urban planning posts under the OPEX programme. As a further indication of the increased emphasis in this area of activity, it is



pertinent to note that the number of technical assistance and UNDP experts engaged in housing, building and physical planning increased from 46 in 1960 to 181 in 1968.

3. Development of the statistics required for urban planning

26. Urban plans are based on knowledge of the existing situation derived from the most reliable information available and assumptions concerning changes in this situation which may result from population growth, internal and international migration, economic growth, social and cultural development etc. To provide this information, statistical data need to be systematically gathered in a form which can be readily utilized as part of the over-all planning process. Absence of such data leads in many cases to conclusions and assumptions founded on pure guesswork.

27. One of the aims of the United Nations Centre for Housing, Building and Planning is to establish basic principles for urban and metropolitan planning which are applicable to the special circumstances of developing countries and consistent with over-all plans for economic and social development. It seems appropriate that the Statistical Office should develop an accompanying statistical framework which would provide for development of the statistical series required for such planning on the one hand and which would also conform to an integrated system of statistics needed for over-all development planning.

28. In fact, tentative steps in this direction have already been taken. As the Commission was informed at its fifteenth session (see E/CN.3/379, para. 45) proposals for a series of seminars dealing with statistics for urban planning had been discussed with the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning. Subsequently, draft proposals for these seminars were jointly submitted by the Statistical Office and the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning. This project is presently under consideration.

29. Work has also been initiated in this area by the Economic Commission for Europe. At its sixteenth session, in December 1967, the Working Party on Housing, Building and Planning Statistics (whose parent bodies are the Conference of European Statisticians and the ECE Committee on Housing, Building and Planning) had a provisional exchange of views on the aims and scope of the work in the

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field of statistics for urban renewal and planning.<sup>9/</sup> It was agreed that this was a broad subject which extends beyond the field of housing and construction statistics proper and that, as a first step, the objectives of the work on statistics in this field should be studied and a programme of work drawn up. A group of rapporteurs was set up for this purpose. As suggested at that meeting, development of a comprehensive system of statistics for urban planning may depend more upon an understanding of what is required and the organization and assembling of existing statistics than the development of new series.

30. The Statistical Office proposes to give consideration to the statistical series that are necessary for urban planning generally and to the development of broad guidelines for countries wishing to develop or assemble these data. The scope and detail of the information required in each case would need to conform to national urban planning requirements. Where, as in many cases, planning consists only of providing a broad framework within which urban areas are permitted to develop in accordance with the opportunities and restraints of a free market economy, statistical needs may be broader and more general than for a country where plans are more detailed.

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<sup>9/</sup> Working Party on Housing, Building and Planning Statistics, "Report of session held in Geneva, 18-21 December 1967" (ECE document HOU/133-HOU/WP.3/61-Conf.Eur.Stats/WG.18/26).