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STATISTICAL COMMISSION  
Twentieth session  
Item 2 of the provisional agenda.  
Adoption of the agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTIETH SESSION  
OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

(Headquarters, <sup>20 Feb - 2 Mar</sup>~~15 to 26~~ January 1979)

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ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure, the Commission will elect at its first meeting a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur to serve from the beginning of the twentieth session of the Commission to the beginning of the twenty-first session.

2. Adoption of the agenda

*E/CN.3/L.86 (Organization of the work of the session)*

The items on the provisional agenda and the corresponding documentation were considered by the Commission at the nineteenth session <sup>1/</sup> and by the Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination at its seventh session (see E/CN.3/502, paras. 4-53). A number of editorial changes and changes in the sequence of items have been made in order to improve the logical presentation of the documentation.

In addition, item 5 (d) of the draft provisional agenda adopted by the Commission, entitled "Improvement and integration of social statistics in developing countries", and designated by the Working Group as "Case studies in the improvement of social statistics in developing countries" (E/CN.3/502, paras. 34-36), has been deleted since it has become apparent that there will not be enough case material available in time to produce a useful report.

3. Industrial, energy, transport and international trade statistics

(a) Industrial statistics

The Secretary-General will submit to the Commission a document containing some initial proposals for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics. The document will include the background and history of the previous programmes, the current situation of industrial statistics, particularly in developing countries, and a brief description of the programme proposed for 1983. In the light of a review of the results of the 1973 programme, a number of questions will be raised with a view to introducing improvements.

Documentation

"Initial proposals for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics"  
(E/CN.3/503)

(b) Energy statistics

The Secretary-General will report to the Commission on the development of

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<sup>1/</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), chap. XI.

international energy statistics. An expert group on classification and measurement in the field of energy statistics is scheduled to meet in March 1978, and the results of the meeting will be reflected in the progress report.

Documentation

"Progress report on the development of international energy statistics"  
(E/CN.3/504)

(c) Transport statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a report on the gaps and achievements in shipping statistics, within the framework of transport statistics.

Documentation

"Shipping statistics, within the framework of transport statistics"  
(E/CN.3/505)

(d) International trade statistics

The Secretary-General will report to the Commission on the concepts and definitions in international trade statistics, on the basis of the recommendations of an expert group that met in December 1977. The expert group reviewed country practices and difficulties encountered by users of these statistics and made recommendations for revising International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions. <sup>2/</sup>

Documentation

"International trade statistics: a review of concepts and definitions"  
(E/CN.3/506)

4. National accounts and balances

(a) Review of the System of National Accounts (SNA)

When publication of the revised System of National Accounts <sup>3/</sup> was approved by the Commission, at the fifteenth session, the approval was accompanied by a request "to keep under review and to report to the Commission from time to time the progress made by countries in applying the new system, together with any conceptual or practical difficulties encountered" (resolution 1 (XV), para. 9). That request has been repeated periodically since then, most recently at the

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<sup>2/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.XVII.16.

<sup>3/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No. E.69.XVII.3.

nineteenth session. 4/ The Secretary-General will submit to the Commission a document containing the preliminary findings of such a review.

Documentation

"Review of the implementation of the revised System of National Accounts"  
(E/CN.3/507) *Corr. 1 (E, R, S only)*

(b) Tangible capital assets

At the eighteenth session, the Commission requested preparation of draft international guidelines on statistics of the stocks of tangible capital assets of establishment-type units in the context of SNA and MPS (System of Balances of the National Economy). 5/ At its seventh session, the Commission's Working Group decided to add this subject to the Commission's agenda (E/CN.3/502, paras. 22-24).

Documentation

"Draft international guidelines on statistics of tangible assets"  
(E/CN.3/508)

(c) Public sector statistics

At the nineteenth session, the Commission approved an approach to reconciliation of the United Nations "Draft manual on public sector statistics" and the IMF's draft "Manual on government finance statistics" and requested that a revision of the United Nations manual be prepared along the lines indicated. 6/ It also considered a draft detailing of the classification of the purposes of government and requested its revision. 7/ The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on the public sector manual and a draft of the revised classification.

Documentation

"Progress report on the manual on public sector statistics" (E/CN.3/509)

"Draft detailing of the classification of the <sup>*functions*</sup> ~~purposes~~ of government"  
(E/CN.3/510)

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4/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), para. 29 (d).

5/ Ibid., Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5603), para. 143 (b) (iii).

6/ Ibid., Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2, para. 36 (a).

7/ Ibid., para. 36 (b).

(d) Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on links between SNA and MPS. One aspect of this work concerns total consumption of goods and services by the population, and a document on this topic will also be prepared. It will be a conceptual discussion, supplemented with some statistical examples.

Documentation

"Progress report on links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)" (E/CN.3/511)

"Total consumption of the population: technical report" (E/CN.3/512)

5. International Comparison Project (ICP)

At the nineteenth session, the Commission expressed strong support "for a continuation and expansion of the International Comparison Project (ICP) and its conversion in due course into a regular collection and estimation activity". <sup>8/</sup> A report on this subject will outline the history of the project and review the major issues in relation to future work, including general interagency co-ordination, the role of the regional commissions, technical issues to be considered and the steps required to establish ICP as a regular data collection and estimation activity.

Documentation

~~The~~ International Comparison Project: a review of major issues and plans for its ~~further~~ development" (E/CN.3/513)

*future*

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<sup>8/</sup> Ibid., para. 201 (d).

6. International statistical classifications

At the nineteenth session, the Commission approved a long-term programme of work on the harmonization of economic classifications, leading to the eventual development of a combined trade/production commodity classification. It was agreed that the first step in this programme should be consideration of revisions in the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) 9/ that such a programme would entail. 10/ A document reviewing this and other aspects of the work on economic classifications will be prepared by the Secretary-General.

Documentation

"Progress report on the harmonization of economic classifications"  
(E/CN.3/514)

7. Social and demographic statistics

(a) 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme

At the nineteenth session, the Commission requested that final draft recommendations for the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme be submitted for consideration at the twentieth session. 11/ The Secretary-General has prepared these draft recommendations which were considered by an expert group in January 1978.

Documentation

"Draft principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses"  
(E/CN.3/515)

(b) Organization of integrated social statistics

At the nineteenth session, the Commission requested a report dealing with practical methods of integrating social statistics. 12/ The Secretary-General will prepare such a report, incorporating the views of an expert group which is scheduled to meet in March 1978.

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9/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.68.XVII.8.

10/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), para. 124.

11/ Ibid., para. 54 (b).

12/ Ibid., para. 83 (b).

Documentation

"Methods of collecting, organizing and retrieving social statistics to achieve integration" (E/CN.3/516)

(c) Social indicators

At the nineteenth session, the Commission requested a summary report on recent developments in national and international work on social indicators. 13/ The Secretary-General will submit such a report based on work in the specialized agencies, regional commissions and institutions, other international organizations and in countries publishing compendia of social indicators and social statistics and sponsoring research on the subject.

Documentation

*Progress report on*  
"Recent developments in national and international work on social indicators" (E/CN.3/517)

(d) Harmonization of concepts and classifications among specialized fields of social statistics

At the nineteenth session, the Commission agreed that in further work on a framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics, high priority should be given to the harmonization of social, demographic and related economic concepts, classifications and definitions. 14/ The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on such harmonization, including age classification.

Documentation

"Progress report on the harmonization of concepts and classifications among specialized fields of social statistics" (E/CN.3/518)

(e) Statistics of time use

At the nineteenth session, the Commission agreed on the need for a detailed discussion of "concepts and statistics of time and time use, and of their role in an integrated approach to social and demographic statistics". 15/ The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on statistics of time use.

Documentation

"Progress report on the development of statistics of time-use" (E/CN.3/519)

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13/ Ibid., para. 105 (c).

14/ Ibid., para. 83 (d).

15/ Ibid., para. 81.



8. Environment statistics

At the nineteenth session, the Commission requested a progress report on co-ordination of environment statistics. 16/ The Secretary-General will submit this report, which will indicate both problems and progress. A second progress report, requested by the Commission at the same session, 17/ will review work relating to a questionnaire on data needs and availability and to a pilot study on the compilation of a dictionary describing technological processes.

Documentation

"Progress report on the co-ordination of environment statistics" (E/CN.3/520)

"Progress report on environment statistics" (E/CN.3/521)

9. Statistical organization

At the nineteenth session, the Commission gave detailed consideration to the organization of national statistical services and decided that statistical organization should be on the agenda for the twentieth session, with special emphasis on ways and means of deciding on priorities in statistical programmes. 18/

Documentation

"The setting of priorities in national statistics: a review of major issues" (E/CN.3/522)

10. Technical co-operation

(a) International technical co-operation in statistics, 1979-1983

At the nineteenth session, the Commission considered a report covering 1977-1981 and indicated that a similar report should be prepared for 1979-1983. 19/ Such a report, organized by major types of activities, will be submitted to the Commission as a joint report of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

At its seventh session, the Commission's Working Group decided that the above-mentioned report should be supplemented by one on problems and directions in technical co-operation in statistics (E/CN.3/502, para. 69). The Secretary-General will submit the report which will include a description of the procedures

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16/ Ibid., para. 115 (c).

17/ Ibid., para. 115 (d).

18/ Ibid., para. 142 (d).

19/ Ibid., para. 145.

followed by both the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of Technical Co-operation for evaluating technical co-operation projects at their various stages. The report will also indicate some new directions in technical co-operation in statistics.

Documentation

"International technical co-operation in statistics, 1979-1983" (E/CN.3/523)

*Notes on*  
"/Procedures for evaluating technical co-operation projects and *some* review of new directions in technical co-operation in statistics" (E/CN.3/524)

(b) Training of statistical personnel

At the nineteenth session, the Commission was concerned by the decrease in the allocation of funds to training, especially regional funds. <sup>20/</sup> On the Commission's recommendation, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2054 (LXII) of 5 May 1977 which, inter alia, requested the United Nations Development Programme to increase the funds for the training of statisticians, especially regional funds. A report will be prepared, reviewing the training of statistical personnel carried out through the United Nations system and paying special attention to regional training. The results of a mission to review the training needs of statisticians in Africa will be included and reviews carried out in other regions will be described. The report will also consider basic issues in relation to future training.

Documentation

"Review of training of statistical personnel" (E/CN.3/525)

(c) Data processing

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on developmental and assistance activities in statistical data processing provided by the United Nations system.

Documentation

"Technical co-operation in statistical data processing" (E/CN.3/526)

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<sup>20/</sup> Ibid., para. 147.

(d) National Household Survey Capability Programme

At the nineteenth session, the Commission welcomed the initiative of the African household survey capability programme and felt that "similar programmes with respect to survey operations should be developed to meet the needs of other developing regions". <sup>21/</sup> On the Commission's recommendation, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2055 (LXII) of 5 May 1977 on a National Household Survey Capability Programme, which, in paragraph 5, "requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, to provide all necessary support for this programme and to submit a progress report to the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session".

Documentation

"Progress report on the National Household Survey Capability Programme"  
(E/CN.3/527)

*E/CN.3/L.88 (draft resolution)*

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<sup>21/</sup> Ibid., para. 166.

11. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes

(a) Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination

Pursuant to Commission resolution 1 (XVI) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1306 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, the Commission's Working Group held its seventh session at Geneva on 23 and 24 June 1977 and will report to the Commission thereon.

Documentation

"Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination; report of the seventh session" (E/CN.3/502 and Corr.1)

(b) International statistical programmes, 1979-1983

At the nineteenth session, the Commission considered a report on that subject covering the period 1977-1981 and indicated that similar reports should be prepared in the future. <sup>22/</sup> Such a report, covering 1979-1983, will be submitted to the Commission as a joint report of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The report will be organized according to the revised major policy objectives adopted by the Commission's Working Group (E/CN.3/502, para. 75) and refined by the Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination at its twelfth session, in February 1978. The report will include an analysis of what has been achieved in co-ordination in selected substantive areas.

Documentation

*A* and International statistical programmes, 1979-1983, and analysis of past achievements in co-ordination in selected areas" (E/CN.3/528)

12. Programme objectives: implementation and prospects

(a) Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report summarizing the statistical work of the regional commissions and of the Inter-American Statistical Institute since the nineteenth session of the Commission.

Documentation

"Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies" (E/CN.3/529)

(b) Statistical work of the specialized agencies

A progress report will be before the Commission, summarizing the statistical work of the specialized agencies since the nineteenth session of the Commission.

22/ Ibid., paras. 188-189.

Documentation

"Statistical work of the specialized agencies" (E/CN.3/530)

(c) Statistical Office of the United Nations

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report summarizing the work of the Office since the nineteenth session of the Commission; another document will contain the programme objectives, medium-term plan, 1980-1983, and the work programme of the Office.

Documentation

"Statistical Office of the United Nations" (E/CN.3/531)

"Programme objectives, medium-term plan, 1980-1983, and work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations" (E/CN.3/532) + E/CN.3/XX/CRP.1 (RESTRICTED)

13. Other business ↗

At the nineteenth session, the Commission discussed briefly the meaning attached to a number of terms used frequently in Commission documents and in international statistical programmes and publications. Definitions of some of the terms were discussed at the eleventh session of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities and at the seventh session of the Commission's Working Group. The latter requested that the definitions be refined and presented to the Commission (E/CN.3/502, para. 65). The Secretary-General will submit a document containing the proposed definitions.

The Commission may also wish to discuss under this item any matters not covered under other items of the agenda.

Documentation ↓

"Proposed definitions of selected terms for use by the Statistical Commission" (E/CN.3/533)

14. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-first session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, a draft provisional agenda for the subsequent session will be presented to the Commission during the twentieth session. The Commission may wish to modify the draft as necessary, based on the decisions made during the session. E/CN.3/L.89

15. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

The report of the Commission on its twentieth session will be prepared by the Rapporteur, with the assistance of the Secretariat.

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E/CN.3/L.87 and Add.  
1-27