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Twenty-third session
25 February-6 March 1985
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Special issues:
 - (a) Meeting user needs for, and improving the dissemination of, international statistics;
 - (b) Future direction of work on social indicators;
 - (c) Publication policy for statistics.
4. National accounts and balances:
 - (a) System of National Accounts (SNA);
 - (b) Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS).
5. International economic classifications.
6. Price statistics.
7. Industry, energy and environment statistics:
 - (a) Statistics of mineral resources;
 - (b) Energy and environment statistics.

8. Demographic and social statistics:
 - (a) Social indicators and the integration of social, demographic and related statistics;
 - (b) Population and housing censuses.
9. Technical co-operation:
 - (a) Technical co-operation in statistics;
 - (b) Development of country capabilities: the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) and the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS);
 - (c) Special problems of the statistically least developed countries.
10. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes.
11. Programme implementation.
12. Programme objectives and planning.
13. Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.
14. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

Annotations

1. Election of officers

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

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The items on the provisional agenda and the corresponding documentation were considered by the Commission at its twenty-second session 1/ and, "bearing in mind the views expressed in chapter XIV of the report of the Commission on the work of its twenty-second session, and the need to reduce documentation in accordance with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Council", approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1983/119 of 26 May 1983.

The Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination considered the provisional agenda at its tenth session (see E/CN.3/1985/17, paras. 7-25). In response to Economic and Social Council

resolution 1983/53 of 28 July 1983, entitled "Standardization of definitions and terminology for mineral resources", the Working Group amended item 7 of the provisional agenda (Energy and environment statistics) to read "Industry, energy and environment statistics". By that resolution, the Secretary-General had been requested "to take into account the recommendations in the report [of the group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General in pursuance of Council resolution 1979/72 of 3 August 1979] relating to the activities of the United Nations in the reporting, compilation and publication of statistics on mineral production and consumption" and "to consider which additional activities would be required to implement those recommendations, including those concerning definitions and terminology for individual minerals and metals, and statistics on the secondary recovery of metals" and to report the progress made in pursuance of those requests to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-third session. Item 7 of the provisional agenda, therefore, includes two sub-items, namely sub-item 7 (a), entitled "Statistics of mineral resources" and sub-item 7 (b), entitled "Energy and environment statistics".

Some changes were proposed by the Working Group under items 4 (National accounts and balances), 8 (Demographic and social statistics) and 9 (Technical co-operation) of the provisional agenda which has been structured by the Secretary-General to reflect these changes. There are two sub-items under item 4, namely sub-item 4 (a), entitled "System of National Accounts (SNA)", and sub-item 4 (b), entitled "Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)". A report will be submitted under each sub-item. Item 8 of the provisional agenda includes sub-item 8 (a), entitled "Social indicators and the integration of social, demographic and related statistics", and sub-item 8 (b), entitled "Population and housing censuses". The Working Group decided to postpone two documents which the Statistical Commission had decided to consider at its twenty-third session under item 8 of the provisional agenda, namely, the report on recent developments in national population registration systems and their statistical use and the report on national practices in coding country of birth or citizenship in compiling international migration statistics. Under item 9 of the provisional agenda, there are three sub-items, namely sub-item 9 (a), entitled "Technical co-operation in statistics", sub-item 9 (b), entitled "Development of country capabilities: the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) and the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS)" and sub-item 9 (c), entitled "Special problems of the statistically least developed countries". Relevant documents are submitted under each sub-item. The working Group decided to postpone to a subsequent session the document on the assessment of the effectiveness of technical co-operation in statistics, which the Commission had proposed to consider at its twenty-third session.

On the basis of the experience at the twenty-second session of the Statistical Commission, the Working Group decided to discontinue the practice of identifying documents as for discussion or for information which had been introduced at that session on an experimental basis.

Documentation

Organization of the work of the session: note by the Secretariat
(E/CN.3/1985/L.1)

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3. Special issues

(a) Meeting user needs for, and improving the dissemination of, international statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a report suggesting possible ways to improve the identification of users of Statistical Office data and their needs, as well as the dissemination of international statistics. The report will concentrate on the publications and areas of responsibility of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and discuss the impact of modern data processing on the structure and composition of the products needed by users and supplied by the Statistical Office. It will include information on the method of informing users of the total range of statistical services that can be made available, the reduction in the time-lag between the availability of data and their publication, and the need for continuing interaction between the users and producers of statistics.

Documentation

Meeting user needs for, and improving the dissemination of, international statistics: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/2)

(b) Future direction of work on social indicators

The Secretary-General will submit an issue-oriented report covering the co-ordination of socio-economic data sources and classifications for social indicators and the development of social indicators at the national and international levels. It will emphasize new approaches to the co-ordination of data collection and compilation for social indicators, the maintenance of data bases, and the presentation and dissemination of indicators. It will review national and international approaches to the selection and definition of indicators for special population groups, and future directions, questions and problems in this area.

Documentation

Direction of future work on social indicators: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/3)

(c) Publication policy for statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a report on the broad aspects of the publication policies of international statistical agencies, dealing mainly with the policies of the United Nations. It will provide a summary of current activities and a review of major matters of policy. The document will address some important related issues such as the impact of data availability in machine-readable form on the demand for publications. Planned improvements in publications will be described.

Documentation

Broad aspects of the publication policies of statistical agencies: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/4)

4. National accounts and balances

(a) System of National Accounts (SNA)

The report to be submitted under this sub-item will describe the work of the involved international organizations on the review of SNA. This work is co-ordinated through the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts, which is comprised of representatives of the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Economic Community (EEC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The report will include a summary of the review topics and any preliminary conclusions that have been reached in various international forums. The topics will include the clarification and updating of SNA concepts and classifications, the linking of SNA standards with related statistical standards, and various practical issues related to statistical sources and methods and uses of national accounts that will be described in detail in the forthcoming Handbook of National Accounts series.

Documentation

Review of the System of National Accounts (SNA): report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/5)

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

The Secretary-General will submit a report on the major accomplishments achieved in inter-system comparisons since the twenty-second session of the Statistical Commission, including an indication of the work that remains to be done, and on the status of the revision of Comparisons of the System of National Accounts and the System of Balances of the National Economy: Part One, Conceptual Relationships. 2/ The report will include the major quantitative results of illustrative calculations of gross domestic product (GDP) for selected centrally planned economies and of net material product (NMP) for selected market economies. It will deal with the sources and methods of calculation and will summarize the results of the bilateral comparisons in quantitative terms. It will discuss the improvement of the conceptual framework for the inter-system comparisons and selected conceptual problems in such comparisons. An annex to the report will contain a detailed presentation of the calculations of NMP of the United States of America for 1972, prepared on the basis of the United States input-output table.

Documentation

Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS): report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/6)

5. International economic classifications

The Secretary-General will submit a report on the harmonization of international economic classifications, together with a draft revision of the part of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) covering activities producing transportable goods, a draft of the combined trade/production goods classification and a revised draft of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), Revision 3.

The report will outline, in particular, the approaches proposed for harmonization between classifications of activities and transportable goods. The report will also indicate the way in which the draft of SITC, Revision 3 takes into account the factors specified by the Commission at its twenty-second session.

Documentation

Harmonization of international economic classifications: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/7)

6. Price statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a report on phases IV and V of the International Comparison Project (ICP), the roles of the organizations involved therein and the Inter-agency Price Statistics Programme (IPSP). The report will summarize the results of phase IV of ICP and discuss their publication and the utility of combining regional results. It will include a description of the work done by the International Labour Office in revising its food price inquiry so that the items for which prices will be collected will comprise a sub-set of the food items in the ICP list of commodities. It will also present the plans for phase V and include a discussion of the work on ICP questions at other institutions, including the World Bank.

The report will include a discussion of the first results of IPSP, which will be published in the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics in an experimental form. It will include a review of the co-ordination, collection and dissemination of price statistics among regional commissions and agencies. It will also include information on the progress of the joint United Nations/International Labour Organisation manual for constructing consumer price indexes and other manuals on price and related statistics.

Documentation

International Comparison Project (ICP) and Inter-agency Price Statistics Programme (IPSP): report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/8)

7. Industry, energy and environment statistics

(a) Statistics of mineral resources

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on the development of statistics of mineral resources, dealing with the expansion of the list of minerals

and metals on which data are collected and published by the Statistical Office, methodological development concerning statistics on the secondary recovery of metals and an extension of the work on mineral consumption statistics and raw material balances.

Documentation

Development of statistics of mineral resources: progress report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/9)

(b) Energy and environment statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a report on standards, methods and classifications of energy statistics and on the environment statistics programmes. For energy statistics, it will focus on the analysis of responses to the technical reports on concepts and methods and on units of measurement and conversion factors in international energy statistics. It will outline co-operation and co-ordination with regional commissions and other organizations in methodology and data collection. It will describe the data collection and dissemination programme (including energy balances) and contain information on the progress made in two new areas of work, namely, new and renewable sources of energy and energy statistics in value terms (prices and costs).

For environment statistics, the report will review the methodological work done since the twenty-second session of the Commission, including the framework for the development of environment statistics and guidelines for specific areas of environment statistics. It will describe the results of the Expert Group Meeting on Guidelines for Freshwater Statistics, held at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 9 December 1983. It will discuss the feasibility of international data collection and reporting in the field of environment statistics and outline a proposed work programme for the forthcoming two years.

Documentation

Standards, methods and classifications of energy statistics and the environment statistics programme: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/10)

8. Demographic and social statistics

(a) Social indicators and the integration of social, demographic and related statistics

The Secretary-General will submit a progress report on national and international work carried out on the development and application of social indicators and on activities for the integration of social, demographic and related statistics at the national and international levels. For national activities, it will include information on compendiums of social statistics and indicators; the development and integration of basic data collection programmes for indicators; the frameworks and classifications for that integration; the development of

socio-economic data bases; and statistics and indicators for special groups. National and international activities for monitoring trends and levels of socio-economic development will be considered. The progress report will also cover the international co-ordination of work and specialized activities for the development of social indicators in specific fields.

Documentation

Development of social indicators and integration of social, demographic and related statistics: progress report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/11)

(b) Population and housing censuses

The Secretary-General will submit a report containing proposals concerning the 1990 World Population and Housing Census Programme which is scheduled to run from 1985 to 1994. It will include an overview of the population and housing census activities for the decade 1975-1984, the emerging issues related to census-taking and the effects of those issues on the 1990 world census programme. It will discuss the implications for the 1990 Programme of recent and anticipated revisions of the international recommendations relating to economic activities, including the definitions and classifications of employment and unemployment, status in employment, ISIC and the ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). It will also outline the activities to be undertaken by the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat in order to assist countries in preparing for and carrying out national population and housing censuses in the forthcoming census decade, including the documents to be prepared, the regional workshops and seminars to be conducted and the other technical co-operation activities to be undertaken. It will include information on the population and housing census activities proposed by the regional commissions for the decade 1985-1994 and their co-ordination with the United Nations world census programme.

Documentation

World Population and Housing Census Programme, 1985-1994: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/12)

9. Technical co-operation

(a) Technical co-operation in statistics

The Secretary-General will submit an overall report summarizing the global technical co-operation programme in statistics implemented by the organs and organizations of the United Nations system, other international organizations and countries. The report will also include information on new issues in statistical training and in statistical data processing.

Documentation

Technical co-operation in statistics rendered by the organs and organizations of the United Nations system, other international organizations and countries: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/13)

(b) Development of country capabilities: the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) and the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS)

Two reports will be before the Commission. One, submitted by the Secretary-General, will discuss NHSCP. The other, submitted by the World Bank, will discuss LSMS.

Documentation

National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP): report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/14)

Living Standards Measurement Study: report of the World Bank (E/CN.3/1985/15)

(c) Special problems of the statistically least developed countries

The Secretary-General will submit a report dealing with the special problems of the statistically least developed among the developing countries.

Documentation

Special problems of the statistically least developed countries: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/16)

10. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes

The Commission will have before it the report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination on its tenth session, held at Geneva from 26 to 28 September 1983. The report includes a review of the provisional agenda and the documentation for the twenty-third session of the Statistical Commission, recommendations for special topics for consideration by the Commission at its twenty-fourth session and a consideration of the co-ordination of the statistical data-collection activities of international organizations.

Documentation

Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination: report on the tenth session (E/CN.3/1985/17)

11. Programme implementation

The Secretary-General will submit a report containing an overall review of the principal statistical activities of the international organizations for the years 1983 and 1984. It will concentrate on major achievements and important changes in the activities of the organizations.

Documentation

Overall review of the statistical work of the international organizations for the period 1983-1984: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/18)

12. Programme objectives and planning

The Secretary-General will submit two reports to the Commission. One will contain a description of the plans of the international organizations in the area of statistics up to the end of 1989, concentrating on important planned changes in the activities of the organizations, namely, new activities and activities to be cancelled or significantly modified. The other report will describe the proposed work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat for 1986-1987, including broad resource information and revisions made in the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 since the twenty-second session of the Statistical Commission.

Documentation

Plans of the international organizations in the area of statistics: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/19)

Proposed work programme of the Statistical Office for 1986-1987 and revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989: report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/20)

13. Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, the Commission will have before it the provisional agenda for its twenty-fourth session, together with an indication of the documents to be submitted under each item and the legislative authority for their preparation in order to enable the Commission to consider those documents from the point of view of their contribution to the work of the Commission and their urgency and relevance in the light of the current situation.

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/50 of 23 November 1979, the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Commission will be submitted to the Council. In paragraph 2 (e) of that resolution, the Council decided that "the provisional agenda for its subsidiary bodies, together with the list of requested documentation, should be submitted to the Council for its review in order, inter alia, to establish greater consistency between the documentation of those bodies and the overall documentation requested by the Council and other subsidiary bodies and greater consistency between the requests for documentation and the medium-term plan and the programme budget".

Further, the Council, in paragraphs 5 and 6 of its resolution 1981/83 of 24 July 1981:

"Instructs the subsidiary bodies of the Council to take urgent measures to streamline their agendas and programmes of work and to bring about a substantial reduction in their requests for documents, bearing in mind the duration and the cycles of their meetings, and to report to the Council on measures adopted, taking strictly into account the guidelines set forth in the pertinent resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;

"Requests the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of intergovernmental and expert bodies, before decisions are adopted, any request for documentation that exceeds the ability of the Secretariat to prepare and process on time and within its approved resources".

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-fourth session of the Commission: note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1985/L.2)

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

The Commission will adopt the report on its twenty-third session, which will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1983, Supplement No. 2 (E/1983/12 and Corr.1), chap. XIV.

2/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.XVII.6.
