



UNITED NATIONS

STATISTICAL COMMISSION
REPORT OF THE TENTH SESSION

(28 APRIL - 15 MAY 1958)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS : TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 10

NEW YORK

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.
Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS
TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 10

STATISTICAL COMMISSION

**Report to the Economic and Social Council on the tenth session of the Commission,
held in New York from 28 April to 15 May 1958 inclusive**

I. Organization of the session

OPENING AND DURATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Statistical Commission held its tenth session at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 28 April to 15 May 1958.

ATTENDANCE

2. The following representatives and alternates attended the session:

Canada: Mr. W. E. Duffett, Mr. S. A. Goldberg (alternate);

China: Mr. Chung-Sieu Chen;*

Cuba: Mr. C. Luhrsen Gonzales;

Denmark: Mr. Kjeld Bjerke;*

Dominican Republic: Mr. K. L. Dipp Gómez, Mr. E. Cordero Michel (alternate);

France: Mr. F. Closon, Mr. Ph. Marandet (alternate);

India: Mr. P. C. Mahalanobis;

Ireland: Mr. M. D. McCarthy;

Netherlands: Mr. Ph. J. Idenburg;

New Zealand: Mr. G. E. Wood, Mr. J. V. T. Baker (alternate);

Romania: Mr. M. Levente, Mr. V. Trebici (alternate);

Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic: Mr. L. M. Koretsky;

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. T. V. Ryabushkin;

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Sir Harry Campion, Mr. J. Stafford (alternate);

United States of America: Mr. R. T. Bowman.

3. Mr. B. A. Pérez (Philippines) attended the tenth session of the Statistical Commission as an observer.

4. The following representatives of the specialized agencies attended the session:

International Labour Organisation: Mr. R. J. Myers;

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: Mr. P. L. Sherman;

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Mr. B. A. Liu;

International Monetary Fund: Mr. E. Hicks, Mr. W. Gardner, Mr. G. Dorrance;

International Civil Aviation Organization: Mr. S. H. Newbill;

World Health Organization: Dr. Y. Biraud.

5. The following representatives of non-governmental organizations with consultative status were present at the session:

Category A

International Chamber of Commerce: Mr. G. L. Ridgeway, Mrs. R. Lusardi;

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Mr. L. Teper;

World Federation of Trade Unions: Miss E. Kahn;

International Federation of Christian Trade Unions: Mr. G. C. Thormann.

Category B and Register

International Statistical Institute: Mr. R. Eckler;

Inter-American Statistical Institute: Mr. O. A. de Moraes;

International Association of Penal Law: Mr. S. Manuila.

6. Mr. Ph. de Seynes, Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, represented the Secretary-General. The following members of the Secretariat participated: *Statistical Office*: Mr. W. R. Leonard, Mr. P. J. Loftus, Mr. W. W. Flexner, Mr. R. C. Geary, Mr. O. Cabello; Mr. B. N. Davies, representing the Conference of European Statisticians; *Population Branch, Bureau of Social Affairs*: Mr. J. Bourgeois-Pichat; *Fiscal and Financial Branch, Bureau of Economic Affairs*: Mr. A. Landau. Mr. J. Hancock acted as Secretary of the Commission.

* Alternate, in accordance with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions, the member confirmed by the Economic and Social Council being unable to attend.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

7. At the 147th meeting the Commission unanimously elected the following officers for the tenth session:

Chairman: Mr. G. E. Wood (New Zealand);

Vice-Chairman: Mr. M. Levente (Romania);

Rapporteur: Mr. M. D. McCarthy (Ireland).

II. Agenda

8. At the 147th meeting the Commission unanimously adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers of the Commission.
2. Adoption of agenda.
3. General survey of developments in international statistics.
4. Industrial statistics.
5. Enterprise statistics.
6. Price statistics.
7. External trade statistics.
8. National accounts.
9. Statistics of capital formation.
10. Distribution of income.
11. Balance-of-payments statistics.
12. Classification of government accounts.
13. Demographic statistics.
14. Social statistics.
15. Programme of basic statistics for economic and social development.
16. Matters referred to the Statistical Commission by other international bodies:
 - (a) Subjects referred by the Population Commission.
17. Other business:
 - (a) Tourist statistics;
 - (b) Pattern of conferences.
18. Priorities of the Commission's work programme.
19. Report of the tenth session to the Economic and Social Council.

III. General survey of developments in international statistics

CONCENTRATION OF ACTIVITIES

9. In resolution 664 B (XXIV) the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a further report along the lines of his report entitled "Observations on the work programme of the Council and on the financial implications of the Council's actions" (E/3011 and Add.1 and 2).¹ The consideration of this

¹ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 4.*

matter at the Council's twenty-fourth session had not included the statistical programme owing to the fact that the Commission had not met in 1957. In accordance with the Council's resolution, the Commission reviewed its work programme and the work of the Statistical Office. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General entitled "Review of international statistics" (E/CN.3/249), which summarized these work programmes.

10. The Commission gave particular attention to the publication programme of the Statistical Office which was summarized in paragraphs 11 to 17 of the Secretary-General's memorandum (E/CN.3/249). In view of the growth in number and size of the statistical publications, which was due partly to the expansion of statistics in recent years, selectivity and summarization of the statistical series would be necessary to keep the publications within the limits of the resources. Continued attention would have to be given to the need for economy and to the prevention of duplication. It was considered, however, that the regular statistical publications of the Office were of paramount importance for international purposes and of great value for public and private purposes in the individual countries. These publications, in particular the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, the *Statistical Yearbook*, the *Yearbook of International Trade Statistics*, and the *Demographic Yearbook*, had become almost indispensable tools in the day-to-day activity of many government agencies and of a growing number of non-governmental and business organizations. The Commission wished, therefore, to record the importance which it attached to the work of the Statistical Office in the systematic publication of statistical data to serve a wide variety of needs. Statistical publication was a prime function of the Statistical Office which, with the co-operation of the national offices, it was in a position to perform more effectively and economically than any other body. Failure to publish regularly would undoubtedly lead to a large number of individual requests for data which would be more expensive to meet. The Commission wished particularly to emphasize the need for prompt publication of data. Certain of the series, for example, data on world trade, were urgently required for current purposes in many countries, and the Statistical Office was, therefore, requested to endeavour to speed up the release of its quarterly data, which were regrettably late in appearing. Since much of the delay was due to printing difficulties, perhaps a preliminary survey of the data could be circulated to countries by airmail each quarter.

11. The Commission felt that even wider use of the international statistical data which was being compiled by the United Nations Statistical Office and the statistical divisions of the specialized agencies would be facilitated by the publication of a revised bibliography along the lines of the *List of Statistical Series Collected by International Agencies*,² published by the Statistical Office in 1955. The Commission felt that the catalogue of statistical series had been of value to many countries

² Statistical papers, Series M, No. 11/Rev.1. United Nations publication, Sales No. : 1955.XVII.6.

and that it should be expanded to provide information showing the scope of each of the series and to include descriptive material.

12. The manuals and other publications dealing with statistical methods were useful to the work of the statistical offices in all countries; they were also particularly valuable to the countries where statistical systems were at an early stage of development. The attention of the Council and of the General Assembly should be drawn to the value of those publications. It was recommended that it would be useful to have a bibliography of all methodological publications in statistics produced by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the regional conferences, to afford a ready means of reference to any country which wished to organize or reorganize a particular section of its statistical service.

13. It was felt also that certain subjects which had been discussed from time to time by the Commission were at present inadequately documented. For example, the Commission's work on wholesale prices had resulted in a number of very useful documents which were not readily available to national offices studying the subject, because the material existed only in the form of Commission papers considered at the various sessions. A publication which assembled the material of selected documents in one place would be very useful. A bibliography of the kind described above would be a useful preliminary to descriptive analyses of the problems of collection of statistics in the various subject fields and descriptions of national experience in collecting and compiling data and in utilizing international standards. The Commission felt that attention should also be given to methods of assessment of the reliability of the statistics. It would, for instance, be useful to provide, on an international basis, similar information to that published by the United Kingdom in its *National Income Statistics, Sources and Methods*, which described the method of collection of the main categories of the United Kingdom national accounts. The improvement of the various standards and the different methods of applying them in countries might even be given higher priority than the development of new standards.

14. The Commission took note of the existing arrangements for the co-ordination of the work programmes, in the field of statistics, of the international agencies. In addition, the Commission heard reports from the representatives of the specialized agencies concerning their statistical activities. It considered that it was most valuable to the Commission to receive those statements since by such means it was able to keep in close touch with the international statistical programme as a whole. Moreover, the statistical activities of the various agencies were reflected in the requests for information received by the statistical offices of member States. Such requests added considerably to the work of the national offices, and it was essential that the Secretariat maintain continuous close co-ordination at the technical level to ensure that there should be no duplication of effort and that data supplied to one agency were available for the use of all international agencies.

15. In that connexion, the Commission noted that copies of statistical questionnaires prepared by the specialized agencies were submitted to the Statistical Office for circulation to all agencies. That system had been of help in previous years in avoiding duplication of statistical requests to the national offices. The Commission felt that the circulation of all questionnaires to all agencies was now unnecessary but that copies of agency questionnaires should continue to be sent to the Statistical Office, and by the Statistical Office to agencies interested in the subjects. The purpose of the previous arrangement would be adequately served in future by the Statistical Office's review of the questionnaires.

16. In considering the problem of statistical work in the regional commissions, it was noted that the work programmes were integrated by the Statistical Office through its officers stationed in the regions. The Commission felt that methodological reports of the regional conferences of statisticians would be of interest to all Commission members and to national statistical offices, and arrangements for the dissemination of such information should be made by the Secretariat. It was considered also that the Commission should receive reports on other regional statistical activities, including the regional conferences, as well as on seminars, and also on technical assistance provided to countries with the object of improving their statistics. While such reports might increase the documentation, it was felt that they were necessary to ensure that the Commission's review of the work programme should be a comprehensive one.

17. The Secretariat was invited to explore methods of achieving a reduction in the volume of documentation received directly by the Commission at its biennial meetings. Possible methods suggested were the greater use of regional discussions and of groups of experts to carry out preliminary study at the technical level. Countries would also be greatly assisted by the earlier circulation of technical documents which required detailed attention by the national offices in preparation for the discussions of the Commission.

18. The Commission indicated that further work was required at the international level on problems connected with the integration of different statistical series and with the reconciliation of data which measured related but not completely identical aggregates. In developing statistical inquiries, it was always necessary to consider the principal uses to which the data would be put, which would often indicate the degree of uncertainty which could be permitted and consequently influence the amount of resources which should be allocated to specific surveys. Attention should also be given to methods of assessing needs for scientific and technical manpower and of measuring the relation between the numbers of scientific and technical personnel and process workers in different industries. (See paragraph 149 (ii).)

19. The Commission noted that the General Assembly had decided (resolution 1219 (XII)) on the setting up of a Special Fund as a means for expanding the economic assistance available to the less developed countries. The Commission welcomed the opportunity that would

be afforded to the less developed countries to obtain such assistance as they might require in carrying out statistical surveys as a basis for their economic development plans and felt that care should be taken to associate national statisticians with any foreign experts engaged in the work. In this way the national statistical services would be given the experience and knowledge which would assist them to continue the work in the future. It was felt that sampling methods would be of great value in those operations. The Commission also noted with gratification that it would be possible, by means of the Special Fund, to initiate training programmes in statistics for the assistance of countries requesting such help.

20. It was understood that among the kinds of projects which might usefully be financed by the Special Fund would be assistance to countries, at their request, for the carrying out of statistical studies of resources from the broad economic point of view. For example, statistical studies, similar to "operational research", could be undertaken to determine the changes required in the agricultural field in consequence of expected changes in the population and in the structure of the economy in the course of fulfilment of national economic development plans. The problem of allocation of resources to various uses in the course of those development plans involved statistical problems which could profitably be studied in the less developed areas.

21. On the general question of the work programme of the Statistical Office, the Commission considered that the programme was satisfactory. While the Commission's discussion had revealed the need for certain additional work, it was felt that in general the new projects could be handled by rearrangement of the priorities of the work programme (see chapter XVII below). In general, the Commission considered that the progress made in international statistics to date represented a notable achievement; it expressed its gratification at the development of international co-operation and understanding in that field.

IV. Industrial statistics

STANDARDS

22. The Commission decided, at its ninth session, to consider first, a world-wide programme of collecting comprehensive data on industrial units for 1962 or a proximate year, and secondly, alterations required in the standards in basic industrial statistics in the light of the experience of countries since the adoption of those standards by the Commission. The Commission considered those questions on the basis of a memorandum prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/242 and Add.1). The memorandum set out information on the need for, and feasibility of, a world-wide programme of industrial inquiries. It also contained a preliminary set of revisions in the recommendations of the Commission concerning the coverage, the statistical unit to be used and the items of data to be sought in annual and less frequent inquiries. The document was the result of detailed analyses of recent country practices and experience in the field of basic industrial statistics and

the comments of Governments on earlier versions of the memorandum (E/CN.3/L.40 and Add.1 and 2).

23. The Commission considered that the compilation of comprehensive information on industry (mining, manufacturing, construction, and the production of gas, electricity and steam) for 1963 or a year close to 1963 should be recommended to Governments of Member States. There were many urgent needs, both international and national, for internationally comparable data on industry. In view of the demand for such information, the Statistical Office was engaged in compiling data for 1938, 1948 and 1953 on the structure and key activities of industry in countries of the world. The data, classified according to groups of the *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities*,³ would show the number of establishments, value added, employment and installed power capacity and the relationships between those items of data. It was hoped to extend the study later to other aspects of industry. Since 1952 over sixty countries have taken industrial inquiries, and almost as many countries had indicated their intention to collect comprehensive information on industry for 1963 or a proximate year. Other countries had indicated that they would consider shifting the date of their comprehensive industrial inquiries to the year adopted for the world-wide programme. Countries would gather those comprehensive data through censuses of industry, annual industrial inquiries or recurrent statistical or administrative surveys. While it was intended that construction should be included in the inquiries, it was recognized that many countries would encounter difficulties in gathering data for that industry, and alternative methods to the census might be investigated for that purpose. Specific recommendations would be needed for the world-wide programme with regard to coverage and to the items of data to be sought and their classification.

24. The Commission felt that the preliminary suggestions set out in the "Draft revisions to the international standards in basic industrial statistics" (E/CN.3/242/Add.1) furnished a useful basis for formulating, through further consultation with countries and regional organizations, a more definitive set of proposed standards for consideration by the Commission at its next session. In that work the proposals set out in the document should be supplemented by suggestions regarding the characteristics of the statistical unit that provided the most useful classifications for the various items of data. More attention should also be given to the experience and practices of countries with planned economies in gathering and compiling statistics on industry. Many of those countries had well-established programmes which yielded organized data on all aspects of industrial activity. The Commission considered that the Statistical Office should make a comparative study of the concepts and techniques of the principal industrial countries in that field with the object of improving international comparability of data on industrial production.

25. The following specific points were made with regard to the preliminary proposals set out in the "Draft revisions":

³ Statistical papers, Series M, No. 4, 1949.

(i) In discussing the frequency and coverage of basic industrial inquiries it was important to clarify and elaborate on the relationship between decennial, annual and current inquiries. Some countries found it convenient, for example, to sum annual data from monthly or quarterly inquiries. It was not possible to make rigid rules as to the periodicity of collection of items of data. The use of sampling in these inquiries should be covered more fully, and it should be emphasized that one of the objectives was to attain the required accuracy of data at a minimum cost, and lighten the load on the administrative organization. In the case of industrial establishments, that would generally involve the use of stratified samples. It was not necessary in all countries to cover all establishments in ten-year inquiries; nor was it practicable or necessary to specify the precise percentage of industrial activity that should be covered.

(ii) Although the establishment had particular advantages as the statistical unit, since it permitted distinctions to be made according to detailed kinds of industry and geographic regions, the enterprise was also a useful unit for the collection of certain items of data and was perhaps a more convenient unit for the collection of monthly and quarterly data. It was suggested, therefore, that studies of the relationship between establishment-based and enterprise-based data would be desirable. The treatment of ancillaries required to be clarified, and it would be helpful to introduce the notion of "usual combination of activities" in defining the establishment. It was noted that the statistical unit utilized in the countries with planned economies was similar to the definition of the establishment proposed in the Secretary-General's memorandum (E/CN.3/242/Add.1) because of the emphasis given in both cases to the most narrowly defined accounting and managerial unit which could provide the required data regarding the resources and activities involved in production. Although most countries collected data on capital expenditures and inventories from enterprises, some found it possible to obtain such data for establishments.

(iii) Information on date of founding of the establishment has been found useful in checking the register of establishments.

(iv) It had been found desirable, in some countries, to gather data on employees classified according to broad occupational categories and on employees subdivided into full and part-time workers. Distinctions between maintenance workers and other categories of workers included in operatives might also be advantageous in some circumstances but not in others. The question of comparability between the definition of family workers in industrial and population inquiries should be examined. Home workers should not be considered to be proprietors of separate establishments.

(v) The items of data and definitions proposed for capital expenditures were sound. Those items of data, together with the proposed item of data on cost of repair and maintenance work, provided the basis for computing capital formation on either a "gross" or a "gross-gross" basis. However, it should be clearly indicated how data might be gathered on capital expenditures on

factories not yet in operation during the inquiry year. The purpose of gathering data on purchases and sale of land should also be clarified.

(vi) Distinctions between sales outside the enterprise and other shipments were not made in certain countries and were made only at infrequent intervals in particular industries in other countries. The valuation of particular kinds of output (e.g., of government-owned factories) presented difficulties in some countries. In that regard it would be useful to compare the practices of countries with planned economies and other countries in gathering data on output. Difficulties had also been encountered in valuing the output of construction activities on the basis of work put in place during the year.

26. The Statistical Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 1 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Invites the Secretary-General:

1. To continue work on the revised set of standards for basic industrial statistics, including suggestions as to the characteristics according to which the various items of data should be classified and to prepare a report for the consideration of the Commission at its next session;

2. To prepare draft proposals for the consideration of the Commission at its next session on the coverage, items of data to be sought and their classification according to characteristics of the statistical unit for inquiries which are part of the 1963 world programme of basic industrial statistics;

3. With the co-operation of the Governments of Member States, to prepare a comparative study of the systems of basic industrial statistics in use in the principal industrial countries with the object of improving international comparability of data on industrial production;

4. To consult with Governments of Member States and to continue the work in collaboration with the regional organizations and other interested bodies, in the course of the foregoing work;

5. To inform Governments of the 1963 world programme of basic industrial statistics.

27. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

The Statistical Commission

Invites the Economic and Social Council to consider the following draft resolution:

[For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XVIII below.]

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION

28. The Commission considered the revisions required in the *International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* in the light of national experience with the classification since its adoption ten years earlier. The Commission based its discussion on a memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/243) which set out the

revised classification together with a description of the principles underlying it and a discussion of its application. Also included was a plan for subdividing wholesale and retail trade which was suggested for purposes of providing some guidance on the subdivision of these categories in national classifications. The memorandum reflected the comments of Governments on an earlier draft (ST/STAT/4) which was prepared after a study of the uses made of the international classification and a detailed analysis of national classifications in current use.

29. The Commission was pleased to note that the revisions in the classification structure proposed in the "Draft revised international standard industrial classification of all economic activities" (E/CN.3/243) consisted only of modifications and clarifications in the definitions of the individual groups of the classification and rearrangement of some of those groups. As a result, continuity between the former and the revised international classification structure could be easily maintained. That was important in view of the wide use which was being made, nationally and internationally, of the international classification in the fields of population, production, employment, national income and other economic statistics. For the same reason the Commission was gratified to note the considerable degree of comparability which would exist at detailed levels of classification between national classification schemes and the revised international standard. Indeed, a number of the revisions in the international classification were designed to increase the extent of such comparability. Other revisions were intended to adjust the international classification to changes during the last ten years in the organization of economic activities and to clarify the scope of individual groups. Because of the diversity in national circumstances, complete comparability, even at detailed levels of classification, between national schemes and the international standard, could not be expected. The Commission recognized in the course of its discussion that more fundamental adjustments in the classification might eventually be required if it was to be more nearly universal. However, the revised international classification did furnish a frame for reaching an acceptable level of comparability and a number of members of the Commission indicated that that objective would be given due attention in their countries in the classification of data according to kind of economic activity. The use of the revised international standard would be facilitated if a numeric and alphabetic index to the classification were prepared. Countries would also find helpful the revised description of underlying principles of the development and use of the international standard.

30. It was noted that at broad levels of classification (e.g., the divisions of the international standard), the divergencies between national classifications and the international standards were more numerous than at detailed levels of classification. That was the case, for example, for the classification schemes of countries with planned economies where distinctions were drawn between "material production" and other kinds of economic activity and between agriculture, on the one hand, and forestry and fishing, on the other. However, it should, on the whole, be possible to regroup categories

of classification schemes of those countries according to the international standard, or the individual groups of the international standard, according to these classification schemes, and the Secretariat was invited to explore this possibility. Co-operation from the statistical offices of different countries in exploring this question would be of help.

31. Improved definitions were given in the revised international classification for the individual groups on wholesale and retail trade. Although it would be desirable to suggest meaningful subdivisions of these individual groups for use internationally, the differences among countries in the organization and extent of specialization of wholesale and retail trade made this impracticable. Nevertheless, some countries would find it helpful to have guidance on this point.

32. The Statistical Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 2 (X)

The Statistical Commission,

Noting that the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities has been revised in the light of current patterns in the organization of economic activity in States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and of experience during the past ten years with the international standard,

Invites the Secretary-General:

1. To call to the attention of Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies the revised "International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities";
2. To prepare numeric and alphabetic indexes to the revised international standard classification;
3. To request States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies to make available detailed indexes to their current national classifications for use in preparing indexes to the revised international standard.

V. Enterprise statistics

PROGRESS REPORT ON STATISTICS OF ENTERPRISES

33. The Commission discussed the subject of statistics of enterprises on the basis of a memorandum on "Developments in statistics of enterprises" (E/CN.3/245) prepared by the Secretary-General. The memorandum described the increasing interest and work of Member States in that field and the recent activities of the International Monetary Fund and the Conference of European Statisticians on that and related matters. The work of the Statistical Office was directed towards the development of methods of compiling balance-sheet and profit-and-loss data for use in economic analysis. It was clear that whether figures were abstracted from available balance-sheets and profit-and-loss statements of enterprises or gathered by means of special inquiries, the data would need to be derived from the accounts maintained by the individual enterprises. Considerable

information was required concerning accounting practices, and consultations had therefore taken place with the accounting profession on the feasibility of gathering the data required for economic analysis from balance-sheets and profit-and-loss accounts.

34. The Commission emphasized the importance of work on statistics derived from the accounts of enterprises. Such information was required, for example, for the compilation of data on the financial and capital transactions, on the uses and sources of funds, and on the liquidity and debtor-creditor position of sectors of the economy, as well as for the estimation of depreciation, profits and savings. A number of countries were, therefore, engaged in gathering and compiling data of the type usually found in balance-sheets and profit-and-loss accounts. The material was frequently obtained from such accounts prepared in connexion with the requirements of income tax and company and business registration as well as through special surveys or regular recurrent reports. The subject was a complex one, but it was felt that the data were important as a supplement to the more traditional type of information gathered on production, consumption, expenditure and incomes. The collection of data on unincorporated business and on operating expenses of enterprises, appropriately classified, presented particular problems.

35. The collection of useful data of the balance-sheet and profit-and-loss type would be materially aided if accounting practices and statistical requirements were co-ordinated and if a sufficient degree of standardization could first be attained in accounting practices in individual countries. It was therefore appropriate to investigate accounting practices and for the statistical authorities in Member States to consult the accounting profession. The Commission accordingly welcomed the direction of the work of the Statistical Office in the field of statistics of enterprises. Some members of the Commission indicated that they were considering the use of that approach in their countries. In developing suggestions concerning concepts and classifications for statistics of the balance-sheet and profit-and-loss type, attention would, of course, need to be given to the uses to be made of those data as well as the records from which they were to be derived. From the former point of view the Commission felt that the very preliminary suggestions set out in the annex to the Secretary-General's memorandum (E/CN.3/245) for the classification of balance-sheet and profit-and-loss data might be modified in the light of the purposes for which the information was collected and that the data should be sought on an accrual basis. In addition, it suggested that attention should be directed to the possibility of collecting information of the type in question not only from enterprises, but also from the units comprising them.

36. The Commission adopted resolution:

Resolution 3 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

1. To continue work on the subject of statistics of enterprises along the lines set out in his memorandum

entitled "Development of the statistics of enterprises" (E/CN.3/245) with a view to developing suggestions, taking account of the related work of the International Monetary Fund, as to the items of data to be derived from the balance-sheet and profit-and-loss accounts of business enterprises and their definition, classification and organization into statements for such purposes as measuring the liquidity, savings and investment and flow of funds for sectors of the economy;

2. To maintain close consultation with the Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies on the work in this field, with the aid of experts where necessary.

THE STATISTICAL UNIT IN ECONOMIC STATISTICS

37. The discussion on the statistical unit in economic statistics was based on a memorandum by the Secretary-General entitled "The choice of an appropriate statistical unit for economic inquiries" (E/CN.3/244 and Add.1). The memorandum reflected the increasing preoccupation of many countries with the question of the most useful statistical units to which different items of data might be related as well as with the problem of interrelating items of data obtained for different statistical units. Several types of units in common use in economic inquiries were examined as well as suggested definitions for those units. Proposals were also made regarding the items of data most appropriate to those statistical units, and methods of work were suggested on the subject of interrelating data collected on different bases.

38. The choice of statistical unit depended on the economic and institutional organization of the country concerned. The statistical unit was at the same time a function of the uses for which a particular item of data was desired and the relative speed or ease of collection. The Commission felt that the Secretary-General's memorandum provided a realistic outline of the problems and a useful basis for future work in that field. It was noted also that the Conference of European Statisticians had convened an expert group which directed its attention to the definition of the various statistical units and the items of data appropriate to those units.

39. It would be desirable to establish standard translations and definitions in the several languages for certain of the technical terms in this field—particularly the terms "establishment" and "enterprise".

40. The Statistical Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 4 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Invites the Secretary-General:

1. To examine the possibility of formulating operating definitions of the enterprise and its subdivisions;

2. To study methods of classifying the enterprise according to kind of economic activity;

3. To develop suggestions regarding the kinds of data that can appropriately be related to the enterprise

and its constituent parts and techniques that might be employed in the collection of those data, and to suggest methods for interrelating enterprise and establishment type data;

4. To obtain the views of the national statistical services, regional organizations and other interested bodies on the memorandum, appropriately modified on the basis of the discussion of the Commission, together with information regarding the experience of countries in dealing with the problems treated;

5. To consult with national statistical services and regional organizations, looking towards a co-ordinated investigation of the forms of business organization and accounting practices with regard to selected items of data.

VI. Price statistics

WHOLESALE PRICES

41. The Commission discussed the question of compiling comparable wholesale price series on the basis of a memorandum on "Problems in the collection of comparable wholesale price series" (E/CN.3/246) prepared by the Secretary-General. The memorandum dealt with the difficulties of compiling comparable price series resulting from changes in the character and quality of goods, transactions in unique goods and discontinuities or marked changes, seasonal or otherwise, in the supply of commodities. The memorandum described the circumstances in which each of those difficulties arose and the relative advantages and disadvantages of alternative methods for dealing with the problems.

42. The Commission emphasized the importance of compiling comparable wholesale price series and the prevalence of the problem. The price series were being utilized for purposes such as deflating components of national accounts and input-output tables and constructing indexes of industrial production, comparisons of the quantum of production and evaluating business and economic conditions. Significant incomparabilities in the wholesale price series utilized for those purposes contributed to serious inaccuracies in the indicators. The statistical authorities were faced with rectifying numerous cases of incomparability in price series on transactions at the wholesale as well as at the retail level. New commodities appeared on the market while items which were being priced disappeared. There were frequent changes in the quality of highly fabricated goods, and a large proportion of engineering goods and all construction projects differed to such an extent from transaction to transaction that price quotations on successive transactions were not directly comparable. At the same time, if prices in those transactions were to be excluded from the price series, the representativeness of the price series gathered was questionable. Some countries were therefore devoting considerable attention and resources to those problems.

43. The Commission welcomed the Secretary-General's memorandum and felt that work should continue on methods of compiling comparable wholesale price series.

It was noted that the incomparabilities in question were usually most serious when comparisons over long periods of time were under review and that there was need for the study of similar problems in the field of retail prices. The Ninth International Conference of Labour Statisticians had in fact asked that work in the field of retail prices be undertaken by the International Labour Office. In further work more attention should be given to the methods and experience of countries in improving the comparability of price data in order to develop practicable suggestions for that purpose. The Secretary-General's memorandum (E/CN.3/246) might be circulated to statistical offices of Member States in order to obtain descriptions of national practice and experience as well as views on the document. While the theoretical considerations set out in the memorandum provided useful points of reference, it seemed doubtful whether, in view of the dynamic character of production, demand and markets, there was a theoretically perfect solution to the problem at all. The task of adjusting for incomparabilities in price questions was therefore one of devising techniques which furnished adequate practicable comparability. It would be desirable to include, in the programme of future work, the study of methods for gathering price information so that incomparabilities in price quotations might be detected quickly and easily, and of criteria for the selection of transactions to be priced so that they might be an adequate sample of all transactions which were to be covered in the system of wholesale prices as well as of the validity of imputing the weight for groups of commodities to the price changes in a limited number of individual items. In view of the complexities of the subject it would be desirable, at an appropriate stage of the work, to assemble an expert group. It would also be desirable to compile a bibliography of the subject when a more developed version of the memorandum had been prepared.

44. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 5 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Invites the Secretary-General:

1. To circulate the memorandum entitled "Problems in the collection of comparable wholesale price series" (E/CN.3/246) to statistical offices of States Members of the United Nations on members of the specialized agencies in order to obtain their views together with descriptions of their methods and experience in compiling comparable and representative wholesale price series;

2. To study, with the aid of national experts if necessary, methods for gathering and compiling representative and comparable wholesale price series;

3. To report on the progress of work in this field to the Commission at its eleventh session.

GENERAL-PURPOSE INDEX NUMBERS OF RETAIL PRICES

45. The Commission discussed a memorandum entitled "General-purpose index numbers of retail prices" (E/CN.3/247), prepared by the Secretary-General. The

memorandum described the uses and character (e.g., transactions to be covered, classification and weighting) of general-purpose price index numbers. These included price index numbers for the sales of retail trade and related service establishments, the expenditures of resident households and private consumption expenditures in national accounts.

46. The Commission felt that it was not necessary, at that time, that further work should be done at the international level on price index numbers of the sales of retail trade establishments or of personal consumption expenditures in national accounts although those index numbers did have certain national uses. Price indexes on personal consumption expenditures were of course implicit in the estimates of personal consumption expenditures at constant prices that were being prepared by a number of Member States, using individual retail price series. Work at the international level on consumer price index numbers (i.e., price indexes of the expenditures of particular kinds of households) was, however, urgently required, and the Commission noted the resolution adopted by the Ninth International Conference of Labour Statisticians on that subject. The Commission considered that the ILO should include in its study a consideration of the problems raised by the inclusion of direct and indirect taxes in retail price index numbers. There were a number of practical and conceptual problems in collecting representative and comparable retail prices. Extension of the traditional consumer price indexes to additional groups in the population might warrant consideration, and in some countries the price indexes had been extended to cover the expenditure of almost all resident households. It was noted that there were some dangers in the extension and multiplication of price index numbers on the expenditures of households of different types in view of the very important specific uses made of the traditional type of consumer price indexes.

VII. External trade statistics

47. The Commission noted the progress made, as reported in the memorandum by the Secretary-General on "Customs areas, free ports and free zones" (E/CN.3/234) in revising the draft list of customs areas (E/CN.3/L.35) and expressed the wish that the Secretary-General circulate to national statistical offices of Member States, at the latest by mid October of each year, a description of the changes required to keep the list up to date. It considered that the definition of "free area" contained in paragraph 3 of the report was a better basis for the study of the statistical treatment of goods passing through free ports and free zones than was the definition of "free zone", quoted in paragraph 4 of the document, and which appeared in *International Standards and Recommended Practices*, issued as annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation drawn up under the auspices of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Nevertheless it is suggested that in view of the existence of a large variety of types of free areas not all of which were covered by the former definition, and in order to improve the comparability of external trade

statistics, more work would be needed, including the collection by the Secretariat of further information from member countries concerned.

48. The Commission commented on a memorandum by the Secretary-General on "Problems of adapting external trade statistics for special types of economic analysis" (E/CN.3/235), which suggested a method for obtaining an approximate sector analysis of external trade by associating with each heading of the trade statistics a numerical code indicating the percentage of the total value of the heading which was to be allocated to each sector. The Commission recognized that goods entering external trade could often not be allocated to economic sectors solely by reference to commodity classification by kind and that sector analysis of trade must involve analysis of the value of such commodities according, in the case of imports, to the proportions used by the various sectors of the importing country and, in the case of exports, to the proportions of their values contributed by the sectors of the exporting country. To make the sector analyses described in the paper would require considerable research and, where the analysis was necessary, the method described in the memorandum might not always represent the easiest way of achieving the result. The Commission nevertheless felt that the memorandum would be of interest to statisticians concerned with the problem. The Commission considered that the Statistical Office should investigate the methods used by countries to apportion commodities between capital goods and consumer goods. It recognized that that type of classification had to be made by countries individually and that even national classification might alter from time to time.

49. It considered also that the basic documents currently available in most countries in relation to external trade would not give sufficient information to permit a thorough analysis of the proportion of the value of imports attributable to different countries which contributed to their fabrication.

VIII. National accounts and capital formation

REVISION OF THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

50. At its ninth session the Commission had requested the Secretary-General to formulate specific proposals for the amendment of the existing text of *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables*⁴ (SNA), to circulate those proposals for comments to the Governments of Member States and to report to the Commission at its tenth session. A similar request had been made with respect to the related report *Concepts and Definitions of Capital Formation*⁵ and it had been recommended that the work of revising the two reports should be closely co-ordinated. In pursuance of those resolutions the Secretary-General has prepared and circulated

⁴ Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 2 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 1952.XVII.4).

⁵ Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 3 (United Nations publication, Sales No. : 1953.XVII.6.)

to Member States a memorandum entitled "Proposed amendments to *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables and Concepts and Definitions of Capital Formation*" (E/CN.3/L.44) containing proposals for the revision, on which they had been invited to comment generally. The Commission had before it (E/CN.3/229) a summary of the comments which had been received on the draft proposals.

51. The summary noted that the draft proposals were designed in accordance with the request of the Commission to extend only to minor modifications of the existing concepts. They had largely been formulated, for the purposes of international consistency, jointly with the secretariats of the International Monetary Fund and the Organization for European Economic Co-operation, and had in most cases been discussed at length at various international meetings. However, many of the comments which had been received indicated that their application to the existing recommendations contained in *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables* required further consideration and clarification.

52. The Commission welcomed the proposal that a National Accounts Manual should be compiled to supplement the revised edition of *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables*. The Manual should be closely related to the latter report and should consist essentially of a detailed commentary on, and explanation of, its recommendations and their application in practice. The emphasis should be primarily exegetic and directed to the provision of guidance in those marginal cases where the application of existing principles had most frequently encountered difficulty. Special attention should be given to the problem of applying the principles in under-developed countries and to examining directions in which the system of accounts might be simplified or modified for particular purposes.

53. In its discussion of the comments (E/CN.3/229) the Commission indicated its general agreement with certain of the specific proposals for minor modifications to the system of accounts. Some reservations were, however, expressed on a number of points, particularly the proposals (i) to modify the existing concept of domestic product, (ii) to introduce a revised treatment of pension schemes, (iii) to maintain the existing treatment of work in progress in the building and heavy construction industries, (iv) to distinguish current and capital transfers in the external account, and finally (v) to abandon the present imputed distribution of the undistributed profits of foreign subsidiaries.

54. The Commission stressed the importance of including within the proposed Manual guidance to under-developed countries in establishing a system of national accounts adapted to their own particular purposes and circumstances, but within the basic framework of the present concepts.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

55. With regard to the future development of the SNA, the Commission expressed the hope that a wider

system could be established which would take account of the very considerable experience gained in that field by countries with planned economies, and at the same time permit translation from one system of accounts to the other. Such a system should also take account of the differing requirements of countries at various levels of economic development and for that purpose the system would need to be flexible. The establishment of the system, it was suggested, should be the subject of continuing study and might usefully be considered by such bodies as the Regional Conferences of Statisticians and by expert working groups with broad terms of reference.

56. In dealing with this topic, the Commission had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General entitled "National income accounting in countries at a very early stage of development" (E/CN.3/256), which examined some of the main obstacles to the development of national income statistics in very under-developed economies and attempted to appraise the applicability of the relevant recommendations of the United Nations under the conditions prevailing.

57. The Commission was of the opinion that the major problems arose out of the dominant role of subsistence production. The United Nations recommendations in respect of subsistence production were reviewed and some of the difficulties involved in their application to the more under-developed economies noted. In addition to the particular difficulties cited in the report, it was observed that even in developed countries the principles involved were not fully satisfactory, since, as economies evolved, activities formerly carried on in the household came increasingly to be performed on a market basis where they were reflected in national product. As a result, national income tended to be underestimated in countries in which there was a considerable measure of non-agricultural production by households for their own use and as a country changed over to a market economy the national income series had an inherent upward bias. Although no principle covering subsistence production could be satisfactory from every point of view, further study and experimentation were called for. One possibility worth exploring was the use of quantitative indicators for certain types of production and another was the extension of the production boundary to include the whole output of material commodities.

58. As regards price, wage and other data needed for estimating subsistence as well as traded production, the difficulties of collecting reliable information were seen to be considerable. It was nevertheless suggested that the statistical resources required for ensuring relatively comprehensive coverage would not need to be appreciably greater than it was in cases where the coverage was more limited, if the use of sample surveys was envisioned. The difficulties of data collection did not therefore preclude broad coverage of untraded output.

59. Considering that even in the more simple economies production in some sectors would be carried on under primitive conditions while production in other sectors might be carried on under modern forms of

organization, the opinion was expressed that the system of accounts most appropriate under those conditions needed to be flexible rather than merely simple. For such countries also undue restriction of the coverage of production outside the monetary sphere was unadvisable if differences and advances in welfare were to be studied. It was acknowledged that the changing proportion of untraded to traded output was in itself a valuable clue to the rate of development.

60. Inflationary tendencies evident in various countries of the kind under consideration made it all the more necessary to study prices in a systematic fashion. The use of sample inquiries in that connexion was to be urged. The inquiries had in certain cases revealed large errors in previously accepted figures. The hope was expressed that the newly formed Economic Commission for Africa would find it possible to further the use and improvement of sample inquiries in the region. Indeed, close contact of the Statistical Office with the new Commission and with national authorities in order to improve the level of national accounts work in Africa generally would be desirable.

FINANCIAL FLOWS

61. The representative of the International Monetary Fund stated that there was a need to seek an integration of national income and financial statistics, through a revision and extension of the system of national accounts that would record the borrowings and lendings (or changes in assets and liabilities) through which the current deficits or surpluses and capital expenditures of the sectors were financed. It was also stated that a working group of the Conference of European Statisticians had recently emphasized the importance of that question and had proposed that meetings should be arranged to discuss it. The Commission took note of those statements and felt that some clarification of the uses of such studies was needed. It therefore considered that the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the Fund and interested regional organizations, should study the purposes and usefulness of an integrated system of financial flow statistics and the national accounts and report on that work at the Commission's eleventh session.

COMPARISON OF SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTS

62. The Commission at its ninth session had requested the Secretary-General to prepare a study of the points of correspondence between the system of accounts employed in countries with planned economies and that set out in *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables* and to report to the Commission at its tenth session. A paper entitled "A study of the points of correspondence and difference between the United Nations system of national accounts and that employed by the USSR" (E/CN.3/R.1) was presented to the Commission for its consideration in compliance with that request. Comments on the document by the Central Statistical Board of the USSR (E/CN.3/R.1/Add.1) were circulated at the same time.

63. The Commission took note of the study. Some members criticized certain parts of it and the discussion brought out the point that when a major review of the present System of National Accounts was undertaken at a later date emphasis should be placed on the need for flexibility of the national accounts system in order that it might be applicable to economies at various stages of economic development and with differing institutional arrangements.

64. The Commission suggested that the study (E/CN.3/R.1) be circulated to national experts of planned economies in order to amend and correct the study and that a revised study be issued by the Secretariat. The Commission requested the Secretary-General, in collaboration with regional organizations and other interested international bodies, and in consultation with the statistical offices of Member States, to continue work in that field with due attention to variations in basic concepts of the principal components as well as of the broad aggregates such as national income and product, and to report back to the Commission at its next session.

65. The Commission noted that it might be useful, in exploring the possibilities of developing a universal system, if an experimental joint study could be made, in co-operation, by experts in both systems of national accounts, of their application to the problems of a particular under-developed country which was interested in such work and was willing itself to co-operate in the matter.

66. In view of the foregoing considerations the Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 6 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

1. (a) To revise and consolidate the two reports *A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables* and *Concepts and Definitions of Capital Formation* on the basis of the proposals contained in document E/CN.3/229, taking into account the comments of representatives at the tenth session of the Commission, and to circulate the draft revised text for comments to Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and interested international organizations with a view to issuing, in combined form, a revision of Studies in Methods, Series F, No. 2 (National Accounts) and F, No. 3 (Capital Formation);

(b) To prepare a National Accounts Manual as a supplement to the revised System of National Accounts and to circulate the draft Manual for comments to States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and interested international organizations;

(c) To submit a report on this work to the Commission at its eleventh session;

2. To undertake the development of methods for the compilation of national accounts in countries at a very

early stage of economic development, having in mind the need for such data for planning economic and social development;

3. To study, in co-operation with the International Monetary Fund and interested regional organizations, the purposes and usefulness of an integrated system of financial flow statistics and the national accounts, and to report on this work to the Commission at its eleventh session;

4. (a) To continue, by means of consultations with statistical offices of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and, where necessary, by conferences and special working groups, the study of existing systems of national accounts including those which do not conform to the System of National Accounts;

(b) To arrange, in co-operation with the Conference of European Statisticians, for the setting up of an expert group representing countries with and without planned economies, to meet, preferably at Geneva, to study the co-ordination of the different systems;

5. To explore the possibility of carrying out an experimental joint study, to be made, in co-operation, by experts in different systems of national accounts, of the problems of a particular under-developed country which is interested in the matter and is willing to co-operate.

CAPITAL FORMATION STATISTICS IN UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

67. In accordance with the request it had made at its ninth session, the Commission had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General entitled "Capital formation statistics: problems and methods with special reference to under-developed countries" (E/CN.3/227). The memorandum dealt in particular with the general approach to the measurement of capital formation employed by such countries, with emphasis on statistical and methodological weaknesses and suggestions for overcoming some of the difficulties exposed. Among the problem areas to which the Commission's attention was drawn were the allocation problems arising from reliance on import statistics, the ascertainment of mark-ups and related charges, the estimation of construction by the use of building permits and the value of building materials and supplies used up, and the difficulties involved in covering own-account construction in rural areas.

68. The Commission observed that the memorandum by the Secretary-General served a useful purpose in bringing to light the difficulties confronting under-developed countries which were now so concerned with improving statistics in that field. It was generally agreed that, so far as possible, countries should follow alternative approaches, such as the expenditure and commodity-flow methods, as a means of improving and checking on the estimates. It was also recognized that certain forms of capital formation, such as the establishment of plantations, which might appear to be of minor

importance in advanced countries, could in fact be of considerable importance in certain under-developed countries, and that careful attention to the problems involved was merited. The opinion was expressed that the difficulty involved in measuring own-account construction, especially with local labour and local materials carried out in rural areas, and the different economic consequences of that form of investment activity often made it advisable to indicate what part of total capital formation related to own-account construction as opposed to capital formation carried out on a normal commercial basis. It was further observed that certain forms of contract construction, for example, the construction of luxury flats, also had a significance for the economy as a whole quite different from that of investment contributing more directly to the development of industrialization.

69. The Commission took note of the fact that two different concepts of capital formation were in use among the various countries, namely, the "gross" and the "gross-gross" concepts, and that the issue was now under consideration by the Conference of European Statisticians. In connexion with measuring capital formation in the agricultural sector, the wider use of sampling methods was felt to be required, and it was suggested that some attention should be given to the possibilities of improving estimates by that means.

70. The Commission was of the opinion that the Secretary-General should follow developments in the field of capital formation statistics, especially in the less developed countries, continue to assess critically the methods and sources employed, and in general assist countries in all ways possible. A report on the progress made should be submitted to the Commission at its eleventh session to determine what future steps might be needed to accelerate progress in that field.

PRICE AND QUANTITY INDEXES

71. At its ninth session the Commission had requested the Secretary-General to continue to collect information from countries on statistics of national product and expenditure in constant prices, to circulate a technical report on price and quantity indexes in national accounting to Member States and interested international organizations for their comment, and to submit a report to the Commission at its tenth session. In compliance with this request the Commission had before it two memoranda by the Secretary-General entitled "A system of price and quantity indexes for national accounts" (E/CN.3/L.46 and E/CN.3/231).

72. The Commission agreed with the view of the Secretary-General that much of the matter in the basic report (E/CN.3/L.46) was tentative and exploratory, and that the attitude of national statistical organizations with regard to it must be one of reserve pending further examination. That reservation applied with special force to the tentative proposals relating to deflation of the income side of the accounts and the balancing of the system of accounts in constant prices. Generally it was felt that there should be a change in order and empha-

sis in the report, starting from the familiar problems of deflation of flows of goods and services with which countries were faced in their day-to-day statistical practice and which still posed unsolved methodological problems. At a later stage the conceptual and practical difficulties attendant on deflation of flows other than goods and services could be dealt with.

73. The view was expressed that flows at constant prices were of far less importance than current flows in the study of inter-sectoral relationships, while it was also stated that for some purposes it would be valuable to have the changes in such current flows analysed into parts attributable to price and quantity changes.

74. The Commission welcomed the initiative of the Statistical Office shown by its work in that field.

75. The Commission suggested that the proposals should be examined by selected national experts before they were submitted to statistical offices of Member States. The need for summarization of the concrete proposals in the report, for convenience of examination, was stressed. Further work should include a discussion of theoretical problems, including the uses of accounts in constant prices. In particular, it was pointed out that the validity of balancing the accounts in real terms required exploration. In the case of the external account, there was a difference of opinion between experts as to the price index which should be used to deflate the current surplus. There were many interpretations to be placed on the concept of gains from terms of trade. The productivity implications of the system in constant prices also required further consideration.

76. Priority should be given to problems of deflation of the expenditure components of the accounts and the net value added method of estimating real output, rather than to deflation of the income side of the accounts. Even in regard to deflation of the expenditure side and the net value added method formidable difficulties were encountered — for example, in connexion with construction industries as well as education and other service flows. Attention in the discussion was also devoted to the double deflation method, in the application of which there were many difficulties.

77. The problem of balancing national accounts in constant prices was further examined in connexion with the document entitled "A preliminary analysis of the nature of aggregates at constant prices" (E/CN.3/L.47), which was also submitted to the Commission in the same connexion. In the memorandum it was pointed out that the so-called "terms-of-trade effect" was only one of a general class of differences occurring, when aggregates at constant prices were compared with one another, even in closed economies. Attention was drawn to the analytic importance of those differences when they measured the extent of technical changes between the base and current periods — for instance, change in the productivity of labour. The Commission suggested that the conclusions given in the document be brought to the attention of interested experts. The Commission wished to encourage the Secretariat to make such technical studies of broad scope as resources permitted.

78. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 7 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

1. To continue to collect information from Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies on statistics of national product and expenditure in constant prices, on the methods of computing these aggregates and of compiling the relevant price indexes;

2. To assist countries in the preparation of systems of quantity and price statistics and to consult with Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies on a continuing basis on their experience in applying particular concepts and methods in the preparation of these statistics;

3. To consult with interested regional and international organizations and individual experts on the proposals in the three memoranda which have been submitted to the Commission on these matters (E/CN.3/L.46, E/CN.3/L.47 and E/CN.3/231) with a view ultimately to the preparation of a study on the conceptual and statistical problems involved in the computation of price and quantity index numbers for national accounts.

IX. Distribution of income

79. The Commission had before it two memoranda by the Secretary-General entitled "Statistics of the distribution of personal income", the first (E/CN.3/L.42) in response to the request of the Commission at its ninth session that a report should be prepared on methods used by countries, and the second (E/CN.3/233) incorporating comments of countries on the first memorandum.

80. From the discussion it transpired that the basic report (E/CN.3/L.42), even as amended, still omitted references to the most up-to-date experience of certain countries. It was suggested that they be included in the definitive version of the report, which should also contain a full bibliography.

81. The Commission considered that both the uses to which such statistics would be put as well as the technical methods to be adopted were deserving of further study. In the latter connexion it was desirable to study appropriate measures of income size distribution (for example, the Lorenz curve, the log-normal parameters or the area included between the concentration curves and the line of equal distribution) in particular for examining changes over time or for comparisons between different socio-economic groups. Reference was made to the usefulness of equal frequency ranges and attention was also directed to some new work in curve-fitting to income size distribution.

82. The extreme difficulty of establishing international standards in the field in question and the hazards of

making comparisons of the distribution of incomes between countries with different economic situations were generally recognized.

83. A certain flexibility in the definition of income in income size distribution should be regarded as inevitable, either because of the source of the statistics or the uses for which they were required. While certain countries might wish to base these statistics for some purposes on cash income, clearly it was often necessary to include subsistence income and services received in kind as well. In all cases the income concept used should be clearly defined and, wherever possible, the questionnaires used in compiling the statistics should be published by countries.

84. The need for the analysis of income distribution by occupational and socio-economic groupings was stressed, as well as the necessity of considering the distribution before and after tax. Such analysis was useful for a study of the national economy and, in particular, the level of living.

85. In under-developed countries it might in certain cases be desirable to measure income by aggregate expenditure, thus broadening the scope of these statistics. In such countries it was easier to obtain reasonably accurate statistics of expenditure than of income and the two totals were closely similar in the great majority of households.

86. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 8 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary General:

1. To revise the report "Statistics of the distribution of personal income" (E/CN.3/L.42), taking into account also the practice of countries which studied distributions of aggregate expenditure instead of personal income;

2. To make an appraisal of the conceptual and statistical problems encountered in this work on the basis of expert opinion;

3. To formulate a statistical programme of work in the field of income distribution for the guidance of countries planning studies in this field.

X. Balance-of-payments statistics

87. The Commission had before it a memorandum by the International Monetary Fund entitled "Progress report on balance-of-payments statistics" (E/CN.3/253), dealing with progress in balance-of-payments statistics since the Commission's ninth session. In an oral communication the representative of the Fund referred to the collaboration of the United Nations Statistical Office and the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in narrowing the remaining conceptual differences between the Fund's *Balance of Payments Manual* and the United Nations and OEEC systems of national accounts. The Fund

representative stressed the importance of first establishing a logical and consistent basis for recording transactions before taking statistical difficulties into account. In its opinion the categories could then be adjusted to the statistical limitations in different countries in such a way as to minimize logical distortions. The Fund had made many such adjustments in working with reporting countries.

88. The Commission noted with satisfaction the valuable work done by the Fund in improving and standardizing balance-of-payments statistics, and the close collaboration maintained with the United Nations and other international agencies. It agreed that it was necessary to arrive at logical solutions to problems arising in balance-of-payments work. Like the Fund, it recognized that problems of data collection could not be ignored when recommendations required adjustment beyond the scope of data that might be available, and a number of questions were raised regarding the reporting of undistributed profits of subsidiaries.

89. The opinion was expressed that, in view of the different purposes served by balance-of-payments statistics and national income accounts, less than complete agreement might be countenanced. It was recognized, nevertheless, that where differences existed every effort should be made to reconcile them.

XI. Classification of government accounts

90. The Commission reviewed a progress report on classification of government accounts (E/CN.3/254) which described the work carried out by the Secretariat in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 378 D (XIII) and General Assembly resolution 407 (V). The English version of the *Manual for Economic and Functional Classification of Government Transactions* (ST/ECA/49)⁶ was published in March 1958 and the French and Spanish editions of the *Manual* are to be published in the very near future. The Commission noted that the *Manual* was intended to serve as a guide in the reclassification of government transactions with a view to providing data for the formulation of economic and social policy. As was stated in the preface of the *Manual*, the information to be obtained was not intended or designed to have the legal and accounting significance of data presented in the basic systems of budget accounts. The schemes in the *Manual* were therefore put forward as supplements to, and not as replacements for, the usual budget classifications which served primarily to ensure accountability.

91. The Commission was informed that earlier drafts of the *Manual* had been presented as working papers to meetings of regional workshops on problems of budgetary reclassification and management held at Mexico City in 1953 and at Bangkok in 1955 and 1957. Comments made during the discussions at those workshops as well as observations from a number of experts working as consultants to the Secretariat in that field were utilized in producing the latest version of the

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. : 58.XVI.2.

Manual. The report also referred to secretariat studies on reclassification of government transactions according to economic and functional categories which had recently been carried out in a number of countries. In a paper entitled *Reclassification of Government Expenditures and Receipts in Selected Countries (ST/ECA/52)* to be published shortly, experiences of Governments in that particular field would be summarized.

92. In accordance with the wishes expressed by the Commission at its ninth session, the *Manual* had been circulated in draft form to Member States for their information and comments. Arrangements had been made to obtain comments from the national statistical services and national fiscal authorities as well as from interested regional and international organizations.

93. The Commission took note of the completion of the *Manual*, and requested the Secretary-General to draw it to the attention of the statistical offices of Member States and to submit a progress report on the subject to the Commission at its eleventh session, together with a summary of the comments received from Governments and interested regional and international organizations.

XII. Demographic statistics

1960 WORLD POPULATION CENSUS PROGRAMME

94. With regard to the 1960 World Population Census Programme, the following documents were before the Commission: a progress report (E/CN.3/237 and Add.1); a memorandum by the Secretary-General entitled "Principles and recommendations for national population censuses" (E/CN.3/236 and Add.1); and a working paper on refugee statistics.

95. Supplementing the information contained in the progress report the Commission was informed that preparations were under way for the operation of two regional census training centres, one at Tokyo and one at Lima, to be held during the second part of 1958. The centres were designed for the training of statisticians from the Far East and Latin America who would have substantial responsibility in planning and conducting the forthcoming censuses of population, housing and agriculture. The two centres were jointly sponsored by the United Nations and FAO; the Inter-American Statistical Institute co-sponsored the centre for Latin America. In addition, the Commission noted that considerable progress had been made in the preparation of the new handbook of population census methods for use at the training centres and by Governments in planning their new series of national censuses.

96. The Commission noted with satisfaction the work done in preparation for the 1960 World Population Census Programme, through the development of draft recommendations, the convening of regional technical conferences to review those recommendations and develop modifications, the broadening of the scope of the documentation to give attention to all phases of national census activity, the development of technical

manuals, the participation in census training centres and the provision of direct technical assistance to countries desiring such assistance.

97. The Commission recommended that the Secretary-General continue to develop a programme of technical assistance, training and expert advice for the preparation and conduct of national censuses. The programme should be made flexible to meet national and regional needs, recognizing that such needs might vary widely from country to country and from region to region. The organization of training centres in addition to those already planned should be encouraged. In so far as feasible, the Secretary-General might undertake also to facilitate the participation by technicians from one country in the observation and demonstration of census methods in other countries, and the exchange of national experiences in planning and conducting censuses.

98. The Commission noted also the usefulness of the methodological studies and technical manuals prepared by the Secretary-General. It was pointed out that in several countries they were used extensively in planning their forthcoming censuses. The Commission expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would be able to continue assembling, analysing and disseminating technical information based on the experience of the new series of censuses and in particular on the extent to which international recommendations had been useful or required modifications.

99. The view was expressed that whereas recommendations concerning the applications of sampling methods to population censuses would be of assistance to countries, a practical manual illustrating the operational and mathematical aspects of sampling techniques under given costs in current use would be of greater value.

100. The Commission considered the third draft of the "Principles and recommendations for national population censuses" (E/CN.3/236/Add.1), which had been submitted for final consideration and approval. It was pointed out that the document endeavoured to reconcile varied and sometimes opposing views and should be regarded as a compromise of methods and points of view among a large number of countries in different stages of development, with different needs, resources and census experience. Some members thought, for example, that additional facts about economic characteristics should be sought, such as position in occupation. While the principles offered guidance which it was hoped would be of value to all countries, the Commission felt that the recommendations needed to be applied with due regard to their practical feasibility in the circumstances of each country and the resources available.

101. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 9 (X)

The Statistical Commission,

Having studied the revised draft of "Principles and recommendations for national population censuses" (E/CN.3/236/Add.1),

1. Gives general endorsement to the principles;
2. Recommends that the Secretary-General take into account the comments of the Commission in preparing the final version;
3. Recommends that the principles and the progress report (E/CN.3/237 and Add.1), as revised, together with the handbook of census methods, be issued as soon as possible for the guidance of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies in connexion with their forthcoming censuses of population.

102. The main revisions of substance relating to the principles and recommendations are given briefly in the annex to this report.

OTHER ASPECTS

103. The Commission had before it a memorandum (E/CN.3/238) which gave an account of the activities in the field of demographic statistics during the interval since the ninth session. Three principal aspects of a "maintenance" nature were described, namely: (a) the assembling and publication of demographic series, (b) the evaluation of the quality of the series, and (c) the promotion of development and improvement.

104. The memorandum pointed out the increase in volume and complexity of available series during the period under review, due in part to the large number of population censuses carried out between 1945 and 1957, the dissemination of these statistics in the *Demographic Yearbook* and the steps taken to evaluate the completeness and accuracy of the data. It also noted that since the formulation in 1953 of international standards in vital statistics the promotion of development and improvement based on the standards was carried out through technical assistance.

105. The Commission noted the progress made and recommended that work be continued along the lines described. It also reiterated its request that steps be taken as soon as feasible to implement other aspects of its resolution 18 (IX),⁷ including the recommendation that a study and evaluation of continuous population registers be undertaken with a view to an examination of their usefulness as a statistical mechanism both in statistically developed countries and in those less advanced.

XIII. Social statistics

PROGRAMME OF SOCIAL STATISTICS

106. The Statistical Commission considered a memorandum containing an international programme of social statistics (E/CN.3/239) prepared by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned.

107. The Commission considered that the programme

⁷ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 7, para. 115.

outlined was of importance since it was concerned with the utilization of statistics for the appreciation of social conditions and for the formulation and evaluation of social policies, as well as for the measurement of the effectiveness of social services.

108. The Commission noted that social statistics in the broad sense, as used in the memorandum, could not be regarded as a special field of statistics. Most of the categories of data mentioned in the programme belonged to the traditional fields of statistics. The Commission agreed, however, that it would be useful to present the data appearing in the traditional statistical fields from the special point of view of assessing the level of human welfare. The Commission felt that there was particular need for special studies concerned with the development of operational concepts and with methods of collection and analysis of data likely to provide indicators and integrated measures, for assessing changes in levels of living, for formulating economic and social policies and for evaluating the results of such policies.

109. The Commission considered a proposal by the Secretary-General for the preparation of a compendium of social statistics designed to provide a background for the discussion of the world social situation, to be compiled by the Secretary-General with the co-operation of the specialized agencies, the first issue of the compendium to be published not later than 1963. The Commission recognized in principle the usefulness of such a compendium and agreed to accept the Secretary-General's proposal. It agreed also that he should be requested to report progress at the eleventh session.

110. The Commission recognized that considerable difficulties would be involved in the preparation of the compendium owing to the lack of adequate statistics in certain fields, the possibility that in many cases only more advanced countries would have the required statistics and the possibility that the 1960-61 census tabulations would not be available. In addition, there was a danger that the statistical comparisons of personal living conditions might be misinterpreted. The compendium would, therefore, necessarily be of an experimental nature and might be limited in scope but the Commission was hopeful that improvement would be made in future issues and that suitable steps would be taken to ensure that data from under-developed countries should be included in so far as possible.

111. It was noted that considerable caution would have to be exercised in determining the contents as well as in assembling and analysing the statistical data to be included in the compendium and that variations in interpretations would need to be dealt with in extensive technical notes.

112. It was noted that it would be desirable to emphasize the part concerned with unemployment and with living conditions of the unemployed as well as conditions of employment including under-employment.

113. The Commission recommended that careful attention should be given to the co-ordination of the compendium with the next full *Report on the World Social Situation* scheduled to be issued in 1963 and with other related international publications and that

the Secretary-General should prepare a report on the plan, including an outline of the contents of the compendium for the consideration of the Commission at its next session.

114. The Commission was informed that the contents and co-ordination of work for the compendium of social statistics would be discussed at the secretariat level at inter-agency meetings on social statistics and that the experts on the substantive matters would be consulted. The list of items for inclusion proposed by the Secretary-General was entirely provisional and subject to changes pending such discussions. Specifically the contents outlined in part III (Health conditions) were not to be considered as a WHO proposal.

115. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 10 (X)

The Statistical Commission,

Noting the international programme of social statistics presented in document E/CN.3/239,

1. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the specialized agencies, initiate the preparation of a Compendium of Social Statistics to be issued at the latest in 1963 in co-ordination with the full *Report on the World Social Situation*;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report progress on the project at the eleventh session.

116. The Commission considered that there was a need for studies to determine the ways in which social statistics could be used by Member States in formulating, implementing and evaluating social policies in different specialized fields.

117. In conducting such studies the Commission recommended that the Secretary-General consult with the statisticians of Member States, universities, and private or non-governmental organizations with a view to gathering information which might lead to the preparation of a report or series of reports on the uses of statistics for the formulation of social policies. The statistical services of each country should be kept informed of such consultations.

118. With reference to the development of international standards for the compilation and analysis of social statistics (E/CN.3/239, section IV D), the Commission expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would continue with that type of work. However, recognizing the difficulty of developing suitable standards for all the aspects envisioned in the above-mentioned document, it was suggested that special attention should be given by the appropriate agencies to developing international principles for the compilation of housing statistics and statistics concerning households, families, social services and improved measures of mortality.

119. With regard to methodological studies on the use of sample surveys in the collection of social statistics in under-developed countries (E/CN.3/239, section IV E),

several members of the Commission stressed the urgency of such studies and requested that the Secretary-General intensify efforts to improve the exchange of international experience in that field.

120. In regard to education and training in social statistics (E/CN.3/239, section IV F) the Commission noted that the regular international training programme in the different subjects of statistics should contribute to the development of the various social statistical sectors. However, the clarification was made that no training on the over-all social statistics aspects was intended in paragraphs 42-44 of the memorandum.

121. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 11 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General to prepare, in collaboration with appropriate agencies and in consultation with Governments of States Members of the United Nations or member of the specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts, studies on the uses of social statistics for the formulation of social policies.

HOUSING CENSUS

122. The Commission had before it a memorandum prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/240) stating the action that had been taken regarding the development of international principles for housing censuses and inviting the Commission to comment upon the "General principles for a housing census" (second draft) (E/CN.3/240/Add.1-ST/STAT/P/L.22/Rev.1) as well as to express its views regarding issues which could not be resolved by further study of country experiences or on which different viewpoints have been expressed by Governments or regional groups.

123. In considering the memorandum and its addendum the Commission noted the progress that had been made since its last session, which was reported in the document submitted to it, and that the progress was the result of consultations with national statistical services and regional groups. Members of the Commission expressed the view that the "General principles for a housing census" would be useful to Governments in planning and developing their national housing censuses, although an even more considerable degree of adaptation to local circumstances would be necessary than in the case of censuses of population. The Commission suggested the inclusion of a more specific statement which would make it clear to countries that the recommendations were not mandatory and that the list of items and the tabulations shown did not necessarily represent a minimum programme while at the same time cautioning the countries against the adoption of an over-ambitious census plan which might jeopardize the success of the census operation as a whole.

124. With regard to the relationship between the housing census and the population census it was generally

felt that if possible they should be held at the same time. Some members of the Commission felt, however, that, although it was feasible to combine housing and population censuses when only a few housing census items were required, a separate enumeration might be required, in view of the specialized nature of the data, as the housing census increased in scope.

125. In considering specific items included in the addendum, the Commission noted that there was general agreement concerning the need to define housing units in terms of physical characteristics, disregarding the actual occupancy at the time of the census, except that certain types of housing units needed to be occupied for residential purposes in order to be covered by the census.

126. Some members of the Commission felt that, in addition to the number of rooms, the habitable area should be included in the list of items recommended for collection. It was suggested that, although there was sometimes difficulty in determining the rooms that were occupied for professional or business purposes, such rooms should where possible be counted, but in a separate classification in order that they should not be included in calculations of persons per room.

127. Since all buildings had to be investigated during a housing census in order to find out whether or not they were occupied, it was suggested that it would be useful if a listing of buildings intended for non-residential purposes were made at population or housing censuses and that the listing could be made in such a way as to serve as a register for censuses of distribution and similar inquiries. It was also suggested that each country should, according to local circumstances, develop instructions for the recognition of permanent units.

128. Members of the Commission expressed their views regarding the priority of certain items, and discussed the inclusion as well as the exclusion of various items. The recommendations included in the "Principles" appeared to be over-ambitious for some countries and to fall short of the needs of others. However, the Commission did not attempt to reconcile the various points of view expressed concerning the items included in the "Principles" and felt that the recommendations should not be developed to such an extent that they would become inflexible but should be expressed in general terms in order that the users could adapt them to their individual needs.

129. It was stated that the recommendations could only be evaluated after they had been put to practical use in connexion with the forthcoming housing censuses and it was recommended that, in view of the proximity of the 1960 censuses, the principles should be revised and expanded according to the suggestions made by the Commission and circulated to Member States at an early date. The Secretary-General was asked to request Member States to transmit to the Secretariat their experiences in applying the principles to their particular problems in order that such experiences might be taken into consideration in future publications.

130. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 12 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Recommends:

1. That the Secretary-General prepare a revised version of the "General principles for a housing census" taking into consideration the comments made by the Commission at its tenth session;

2. That in view of the importance of housing censuses for the evaluation of the housing situation and as an important frame for sample surveys to be taken during the inter-censal period, the Secretary-General distribute the revised version of the principles to States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies and international agencies concerned with housing statistics at an early date in order that they may be used in the planning and developing of national housing censuses;

3. That the Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies be requested to transmit to the Secretary-General their experiences in applying the recommendations to their particular problems with a view to revision and improvement so that they may more adequately meet varying national needs and circumstances;

4. That arrangements be made for field tests of the principles either as a part of the activities of international or national statistical training centres organized under the technical assistance programme of the United Nations or as projects undertaken by co-operating countries;

5. That an evaluation of the international experience regarding the application of the principles be presented to the Statistical Commission at a future session.

LEVELS OF LIVING

131. The Commission had before it a progress report on statistical aspects of the international definition and measurement of levels of living (E/CN.3/241) prepared by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the specialized agencies concerned.

132. In considering the question of terminology, which had been raised at a previous session, views were expressed in favour of retaining "levels of living" as a suitable expression, instead of adopting the term "conditions of living". The former term has gained acceptance and the Commission felt that it would not be advisable to make a change at the current time.

133. The Commission was informed that the proportional mortality ratio, i.e., the percentage of deaths at age fifty and over to total deaths, which had been recommended by the Expert Committee on Health Statistics as a comprehensive health indicator, was on an experimental basis. Several members felt that such a single measure would not be immediately accepted since it did not necessarily reflect health conditions and was affected by the changes in age distribution of the population which might or might not be due to mortality; nevertheless, they felt that experimentation in regard to

it should go forward. The Commission welcomed the classification of indicators proposed by the Study Group on the Measurement of Levels of Health.⁸

134. In reference to the indicators of food and nutrition, attention was called to the need for further research regarding the determination of calorie and protein requirements. The FAO representative indicated that such research was in process.

135. It was noted that no specific indicators on housing, including household facilities, had been developed.

136. The Statistical Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 13 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Recommends that the Secretary-General continue to devote efforts to the development of indicators of levels of living in collaboration with the specialized agencies and present a progress report for the consideration of the Statistical Commission at its next session.

FAMILY LIVING STUDIES

137. The Commission had before it a report on family living studies (E/CN.3/250) prepared by the International Labour Office.

138. It had been suggested that some clarification in terminology was desirable to distinguish between fairly broad multi-purpose surveys and ones limited primarily to expenditure surveys. It was proposed by the ILO that the former might be designated as "household living inquiries" and the latter as "household expenditure inquiries". The Commission reached no decision on that point but agreed that the Secretariat might examine the question of terminology further.

139. With regard to the ILO programme of work in family living studies, the Commission agreed with the ILO proposal to concentrate work in small towns and rural areas; it was, however, indicated that the preparation of studies regarding the methods of carrying out surveys, definition of units and principles of classification in the various fields was a matter of great urgency.

140. The Commission noted with appreciation the plans of the ILO for the preparation of a symposium on family living studies and the fact that field studies in four countries were being arranged. The Commission wished to be kept informed about progress on family living studies.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS

141. The Commission considered a memorandum prepared by the International Labour Office (E/CN.3/251) describing the work accomplished in the preparation

of an International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), an activity in which the Statistical Commission has maintained a continuing interest. The final text of the ISCO had been prepared and issued in 1957 taking into account the decisions of the Ninth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

142. The Commission expressed satisfaction that the work had been completed, especially since it would be available for consideration by Member States in connexion with the 1960 censuses of population. The Commission noted that it would be important to take account of the experience of countries in applying the classification to censuses so that suitable revisions could be considered at a later stage. Representatives of several countries indicated that, while they might not be able to use the classifications as such in their censuses, they would undertake, as far as possible, to provide for international comparability, at least on a broad basis.

STATISTICS ON EDUCATION, CULTURE AND MASS COMMUNICATION

143. The Commission considered a progress report (E/CN.3/252) prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) dealing with the publication of statistics on a number of subjects for which UNESCO is responsible and with the work on the standardization of education statistics. The Commission noted the importance of the publications, commenting especially on those which place figures on education in a larger context. The Commission hoped that that broader analytical approach might be maintained and extended. The Commission also hoped that countries would be able to adopt the standards for educational statistics, work on which was virtually completed.

144. The Commission invited UNESCO, in cooperation with the ILO and other appropriate international agencies, to collect information on resources and requirements of scientific and technical manpower in the different countries.

XIV. Programme of basic statistics for economic and social development

145. The Commission considered two memoranda prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/248 and E/CN.3/L.41) concerning statistical series which would be of assistance to less industrialized countries in developing an integrated system of statistics for use in programmes of economic and social development. The former memorandum contained a list of statistical series for that purpose including, for each of the series, a description of components, scope, frequency, possible sources of information and supplementary series of interest. The list reflected the comments of Governments of Member States and of the specialized agencies on an earlier version of the list (E/CN.3/L.41). The earlier memorandum contained, in addition to the list of basic series, a textual discussion of the uses of each of the

⁸ World Health Organization, *Measurement of Levels of Health: Report of a Study Group*, Technical Report Series, No. 137 (Geneva, 1957).

series in programming and assessing development, and of the relation of the various series to one another.

146. The Commission felt that the list of series set out in the memorandum by the Secretary-General on "Basic statistics for economic and social development" (E/CN.3/248), taking account of the views of the Commission, would furnish valuable guidance to less advanced countries in developing an integrated system of statistics for purposes of assessing and furthering economic and social development. The list was not to be considered a minimum or standard set of statistical series since a number of less developed countries did not have the necessary resources or experience to gather some of the series listed, some of which, indeed, even for statistically advanced countries, might be difficult to collect. Moreover, certain of those countries did not need and might not find it feasible to gather, even at advanced stages in the development of statistics, all of the series enumerated. It was not possible for such a list to include all of the statistics which less developed countries might find necessary to meet their specific needs at various stages of development. The list did, however, contain the main statistical series which it had proved to be feasible to collect and include the principal measures necessary to assess economic growth and changes in conditions of living as well as the resources for furthering development. The list would serve as a means by which the statistical offices of less developed countries could establish the objectives and the order of development of their statistical work by a process of selection in the light of national circumstances, needs and resources. The textual material of the document should be revised to set out clearly the purposes of, and need for, the various series in order to assist the statistically less developed countries in making their selection.

147. The Commission agreed that the system of national accounts should be excluded from the list of statistical series in view of the extensive data required in order to complete those accounts. However, many of the statistical series in the list would provide basic data for completing parts of the national accounts, and the compilation of an articulated set of national accounts should be regarded as a definite objective. In the revised text to accompany the list of series, emphasis should be given to methods of integrating the series by means of the national accounts. The value of having estimates, even though rough, of such aggregates as national income, gross domestic product consumption and capital formation should be indicated in the text. It was suggested that some attention might be given in the text to concepts of income and consumption appropriate for use in non-monetized economies. It would be desirable to provide in the text a general discussion of the usefulness of sampling — in particular, the advantages of an integrated scheme of sampling for gathering many of the series — although sampling had been dealt with in connexion with many of the individual series. The question of accuracy should be discussed in relation to the uses of the series and the available resources.

148. It was not feasible to suggest orders of priority for the collection of the statistical series in the list more specific than those already given in the text of document

E/CN.3/L.41 because of the diversity of conditions among the less industrialized countries of the world. The differences in stage of development, needs for information and resources for gathering data would be less marked among the less industrialized countries of particular regions. It would be practicable to establish, on a regional basis, certain orders of priority among the series, and consultations should, therefore, take place for that purpose at the regional level.

149. The Commission felt that the following points should be referred to in the text accompanying the list:

(i) The desirability of classification according to geographical areas, as, for example, between town and country, should be indicated for some additional statistical series — for example, the number of registered doctors, nurses and related personnel.

(ii) An important question facing countries engaged in programmes of economic development was the need for and availability of scientific, engineering and technical personnel. The distribution of the population by type and level of education completed, the number of students enrolled in schools according to level of education and type of school and the distribution of the economically active population according to occupation would provide useful bench-mark information for that purpose. However, data were also needed on the requirements of industry for scientific, engineering and technical personnel at different levels of output and technical development. For that purpose special studies of labour, industry and education would be required, and internationally comparable data on the need for and availability of these personnel would therefore be valuable. It was noted that those questions confronted the developed as well as the less developed countries. The matter involved the responsibility of the ILO and UNESCO and it would be desirable that those agencies co-operate with the Statistical Office in the study of the subject. In particular, comparable definitions which were meaningful and realistic were needed with regard to the scientific, engineering and technical occupations.

(iii) Classifications of the population according to selected socio-economic characteristics were required for many kinds of economic and social analysis. Similar importance attached to classifications of agricultural holdings distinguishing those employing hired labour by numbers employed.

(iv) Where resources permitted, it would be useful to obtain classifications of the aggregate area of field crops during the crop year, distinguishing size of holdings, area and number of trees and vines of productive age, and number of live-stock held at a specific date. Such information, the Commission felt, was too detailed for inclusion in the list proper.

(v) The value of gathering data on bank clearings and on interest rates in addition to the central bank rediscount rate should be mentioned.

(vi) The series on household income and expenditure might be gathered at regular intervals where resources permitted.

150. The Commission adopted the following resolution:

Resolution 14 (X)

The Statistical Commission

Invites the Secretary-General:

1. To revise the list of statistical series set out in his memorandum (E/CN.3/248) and the textual discussion of the series contained in his earlier memorandum (E/CN.3/L.41);

2. To circulate the revised document to members of the Commission for their comments and suggestions, to complete the document in the light of such additional comments and suggestions as may be received, and to circulate it to States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies for the use of the less developed countries in selecting appropriate series for the development of an integrated system of statistics in order to meet national needs;

3. To consult with the statistical offices of the less developed countries through regional conferences and other means in order to assist countries which are developing their statistical systems in the selection of appropriate series and the determination of priorities of their statistical work programmes.

XV. Matters referred to the Statistical Commission by other international bodies

151. The Commission heard a report from the Bureau of Social Affairs on paragraphs 72-77 of the "General survey of developments in international statistics" (E/CN.3/249), which discussed the work of the Population Commission in relation to that of the Statistical Commission. A report was also given on pilot studies in Mysore and the Philippines and reference was made to the Demographic Training and Research Centres at Chembur, India, and Santiago, Chile. Provision had been made for the establishment of regional demographic experts in the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and the Economic Commission for Latin America and in the Near East. The Commission took note of and expressed interest in those activities.

XVI. Other business

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

152. The Commission discussed paragraphs 93-104 of the "General survey of developments in international statistics" (E/CN.3/249), which dealt with the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The opinion was expressed that there should be more co-ordination between agricultural censuses and industrial censuses and that attention might be given to the problem of distinguishing operations such as those of stations which provide agricultural machines for general use.

153. It was also noted that the FAO calculations of

international indexes of agricultural production used different concepts from those used in similar indexes compiled by OEEC and by national statistical offices. A method by which that situation might be overcome would be to develop a single set of international standard concepts. That was a matter which could well be examined further by the Conference of European Statisticians in co-operation with FAO, and possibly other regional conferences in due course. It was also suggested that where the international agencies prepared country indexes by methods different from those used by the national offices the internationally computed country indexes should not be published separately even though they might be included in regional and world totals.

TOURIST STATISTICS

154. The Commission took note of a communication from the Executive Director of the Pacific Area Travel Association urging the Commission to expedite the work, undertaken at its ninth session, of standardizing and improving the comparability of international travel statistics.⁹ Several members emphasized the importance, to the balance of payments of their countries, of international travel, and the question was raised of the extent to which the Embarkation and Disembarkation Card used for travellers by air could serve as a basis for migration and tourist statistics. The Commission was informed that the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO) might shortly be able to initiate measures for the collection of statistics of international travel. Since the further development of standards could best proceed in conjunction with the international collection of data, the Commission, while recognizing the difficulties of collection which many countries had in that field, expressed the hope that the related tasks would be undertaken together and that a progress report, including a discussion of the suitability of the Embarkation and Disembarkation Card for statistical use, would be made to it at its eleventh session.

PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

155. The Commission reviewed the arrangements for its periodic sessions as requested by the Economic and Social Council in consequence of General Assembly resolution 1202 (XII), which dealt with the pattern of conferences and working methods of United Nations bodies. The Commission considered that the periodicity of its sessions should remain unchanged as the biennial sessions had proved satisfactory. Each session should be planned to cover a period of three weeks as experience had shown that to be the normal length of time necessary to cover the agenda of the biennial sessions. The Commission considered that the official responsibilities of many of its members made it extremely difficult for them to be absent from their countries in the first quarter of the year; consequently, the Commission wished to

⁹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Twenty-second Session, Supplement No. 7, para. 155.*

emphasize that its biennial sessions should be fixed in the period from the middle of April to the middle of May.

156. One aspect of its work which the Commission felt was of growing importance was the maintenance of close contact with the work of the regional conferences of statisticians and similar regional statistical organizations. If the co-ordination and development of international statistical work was to be effective it was essential that the staff of the Statistical Office should meet from time to time with the statisticians working in the national statistical offices.

XVII. Programme of work, and priorities

157. The following paragraphs, based on the discussion of the Commission at its tenth session, contain the proposals of the Secretary-General, approved by the Commission, on the priorities to be accorded to the various projects reviewed at the tenth session.

Continuing projects and activities of high priority

(1) The maintenance of the systematic publication of statistics, together with the development of improved indexes and bibliographies, with attention to their wider distribution, to speeding up the release of certain publications and to reviewing the contents of existing publications in order to permit the inclusion of additional analytical tables within the total programme, as well as the provision of a summarized pocket-book of international statistics, of popular reviews of the available data in certain fields and of brief comparative studies of national practices.

(2) The maintenance and development of publications dealing with statistical methods, with particular reference to practices of national offices in solving problems of collection and analysis.

(3) The further development, as necessary, of mechanisms for regional consultations on statistical questions including the strengthening of services available through the regional statisticians, especially in connexion with the statistical needs of the less-well-developed countries. The preparation of an integrated list of primary statistical series and study of their uses and relationship in order to assist statistically less developed countries to produce an integrated statistical system which will aid economic and social development.

(4) Advice and assistance in giving effect to existing standards or guiding principles for the improvement of national and international statistics, together with the exchange of information on problems of methods and applications:

- (a) Basic industrial statistics,
- (b) Capital formation statistics,
- (c) Distribution statistics,
- (d) External trade statistics,
- (e) Index numbers of industrial production,
- (f) Methodology, including sampling,

- (g) National accounts,
- (h) Population and housing censuses,
- (i) Social statistics,
- (j) Vital statistics,
- (k) Wholesale price statistics.

Ad hoc projects of high priority

(1) Comparative study of national practices in the field of distribution statistics, including various methodological considerations in the conduct of large-scale inquiries.

(2) Completion of technical studies of definitions and methods for censuses of housing.

(3) Studies designed to improve the accuracy of vital statistics, including experimental studies on methods of obtaining vital statistics in countries where the conventional registration methods may not be applicable, and an analysis of the methods and uses of population registers.

(4) Continued work towards the improvement of comparability in external trade statistics, especially trade-by-country statistics and methods by which distinctions might be made between capital goods and consumers' goods (in this work full use should be made of regional and other consultations with the statistical offices of Member States); investigation of the statistical treatment of goods traded in free ports or zones.

(5) Continued study, with the assistance of experts, if necessary, of suggestions for statistical programmes on the characteristics of business enterprises, including proposals for tabulations showing important aspects of economic activity; examination of the question of what reporting unit, i.e., the enterprise or establishment, would be most suitable for reporting different types of data; examination of methods for interrelating data for establishments and enterprises, taking account of different record-keeping practices.

(6) Completion of the revisions suggested in connexion with the International Standard Industrial Classification and reissue of the ISIC for general use.

(7) Continued study of national experience with the existing standards for basic industrial statistics and preparation of any proposed revisions in definitions and concepts which may appear necessary, including proposals for censuses of industrial production.

(8) Continued examination of alternative methods of compiling index numbers of wholesale prices; development of suggestions for pricing highly fabricated goods and other problems of collection.

(9) Collection of information from Member States on indexes of national product and expenditure in constant prices, on the related price index numbers and on the methods of computing these indexes; preparation of a study of the conceptual and statistical problems in this field in consultation with interested regional and international organizations and individual experts.

(10) Development of methods for the compilation of national accounts, including capital formation statistics in countries at various stages of economic development.

(11) Study in co-operation with the International Monetary Fund and interested regional organizations of the purposes and usefulness of an integrated system of financial flow statistics and national accounts.

(12) Completion of the revision of the System of National Accounts, exploration of methods and possibilities of completing, with the aid of an expert group if necessary, the systematic comparison of the SNA with the system used by countries with centrally-planned economies, in co-operation with regional statistical groups and the statistical offices of Member States.

(13) Formulation of a statistical programme in the field of income distribution; revision of the study "Statistics of the Distribution of Personal Income" and appraisal of the conceptual and statistical problems in this field.

(14) Initiation, in collaboration with the specialized agencies, of the preparation of a Compendium of Social Statistics.

(15) Investigation of methods, in co-operation with the ILO and UNESCO, for statistical studies of requirements for scientific and technical manpower in relation to economic and social development.

(16) Development, preferably by regional conferences, of international standards for the classification by status.

(17) Examination of the techniques of "operational research" which might be employed by less well developed countries to evaluate alternative methods of using human and material resources in broad sectors of the economy.

(18) Promotion of exchange of national experience in the use of sample surveys and preparation, in collaboration with the specialized agencies, of methodological

studies on the use of sample surveys for the compilation of statistics.

Other projects

Standards for statistics of: transport, crime, migration and tourism.

XVIII. Draft resolution for action by the Economic and Social Council¹⁰

Industrial censuses for 1963

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing that it is necessary to have internationally comparable data on the structure and activities of industry (mining, manufacturing, construction, and the production of gas, electricity and steam) in order to deal with basic questions of economic and social development,

Noting with satisfaction the progress made in the collection of basic industrial statistics throughout the world during the period 1952-1958, and the plans of Governments of Member States to gather comprehensive data on industry for 1963, or a year close to 1963,

Recommends that the Governments of States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies compile basic data on industry for 1963 or a year close to 1963, taking into account as far as possible the international recommendations on this subject which are designed to improve the international comparability of the data.

¹⁰ See paragraph 27 above.

ANNEX

1960 World Population Census Programme

SUGGESTED REVISIONS OF THE PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL POPULATION CENSUSES (E/CN.3/236/Add.1)¹

Paragraph 102-E

A statement should be added to the effect that group enumeration can be considered to be a census if the way in which the information is collected and recorded is so devised that cross-tabulations can be made in the same way as in a census of individuals.

Paragraph 106

In connexion with the timing and interrelationship of various types of censuses, it should be stated that there is widespread opinion that, if a housing census is to be taken, it is preferable to take it simultaneously with a population census and that it is in any case essential to interrelate the two censuses.

Paragraph 209

It should be added that it is an essential part of enumeration that every housing unit should be identified and listed, in order that no inhabitant be missed.

Paragraph 308

In connexion with the application of the recommended list of topics for which data are to be collected the following observations should be made: (a) data should, in suitable cases, be collected for some topics on a sample basis and for other topics on a 100 per cent basis; (b) in areas where there is considerable dependence upon subsistence economy reliable information can be obtained only on location at the time of the census (and place of usual residence, if required) sex, age (or, failing that, age group), and ethnic characteristics (or citizenship, where applicable); (c) it may be possible to obtain fuller information from certain areas within a country or a territory than from others; the fact that in the greater part of a country or territory only a few topics can be covered (since that part is less developed than the rest) should not prevent the collection of further information from towns or other areas where this is possible, both for the intrinsic value of the data and for the experience it provides in taking a census.

Paragraph 407

It is important to bear in mind that housing units and households, while they are clearly distinguishable concepts, are interdependent in the sense that one should not be considered without reference to the other and that in this connexion the relevant conclusions of the Working Group of the Conference of European Statisticians should be taken into account. It is suggested that the second part of sub-paragraph 6 should be redrafted to read: "However, in some countries it is the practice to use a different concept which equates the household with the housing unit and defines the household as the entire group of persons jointly occupying a housing unit. This concept of household does not provide direct information on the number of housekeeping units sharing a housing unit but may be justified where it is not feasible to distinguish between the housing unit and the household, e.g., where,

¹ See paragraph 102 of this report.

in the particular circumstances of a country, the household (house-keeping unit) is generally coterminous with the housing unit."

Paragraph 409

It is suggested that international standard specifications be made of age groups " (3) older children, (4) men in the economically active ages and women in child-bearing ages, (5) men and women beyond these ages".

Paragraph 410

In connexion with the collection of data on marital status it is suggested (a) that some countries may wish to substitute the term "never married" for "single"; (b) that it be left to each country to determine whether persons whose marriages have been annulled should be included with the separated or divorced or together with the single; (c) that information be collected as to persons in stable *de facto* unions and as to persons legally separated or living apart from their spouses, only if it is considered necessary and desirable by the country concerned to obtain such information.

Paragraph 412

It was recommended that in censuses of population, wherever feasible or appropriate, aliens resident within the country should be classified by citizenship.

Paragraph 414

Four main suggestions are made: (a) the definition of unemployed should be modified as far as possible to correspond to the definition recommended at the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians; (b) it should be made clear that a person who is for example a student or a housewife, if employed or seeking such employment in the reference period, should be considered as economically active; (c) since the persons in the not economically active group may belong to two or more of the sub-groups (for instance, a person may be a student and a housewife simultaneously) provision should be made to indicate what priorities are to be assigned; and (d) members of the armed forces should be a separate category of the economically active population, as recommended by the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

Paragraph 417

Since in a number of countries it is not feasible to distinguish unpaid family workers it is suggested that the status group "unpaid family worker" be replaced by "family worker" with an optional subdivision into "paid" or "unpaid".

Paragraph 418 (e)

Information on population dependent on agriculture should be derived from the population census even when a census of agriculture is taken during the same census period. The total agricultural population should be defined as including those economically active in agriculture (separately distinguishing land-holders from landless labourers) together with their dependants. If the members of a household whose head is engaged in agriculture are themselves engaged in other (non-agricultural) industrial branches, they should not be counted as population dependent on agriculture.

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Prosvjeta, 5. Trg. Braštvo i Jedinstva, Zagreb.

[58E2]

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Printed in France

Price: \$U.S. 0.25; 1/9 stg.; Sw. fr. 1.— 12835—July 1958—2,525
(or equivalent in other currencies)