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**STATISTICAL COMMISSION**  
**REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION**

(20 April - 7 May 1965)

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**  
**OFFICIAL RECORDS: THIRTY-NINTH SESSION**

**SUPPLEMENT No. 13**

**UNITED NATIONS**

New York, 1965

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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

THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 13

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## STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Report to the Economic and Social Council on the thirteenth session of the Commission,  
held in New York from 20 April to 7 May 1965

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### I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

#### Opening and duration of the session

1. The Statistical Commission held its thirteenth session at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 20 April to 7 May 1965.

#### Attendance

2. Attendance at the session was as follows:

#### MEMBERS

Australia: Mr. K.M. Archer, Mr. D.V. Youngman;\*

Canada: Mr. Walter E. Duffett, Mr. S.A. Goldberg,\* Mr. H.J. Adler;\*\*

China: Mr. Jui Pao-kung;

France: Mr. Claude Gruson, Mr. Henri Palangié;\*

Hungary: Mr. György Péter, Mrs. Aladár Mód;\*

India: Mr. P.C. Mahalanobis, Mr. K.R. Nair;\*

Ireland: Mr. M.D. McCarthy;

Japan: Mr. Yuzo Morita, Mr. Takeshi Yanai,\* Mr. Yutaka Kitagawa;\*

Norway: Mr. Petter Jakob Bjerve;

Panama: Miss Luisa E. Quesada;

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\* Alternate.

\*\* Adviser.

Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic: Mr. M.S. Markin,\* Mr. Y.N. Kochubei;\*\*

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. L.M. Volodarsky,\*  
Mr. G.N. Bazhenov,\*\* Mr. N.I. Filimonov;\*\*

United Arab Republic: Major-General Gamal Askar;

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: Sir Harry Campion;

United States of America: Mr. Raymond T. Bowman, Mr. Clarence I. Blau,\*\*  
Mr. Harry F. Venneman;\*\*

Uruguay: Mr. Ademar Martínez Sánchez.

The representative of Brazil, Mr. Paulo de Jesus Mourao Rangel was not able to attend the session.

#### SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

International Labour Organisation (ILO): Mr. H.E. Riley;

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO):  
Mr. P.V. Sukhatme, Mr. Salem H. Khamis;

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):  
Mr. A.F. Gagliotti, Mr. Joseph W. Kappel;

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): Miss Sylvia Kirkpatrick;

World Health Organization (WHO): Dr. W.P.D. Logan;

International Monetary Fund (IMF): Mr. Earl Hicks, Mr. Fred L. Lynn.

#### GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Mr. Ph. Carré.

#### NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

##### Category A

International Chamber of Commerce: Mr. George L. Ridgeway,  
Mrs. Roberta M. Lusardi;

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions: Mr. Lazare Teper,  
Mr. Daniel Nelson.

\* Alternate.

\*\* Adviser.

### Category B

Inter American Statistical Institute: Mr. Tulo Montenegro,  
Mr. Roque García Frías, Mr. Efraim Murcia Camacho, Mr. Douglas H. Parks,  
Mr. G. Hugo Vivó;

International Statistical Institute: Mr. Stuart A. Rice.

3. Mr. G. Zhelev attended the session as an observer for the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance; Mr. I. Rizhov served as his adviser. Mr. Charles A. Yager and Mr. René Bertrand attended as observers for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

4. Mr. Philippe de Seynes, Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs represented the Secretary-General. The following members of the Secretariat participated: Statistical Office: Mr. P.J. Loftus, Mr. A. Aidenoff, Mr. W.W. Flexner, Mr. O. Lukács, Miss N.P. Powell; Mr. Barrie N. Davies, regional statistician for Europe; Mr. T.V. Viswanathan, regional statistician for Asia and the Far East; Mr. Gustaaf F. Loeb, regional statistician for Latin America; Mr. Bahgat El-Tawil, regional statistician for Africa. Fiscal and Financial Branch: Mr. A. Landau, Mr. D.M. Bhouraskar. Population Branch: Mr. John D. Durand. Economic Projections and Programming Centre: Mr. J. Linnamo. Miss R.F. Grossman served as secretary of the Commission.

### Election of officers

5. At the 214th meeting, the Commission unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairman: Mr. Petter Jakob Bjerve (Norway);

Vice-Chairman: Mr. M.S. Markin (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic);

Rapporteur: Mr. K.M. Archer (Australia).

### Agenda

6. At the 214th meeting, the Commission suggested changes in the item order of the provisional agenda (E/CN.3/310 and Corr.1); at the 216th meeting, the new item order was adopted. At the 222nd meeting the Commission agreed to subdivide item 15 into four parts. The agenda, as adopted, was as follows:

1. Election of officers of the Commission.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Review of international statistics.

4. External trade statistics:

(a) Progress report on the International Trade Statistics Centre;

- (b) Report of a joint meeting (Paris, 8-12 June 1964) of statistical and customs experts from international organizations, national statistical offices and customs administrations on the international exchange of external trade statistics;
  - (c) Preliminary key between the Standard International Trade Classification, Revised, and the commodity classification of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).
5. Tourist statistics: proposals of the United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism for the definition of terms used in collecting tourist statistics.
  6. Classification of commodities by industrial origin: relationship of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC).
  7. Study of the major uses of, and requirements for, industrial statistics, including the types of primary data and the indicators derived therefrom.
  8. Progress report on industrial statistics.
  9. Study of the industrial statistics of selected countries (Brazil, Ghana, India, Japan).
  10. Construction statistics: concepts and methods of collection and compilation.
  11. Measures of economic growth.
  12. Developments in compilation and other aspects of the work on national accounts.
  13. Statistics of the distribution of income.
  14. Study of methods used in the compilation of input-output tables, including the most important uses.
  15. Review of the systems of national accounts and balances:
    - (a) Programme as a whole;
    - (b) Revision of A System of National Accounts and Supporting Tables (SNA);
    - (c) Material Products System (MPS);
    - (d) Links between SNA and MPS.
  16. Estimation of national product and expenditure in constant prices.
  17. Classification of government accounts:
    - (a) Progress report on the classification of government accounts;
    - (b) System of classification of public debt.

18. Progress report on balance-of-payments statistics.
19. Principles and practices in the collection and compilation of price statistics.
20. World programmes for national censuses of population and housing:
  - (a) Review of national experience with the 1960 programmes and progress report on international activities in connexion with the 1970 programmes;
  - (b) Draft principles and recommendations for 1970 national population censuses;
  - (c) Draft principles and recommendations for 1970 national housing censuses.
21. Population projections: techniques and draft standards for national programmes.
22. Progress report on other demographic statistics.
23. Progress report on other statistics for social programmes.
24. Five-year programme of international statistics.
25. Priorities of the Commission's work programme and control and limitation of documentation.
26. Other business.
27. Report of the thirteenth session.



## II. REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

7. The Commission received a report summarizing developments in international statistics over the previous three years. The report, entitled "Review of International Statistics, 1962-1964" (E/CN.3/311), covered the statistical activities of the agencies of the United Nations family, as well as those of other international agencies working in the field of statistics, all of whom had contributed material for the review.

8. The report described the development of the statistical work of the international agencies towards greater emphasis on the compilation and analysis of data for both national and international uses. This development was the result of an expansion in the demand for statistical data in response to the needs of economic planning and the interest both of Governments and international organizations in achieving economic growth and stability. The growth of international co-operation in the economic and social fields generally, which had characterized developments in recent years, had given increased importance to the basic arrays of international data which showed aggregates and rates of change for the world and the various regions and groups of countries in the main economic and social fields. The international series also reflected something of the terms in which countries participated in the world economy and their relative rates of progress in the various fields. They also facilitated the study by countries of the functional relationships within other economies as a guide in the planning of their own national economies. In these ways, international statistics were increasingly required to identify and measure, for each country, the exogenous variables of its economic life, as well as to serve the purposes of international discussion and agreement within United Nations organs.

9. The report indicated the developments that had taken place in the use of electronic computers by the Statistical Office of the United Nations as a means of meeting the growing requirements for statistical data. The General Assembly, in operative paragraph 4 (h) of its resolution 1710 (XVI), concerning the United Nations Development Decade, had requested the Secretary-General "to review facilities for the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of statistical and other information required for charting economic and social development". At its eleventh session the Commission had requested in its resolution 6 (XI) that the Secretariat experiment with the use of electronic computers in facilitating the rapid processing, verifying and printing of international trade statistics. 1/ At the same session the Commission had noted that "work on the use of electronic equipment for purposes of statistical compilation and tabulation to meet modern needs" was a task requiring additional attention in the future. 2/ Accordingly, at its twelfth session, in its resolution 11 (XII), the Commission had requested the Secretary-General:

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1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 12, para. 63.

2/ Ibid., para. 16.

"1. To establish a centre, attached to the United Nations Statistical Office, for the collection and publication of international data on external trade, and to arrange for the processing of the data by electronic computer;

"2. To provide Member States, specialized agencies and other organizations, at their request, with statistical information resulting from the work of the centre in the form of publications, tabulations, punched cards or magnetic tape, it being understood that special operations would be undertaken at the expense of the requester in response to any request;

"3. To consult with the specialized agencies and other organizations interested in international trade statistics, including the regional economic commissions, in order to eliminate as far as possible duplication of requests to national offices by these organizations for full trade statistics, and to ensure that the centre may be able to meet appropriate requests by these organizations for international trade data." 3/

10. The Commission noted that the progress that had been made by the Statistical Office of the United Nations in implementing the work programme by the use of computers had enabled it to begin to meet the demands for data on international trade. The Commission was informed that a computer would be installed at United Nations Headquarters in October 1965 to serve the needs of the Organization in the statistical, accounting, financial and administrative fields. In consequence, the Secretariat would be in a position to extend computer applications to other areas of statistics and, in particular, to the field of population census data. The Commission decided to discuss the extension of computer methods under the various subject headings of its agenda and in connexion with the work programme as a whole.

11. The Commission was informed of consultations between the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and other international organizations, as well as the regional commissions, concerning the adoption of a new base year for the presentation and, where necessary, the preparation of index numbers. The year currently in use was 1958 and it was felt that a new base should be chosen. The Statistical Office had proposed that 1963 be chosen for the following reasons: (a) it was the year of reference of the majority of the non-agricultural economic censuses and similar inquiries taken by countries as a part of the 1963 World Programme of Basic Industrial Statistics (a number of these countries were already planning or considering a shift of their weight and comparison base year to 1963); (b) it was advisable to have a five-year gap between the present internationally accepted base year (1958); (c) it appeared to be good choice from the point of view of the normality of economic conditions. The agencies indicated general agreement on the choice of 1963 and a readiness to make it the next internationally recommended base year. FAO indicated that it might have difficulties in the case of certain series based on data from the 1960 agricultural censuses.

12. The Commission welcomed the proposal to present index numbers in the international publications on the base year 1963. It was understood that this

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3/ Ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13, para. 122.

proposal was not intended to limit the choice of the national statistical authorities in deciding on the base to be used for national purposes.

13. The Commission reviewed the technical co-operation activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and those of other international organizations. It was noted that the programme of assistance to developing countries in statistics by the United Nations family of organizations was very substantial and had reached a figure of 478 man-years served by experts in these countries in the three years 1962-1964. In addition, fellowships were awarded by the United Nations and the specialized agencies to 657 persons from ninety-three countries, not including awards given to enable technicians to participate in short-term seminars, training centres and study groups.

14. The Commission considered the technical co-operation programme in statistics to be of fundamental importance and commended the secretariats concerned for the achievements made to date. There was, nevertheless, a need for increased facilities for training statistical personnel. The statistical problems faced by the developing countries were problems both of personnel and of methods suited to the requirements of these countries. United Nations help was necessary to reduce the gap between theory and practice, which continued to exist. This might be done by adapting the training courses to provide greater concentration on the practical problems of the developing countries, on methods of collecting the data appropriate to their requirements and on methods of evaluating the data for practical applications.

15. The Commission discussed the publications of the Statistical Office of the United Nations. It was noted that considerable progress had been made in the past three years. Particular mention was made of such publications as The Growth of World Industry, 1938-1961 4/ and National Accounting Practices in Sixty Countries, 5/ which were found to be of considerable interest in many countries. Attention was drawn to the fact that many publications were not available in Russian and Spanish while others, particularly the methodological publications, appeared in Russian and Spanish only with considerable delay. The result was that the Russian- and Spanish-speaking countries were greatly hampered in their use of these documents. It was felt that efforts should be made to remedy this situation.

16. Appreciation was expressed for the methodological work of the specialized agencies. The hope was expressed that the work undertaken by the International Labour Office's Meeting of Experts on the Statistics of Wages and Labour Costs would be continued. The importance of the recommendations of the tenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians was emphasized. In this connexion, the hope was expressed that work would be expedited by the ILO on the manual on consumer price indexes requested by that Conference. The work of UNESCO in the field of education statistics was considered to be of growing importance, and it was noted that UNESCO had increased its support for work on the improvement of world education statistics. Note was taken of the World Health Organization's plans in the field of health statistics and of its

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4/ United Nations publications, Sales Nos.: 63.XVII.5 and 64.XVII.8.

5/ United Nations publications, Sales No.: 64.XVII.9.

extensive international medical research programme. The International Monetary Fund, it was noted, had expanded its training programme and extended the coverage of its publication International Financial Statistics. Note was taken of the work of FAO and of the forthcoming seminar on agricultural statistics and national economic planning, to be held in Moscow. Concerning the plans for the 1970 World Census of Agriculture, interest was expressed in the reports on the experience gained in the 1960 round of agricultural censuses.

17. The Commission heard reports of the statistical work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and expressed its appreciation for the collaboration of these organizations.

18. The Commission commended the secretariats of the United Nations and the specialized agencies for the material submitted in the "Review of International Statistics". The Commission had at its twelfth session suggested that, in future, it might be more convenient if a summary and analysis of the work were given by subject headings. It wished to reiterate that suggestion and to request that its preparatory material should be assembled sufficiently in advance of the next session to enable the arrangement of the items to be presented according to subject headings. Concerning the documentation for the Commission's work in general, the Commission wished to remind the Secretariat that documents should be issued at least six weeks before the start of the session and felt that the Secretariat should endeavour to ensure that in future all documents reach all Commission members at least one month in advance of the start of the session. While it was recognized that the translations involved were difficult and time-consuming, it was essential that members receive the documentation in their working languages sufficiently in advance to enable them to prepare their comments.

19. In discussing major statistical inquiries such as population, agricultural, and industrial censuses, the view was expressed that successful contributions to the technical assistance operations in statistics would be facilitated if such major statistical inquiries were held during different periods. On the other hand, it was felt that this consideration was to some extent outweighed by the advantages of providing data simultaneously for all countries.

20. The Commission recalled that the basic functions of the Statistical Office were to assemble and publish statistics and to prepare international standards which would facilitate the improvement of statistics and permit international comparisons. The activities of the Office in recent years had been giving greater emphasis to two new lines of development: it was sending statisticians to the regions in order to strengthen the work at that level and it was assisting countries in the establishment of their statistical services by providing expert advisers and by setting up training facilities for national personnel. In addition, the Office had the task of preparing regional and world series from the data provided by national offices. The work of the Statistical Office on these tasks would continue to grow in response to the growing use of statistics in the formulation of economic and social policies. The importance of the work of establishing new international standards was not as great as in the past, although there remained important problems particularly in the fields of national accounts, census programmes and certain other fields. The main requirement was to promote the implementation of standards established and to ensure that the standards were

developed to suit the needs of countries at different levels of development and with different economic systems. Much of the work of implementation in this field could be carried out in the regional conferences of statisticians. Future emphasis would, therefore, be on the preparation and analysis of data on the extension of the use of quantitative methods and reduction of the area of subjective valuations. It was, therefore, important that the Statistical Office should have adequate resources for these new tasks.

21. The following resolution was adopted:

1 (XIII). IMPROVEMENT AND PUBLICATION OF STATISTICS

The Statistical Commission,

Having examined the report of the Secretary-General on international statistics,

Noting the large amount of work being done by the statistical bodies of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to improve the comparability of statistical data from different countries, especially countries with differing social and economic systems,

Taking into account also the considerable expansion in regional statistical activity in connexion with the carrying out of extremely important statistical, methodological and research work and the publication of the relevant findings, as also with the organization of seminars, fellowships, advisory services and other important activities,

Considering further that it is essential to provide for the inclusion in United Nations publications of the most reliable statistical data in respect of the various countries,

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To continue working for the development of technical co-operation among the various countries in the statistical field, paying special attention to the organization of the statistical work and services which will be of assistance to the developing countries in formulating their economic and social development plans;

(2) To take the necessary measures to improve further the statistical surveys and publications of the United Nations, having in mind the Organization's obligation to collect and publish reliable data and analyses in respect of the various countries.

### III. EXTERNAL TRADE STATISTICS

#### A. The work of the International Trade Statistics Centre

22. The Commission considered a report (E/CN.3/312) on the work of the Centre since its establishment by the twelfth session of the Commission. It noted that ninety-two countries were now providing data to the Centre, mostly on magnetic tape or punched cards, though some of the data were received by the Centre after delays of a year or more. The data were being verified, standardized and stored on magnetic tape as received. Besides being intended as a centre for the provision of data for general use, the tapes are also the basis of the publications Commodity Trade Statistics (about 8,000 pages a year) and World Trade Annual (about 1,700 pages); to economize the resources of the United Nations, arrangements had been made for the commercial publication of the latter.

23. The Commission was further informed that an IBM 7044/1401 computer system was to be installed at the Statistical Office in October 1965 and was expected to permit an increased volume of computer work.

24. The Commission expressed the view that the progress of the Centre represented an important new development in international statistics. It was noted that consultations were proceeding with the object of enabling greater use to be made of the data assembled by the Centre as a means of avoiding duplication of requests to Governments. It would be useful if the Statistical Office would report on the progress of co-ordination at the secretariat level. It was recognized that many of these demands arose from the activities of technical committees and that the representatives of Governments on these bodies were often unaware of the difficulties posed for national statistical offices by the detailed questionnaires which emerged. It was suggested that a full appreciation of such difficulties should be promoted both within Governments and within the international secretariats. The Commission expressed the hope that satisfactory arrangements to this end would be achieved. Furthermore, the compilation by various organizations of the same basic trade data involving rearrangements or conversion of national data or incorporating estimates was likely to produce inconsistent sets of figures and, even if they were small, the resulting differences were annoying to users. It was, therefore, suggested that compilations of this type should, as far as possible, be left to the Centre without, however, limiting the publication by other organizations of the data resulting from the operations of the Centre.

25. It was recognized that for some special purposes the 5-digit detail of the Standard International Trade Classification might not be sufficient to enable other organizations to rely on the Centre for data, and the Secretariat should consult with the specialized agencies and regional bodies with a view to attempting to collect more detailed data, in terms of the national classifications, in the areas of interest to such bodies in order to avoid requests of this nature from these sources to Governments.

26. The Commission approved the initial steps which had been taken to publish data but felt that the publication programme should be kept flexible to permit changes as experience indicated their desirability. It was, for instance, felt that the

following expansions of Commodity Trade Statistics should be made if resources permitted: 2-digit SITC data should be included; 5-digit data in reporting-country order should also be included at least annually and, if possible, semi-annually. Attention was drawn to the need for publication by the Centre of the main aggregates of world trade adjusted for seasonal variations.

27. Though uncumulative quarterly data have a number of uses, it was pointed out that incorporating in them revisions made by Governments from time to time would be considerably more difficult for the Centre than the present practice of including such amendments in the cumulative figures.

28. To facilitate the comparison of national data and the data in Commodity Trade Statistics, the exchange rates used for conversion into United States dollars should regularly be shown. Keys between national commodity classifications and the SITC were available to interested users on request to the Centre.

29. In discussing the distribution of data on magnetic tape, it was suggested that, when experience had been obtained in the operation of the computer at United Nations Headquarters, a schedule of charges for tapes might be established. The Secretariat would also have to consider the conditions on which it could supply tapes to other organizations.

30. Interest was shown in including in Commodity Trade Statistics regional aggregates for West Asia (i.e., the Middle East outside of Africa). It was recommended that data on large economic classes of commodities distinguishing food, industrial supplies, capital equipment, consumer non-durables and consumer durables should be compiled for each reporting country and for the world and principal regions to supplement the summary data already compiled on the basis of SITC sections.

31. There was general agreement that the classification by broad economic classes shown in annex III to document E/CN.3/312 was useful, but it was emphasized that Governments should have ample opportunity to study it and express their views which should be taken into account before it was finally adopted. In particular, Commission members and interested agencies should be given the opportunity to send their comments on annex III to the Secretariat. In this connexion, the Commission was informed of the steps being taken by countries with centrally planned economies to classify commodities according to the uses to be made of them.

32. The following resolution was adopted:

## 2 (XIII). CENTRALIZATION OF EXTERNAL TRADE STATISTICS

The Statistical Commission,

Recognizing the growing need for both detailed and summary data on external trade statistics,

Noting with pleasure the rapid implementation of the recommendation of its twelfth session (resolution 11 (XII)), <sup>6/</sup> that a Centre be established at the Statistical Office for the processing of detailed commodity-by-country data by electronic computer,

<sup>6/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13, para. 122. -12-

Commending Governments for regularly contributing their data to the Centre in forms suitable for efficient processing by computer,

Noting with satisfaction the much increased availability of data in published form, including the arrangements made for printing and publishing an important part of them without expense to the United Nations, and the increased use by international organizations of the data to decrease overlapping demands to Governments for the same or similar information,

1. Urges Governments not yet providing data to the Centre on a current basis to consult with the Centre on methods of making the information available;

2. Expresses the hope that international organizations will further reduce requests to Governments for statistical information by utilizing the services of the Centre;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to report at the fourteenth session of the Commission on the steps being taken to avoid duplication of requests to Governments for statistical data and to include in the report a study of the feasibility of instituting arrangements between international organizations and the Centre for this purpose;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to maintain and expand the operations of the Centre as resources permit, taking account of the views of the Commission expressed in this report.

B. Report of a joint meeting (Paris, 8-12 June 1964) of statistical and customs experts from international organizations, national statistical offices and customs administrations on the international exchange of external trade statistics

33. The Commission was informed (E/CN.3/313) of the conclusions of the meeting, which had been held at the invitation of the Direction générale des douanes et droits indirects of France. The Commission, in expressing its approval of exchanges of views between statisticians and customs officials and its satisfaction at the success of the meeting, extended thanks to the French customs administration for having made the meeting possible.

34. The Commission approved the proposal that the Statistical Office, in consultation with other interested international organizations, prepare a paper based on the work to date of the Statistical Commission and setting out draft recommendations for the treatment of the main categories of commodities in the inward and the outward flows in international trade and that countries should be requested to describe their methods of treating each of these flows in their national systems. For the latter purpose, the Statistical Office was requested to prepare draft summaries for each country and submit them to the country for revision and approval.

35. Interest was expressed in the project of the Customs Co-operation Council to try to bring together the common elements of national customs declarations to form a uniform international section for use in all customs declarations. The Statistical Office was asked to keep the Commission informed of the statistical aspects of any proposals made in this connexion.



36. The proposal of the Paris meeting that the International Trade Statistics Centre experiment with the collection of data in more detail than the 5-digit level of the SITC was considered by the Commission under part (a) of this item of its agenda (see paras. 25-26).

37. The Commission felt that the study of recommendations designed to set up international standards for transport statistics relating to the movement of goods in international trade and to facilitate obtaining data on the insurance and freight components of the value of commodities moving in international trade could best be initiated at the regional level and then be brought to the attention of the Commission for inter-regional co-ordination.

38. Being convinced of the usefulness of contacts between statisticians and customs officials, the Commission wished to encourage future meetings between them but emphasized that the agenda and documentation should be carefully prepared in advance, perhaps by small working groups representing the two interests involved.

C. Preliminary key between the Standard International Trade Classification, Revised, and the commodity classification of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)

39. In response to resolution 6 (XI) of the Commission,<sup>7/</sup> a preliminary key between the SITC and the CMEA classification was presented to the Commission (E/CN.3/314). In considering it, the Commission had in mind the difficulties of reconciling the CMEA classification, which postulated the knowledge available in countries whose economies were centrally planned, of the end use of many of the articles classified, with the SITC. It laid stress on the importance of reducing the number of unrelated classifications and welcomed the key before it as an important step in that direction. In taking note of the use of an electronic computer to translate the Russian headings of the CMEA classification into English and to tabulate the bilingual (and bi-alphabetic) text of the key, the Commission extended its thanks to the Thomas J. Watson Research Centre of the International Business Machines Corporation which had contributed this part of the work.

40. As use of the key would undoubtedly reveal areas in which it could be improved, the Statistical Office should co-operate with the secretariat of the CMEA in preparing a revised version.

41. The following resolution was adopted:

3 (XIII). RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Statistical Commission,

Recognizing the importance, as a tool to facilitate studying the world economy, of the availability of keys connecting classifications used for different purposes and in different regions,

1. Welcomes the preliminary key between the Standard International Trade Classification, Revised, and the commodity classification of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, prepared by the Statistical Office;

<sup>7/</sup> Ibid., Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 12, para. 63.

2. Recommends that the Secretary-General, together with the secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, improve the key as may prove necessary in the light of its use in practice and issue a revised version.

#### IV. TOURIST STATISTICS

42. The Commission was informed (E/CN.3/315) that the United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism, held in Rome in August and September 1963, had asked it to consider the following definition which it had proposed for the terms "visitor", "tourist" and "excursionist":

"For statistical purposes, the term 'visitor' describes any person visiting a country other than that in which he has his usual place of residence, for any reason other than following an occupation remunerated from within the country visited.

"This definition covers:

"Tourists, i.e., temporary visitors staying at least twenty-four hours in the country visited and the purpose of whose journey can be classified under one of the following headings:

"(a) leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion and sport);

"(b) business, family, mission, meeting.

"Excursionists, i.e., temporary visitors staying less than twenty-four hours in the country visited (including travellers on cruises).

"The statistics should not include travellers who, in the legal sense, do not enter the country (air travellers who do not leave an airport's transit area, and similar cases)." 8/

43. It was pointed out that a number of countries would find it difficult to collect data according to the proposed definition, largely because of the absence of frontier formalities. For example, no record was kept of persons crossing the frontiers between the Scandinavian countries; a person could obtain a permit to reside and work in a country after he had crossed the frontier as a visitor. Furthermore, the proposed definition included large categories, such as persons crossing a frontier for casual family visits, which it might be considered desirable to exclude from data for the use of the tourist industry.

44. The Commission expressed the view that data on the number of tourists formed part of the data on the total movement of persons across frontiers and that any definitions adopted should both be based on a consistent set of recommendations covering all types of international movements of persons and should be in agreement with the procedures recommended by the International Monetary Fund for estimating the contribution of tourist trade to the balance of payments.

45. It was agreed that the collection of data on tourism presented considerable difficulty, that an ingenious use of modern statistical techniques would in most countries have to be made to obtain the information and that available information

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8/ See Recommendations on International and Tourism (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.I.6), Part One.

on ticket sales by rail, air and bus services and on "tourist nights" spent in hotels and pensions would have to be fully used. This being the case, it appeared unwise to settle on a definition before further study of methods of arriving at the data had been carried out.

46. Because such a large part of the tourist trade was in Europe and because the problems of collecting data varied widely among regions, it was the view of the Commission that the problem could most appropriately be studied first at the regional level, perhaps in association with other international organizations.

47. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 4 (XIII). INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL STATISTICS

##### The Statistical Commission,

Taking note of the recommendation of the United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism, urging the Statistical Commission to study the question of the definition of the term "visitor" for statistical purposes,

Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for review by the Commission a study of methods and definitions suitable for use in the field of international travel statistics with a view to enabling the Commission to make recommendations for the improvement of statistics in this field.

## V. INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS

### A. Classification of commodities by industrial origin

48. At its twelfth session, the Commission recommended the preparation of a study which would relate sub-groups and items of the Standard International Trade Classification, Revised, to the groups of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC). After it was prepared, the study (E/CN.3/307) was distributed to all members of the Statistical Commission and other selected countries <sup>at various dates</sup> a few months before the Commission meeting. Comments were received from twenty-two countries and international organizations and a summary of the comments (E/CN.3/308) was also presented to the Commission for discussion.

49. The members of the Commission agreed that the study was useful and was especially valuable to the extent that it demonstrated the feasibility of providing a bridge between a foreign trade commodity classification and an industrial classification. It was agreed that the introduction to the study should be expanded and should contain a more detailed description of the possible uses of such a cross-classification, and that it should also indicate the limitations of such a cross-classification. Among the uses suggested for mention, other than as an industrial commodity classification, were those in connexion with input-output studies and with changes in trade policy affecting industry, such as tariff adjustments. Among the limitations in the use of such a cross-classification when comparing foreign trade and industrial output data were the problems arising from differences in valuation, secondary products of industrial establishments, duplication in output, and time lags.

50. It was pointed out that the cross-classification of the International Standard Industrial Classification by the Standard International Trade Classification could not generally replace an existing national classification of commodities by industrial origin. A number of the industrialized countries are using long-established lists of commodities produced. It would be unacceptable to make any sudden changes in an existing national list, to the extent that this change involved any drastic rearrangements or alterations which would lead to loss of comparability of the data over time. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the cross-classification presented was a valuable guide particularly for use in the less industrialized countries where it could provide a framework for the development of national classifications. Mention was made of the work being done in some countries towards the establishment of a single commodity classification for the analysis and planning of all sectors of the economy. However, it was recognized that to establish a commodity list, even for one country, which was sufficiently comprehensive and flexible for such a wide area of application would need a great deal of work. Reference was also made to the desirability of classifying industrial and other services in a framework similar to the commodity classification.

51. The Commission expressed the view that the study should continue to be based on the present International Standard Industrial Classification and that any question which involves change should be dealt with in the context of a general

revision of the ISIC. In addition, it was suggested that any future subdivisions of the items of the Standard International Trade Classification should take into consideration the breakdowns found to be necessary for the purposes of the cross-classification, as set out in the appendix to document E/CN.3/307, except, of course, those involving distinctions which are not relevant to a commodity classification of foreign trade.

52. The following resolution was adopted:

5 (XIII). RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMODITY  
AND INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General

To revise the study entitled "Classification of Commodities by Industrial Origin; Relationship of the Standard International Trade Classification to the International Standard Industrial Classification" (E/CN.3/307) and to publish the revised edition. In addition, the publication should contain the reverse relationship to that at present shown, that is, linking the International Standard Industrial Classification to the Standard International Trade Classification.

B. Study of the major uses of, and requirements for,  
industrial statistics

53. The Commission discussed the subject of "Major Statistical Indicators of Industrial Activity" on the basis of document E/CN.3/316, prepared by the Secretary-General in response to resolution 3 (XII) of the twelfth session in which he was requested to undertake, "a systematic investigation of the major general uses of, and requirements for, industrial statistics, including the types of primary data required and the derived index numbers, ratios and frequency distributions". 9/ The Commission felt that the document did not fully meet the intentions of the relevant resolution of the twelfth session, possibly because the terms of reference laid down had not been sufficiently precise. It was felt that the list contained in the annex to document E/CN.3/316 might form a useful framework within which to develop statistics valuable for aiding planning and development. It should be circulated for this purpose. It was also pointed out that the list could serve as an index for reference purposes to various statistical standards which had been compiled or published in connexion with the use of industrial statistics by various international organizations.

54. The Commission indicated that it would be useful to rearrange the list of indicators presented in the annex to E/CN.3/316 from various different points of view and among those suggested as useful were:

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9/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13, para. 32.

(a) According to the major users of industrial statistics;

(b) According to whether the data are needed by developed or developing countries;

(c) According to those data for which international recommendations have already been made and those for which no recommendations exist (the former would also include the figures which may be derived from the internationally recommended basic data);

(d) According to whether the indicators are basic data or derived figures.

The Commission also felt that it would be necessary to evaluate the indicators listed in the light of priorities established with respect to their need in industrial development. In addition, it would be important to examine the feasibility of collecting the basic data involved, especially with reference to the cost of collection and the degree of accuracy which it is possible to achieve.

55. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to continue the study of indicators of industrial activity, giving emphasis to those which can be used in connexion with the planning of development in the less industrialized countries and giving priority to those indicators and series which can be derived from information for the items of basic data which are already the subject of international recommendations.

56. In its discussion of this subject, reference was also made to the kind of pre-investment data which was part of the fund of information available in the industrialized countries and the absence of which in the less industrialized countries constituted a serious obstacle to development planning. The Commission's attention was drawn to the need of the developing countries for a study of methods of assessing requirements for scientific and technological manpower and expenditure on scientific and engineering research. The Commission therefore requested the Secretary-General to explore this subject in collaboration with UNESCO and ILO, with the object of making a study of this subject with the help of consultants specialized in this field.

### C. Progress report on industrial statistics

57. The Commission discussed a "Progress Report on the 1963 World Programme of Basic Industrial Statistics" (E/CN.3/318) and noted with satisfaction that more than ninety countries were participating in the Programme, that a number of these had already published their results and that the majority expected to do so during 1965. In the great majority of the countries the mining, manufacturing, and electricity and gas sectors (ISIC divisions 1, 2-3, 51) were covered, but the construction sector (ISIC division 4) was omitted. In addition it was noted that, whilst over fifty countries covered all establishments regardless of size in divisions 1, 2-3 and 51, the small establishments were excluded from coverage in the remaining countries. Also, the expressed intention of many countries to use the basic inquiry as the foundation for annual and more frequent inquiries and services, was noted with approval.

58. The Commission agreed that the omission of the construction sector from the basic inquiry in the majority of countries could be easily understood in the light

of the special difficulties involved. It was felt that international recommendations for the construction sector must be developed separately and not in the context of industrial statistics as a whole.

59. The Commission discussed a number of questions which were not dealt with in the recommendations for the 1963 Programme, but which had arisen during the inquiries in a number of countries. The most important of these were the enumeration of the total quantities produced of specific important commodities and the quantities of specific important materials used. It was agreed that it would be useful to establish international recommendations for selected commodities produced and selected materials used. These recommended lists would include a description of the items as well as a standard unit of measurement. It would be advisable to develop these recommendations through consultations in regional seminars or working groups. The Commission also expressed the view that in the great majority of countries, data concerning such items as the total stock of fixed assets, depreciation and the capacity of machinery and equipment could be best collected through special surveys and not as part of a general-purpose industrial inquiry.

60. The Commission felt that, taking all the difficulties into account, the next world programme of basic industrial statistics should be considered for recommendation for 1973. At the same time, emphasis was given to the need, in both the industrialized countries and those countries which are in the process of industrializing, for annual and more frequent data. It was pointed out that the success of the 1963 World Programme furnished an excellent basis for developing more frequent inquiries. It was felt that it would be useful to discuss, in regional seminars or working groups, the appropriate scope, coverage and content of annual and more frequent inquiries. The importance of annual inquiries was stressed from many points of view, not least of which was the possibility of maintaining a corps of highly trained personnel for such inquiries. It was not, of course, intended to discourage the conduct of basic inquiries in 1968 by countries which operate on a five-year schedule or by countries which did not participate in the 1963 World Programme.

61. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 6 (XIII). BASIC AND CURRENT INDUSTRIAL INQUIRIES

##### The Statistical Commission

##### Requests the Secretary-General:

- (1) To prepare, in consultation with the regional commissions, international recommendations for the establishment of a basic list of selected individual commodities for which industrial production data should be compiled and of materials for which data on consumption should be compiled;
- (2) To develop recommendations for annual and more frequent industrial inquiries;
- (3) To keep up to date and circulate the information on industrial inquiries conducted in all countries, which is set out in document E/CN.3/318.



#### D. Systems of industrial statistics in developing countries

62. The Commission discussed the document entitled "Systems of Industrial Statistics in Developing Countries" (E/CN.3/309 and Corr.1) and expressed its gratitude to Brazil, Ghana, India and Japan who had furnished studies of their systems of industrial statistics. These studies were used in preparing the document and were circulated as appendices thereto. The discussion concentrated on the problems which were especially relevant to the developing countries, particularly with respect to the definition of the field of industry and the techniques of conducting inquiries.

63. The Commission noted the difficulties of defining the field of industry. The existence of establishments of all sizes conducting activities which cut across the division classification (i.e., the 1-digit level of the ISIC) was recognized. The particular problems of small establishments in the developing countries were discussed, particularly those of units conducting both industrial and agricultural activities, and those involved in both industrial and trading activities. It was pointed out that practice varied and that several countries excluded such mixed establishments from industrial inquiries, while other countries included all their activities within the scope of their industrial inquiries. No recommendations were considered possible on this question but it was emphasized that, where data on the agricultural sector of the economy were based on activities rather than establishments, then the inclusion of all mixed industrial-agricultural establishments in the industrial inquiry could lead to some double counting of agricultural activities. The coverage of annual inquiries was also discussed, and it was felt that the criteria used to restrict the establishments covered should be wider than mere size. In this connexion, attention was drawn to the possibility of covering all establishments in certain industries which are either rapidly growing or of particular importance in the process of industrialization. Taking into account the vital need to make the best use of the statistical resources available, a number of possibilities were discussed. Wide use could be made of sampling, especially in order to cover the small establishments; small household establishments could be excluded from industrial inquiries and covered as part of a population census.

#### E. Construction statistics

64. The Commission discussed the study "Construction Statistics" (E/CN.3/305), which was prepared in response to a request of the twelfth session that a detailed study be made of the problems of, and suitable concepts, methods and techniques for gathering data on construction. The study was distributed for comments to all members of the Statistical Commission and other selected countries a few months before the Commission meeting. The comments received were summarized and also presented to the Commission (E/CN.3/306 and Corr.1). The discussion of the Commission confirmed that the study would be very useful in assisting the developing of construction statistics. Moreover, it confirmed the view that construction statistics and other industrial statistics need to be dealt with separately. However, it was felt that some revisions should be made before publication, especially with a view to making the study more suitable for use in the developing countries.

65. It was felt that further clarification of the purposes served by, and the uses of, construction statistics would enable a clearer view to be taken of the scope, coverage and content of inquiries in this field. It was stressed that for most administrative, forecasting and planning purposes it would be necessary to have available data covering the whole of construction activity and not merely that portion carried on by enterprises classified in the construction sector proper. Consequently it would be necessary to identify and enumerate own-account construction, that is, the construction work carried out by units whose main activity is other than construction. In addition, questions were raised concerning the suitability of the present boundaries of the construction industry as defined in the ISIC, bearing in mind factors such as the increasing importance of prefabricated products and the involvement of building firms in open-cast mining and the construction work associated with the opening of new mines.

66. The Commission agreed that it was difficult for recommendations to be made at this time as to the most appropriate statistical unit for use in the collection of construction data. Moreover, it was pointed out that the choice of the statistical unit would heavily influence the method of enumeration which could be used and the items of data it would be possible to collect. It was felt that the kind of generalizations which would be implied if any international recommendation were given could not be made for an activity which in most countries is carried on by a wide variety of units including large private enterprises, government departments, small private enterprises, individual specialized contractors, a variety of sub-contractors and own-account construction carried out by both enterprises and individuals. It was necessary in each country to analyse the structure and organization of the industry and make the appropriate decisions in the light of the particular national circumstances. It would also be valuable if forward-looking indicators of the amount of construction activity likely to arise in the future could be developed.

67. It was agreed that, at this time, it was difficult to make any recommendations in this complicated field as to the items of data which should be collected. However, it would be useful to set out, with some priorities indicated, items of data which might be collected according to the statistical unit used, in order to demonstrate the various approaches possible and to serve as a basis for further work and discussion in this field. It was the Commission's view that high priority should be given to further work in this field at the international level to facilitate efforts at the national level.

68. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 7 (XIII). CONSTRUCTION STATISTICS

##### The Statistical Commission

##### Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To revise the document entitled "Construction Statistics" (E/CN.3/305) in the light of the comments received and of its own discussion and to extend the annexes of the document to cover more countries;

(2) To publish the revised edition of the document.

## VI. NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AND RELATED SUBJECTS

### A. Measures of Economic Growth

69. The Commission discussed the statistical aspects of assessing and charting economic growth and of the activities of the Economic Projections and Programming Centres at United Nations Headquarters and at the regional economic commissions, based on documents E/CN.3/321 and E/CN.3/338 and Add.1. These reports had been prepared as part of the programme of work designed to assist in the more rapid evolution of the national statistics required in planning economic and social development which the Commission had formulated during its twelfth session. In the course of the discussion, the Commission was also informed of similar work being undertaken by other international organizations.

70. The work of the Economic Projections and Programming Centres was focused on the character and methodology of constructing aggregative models for long-term planning and the compilation of models for long-term projections in the case of groupings of countries according to stage of development or region. Projections were not being made for individual countries. The activities relating to methodology of planning were designed to provide for an international exchange of information and experience and for technical assistance to the developing countries, as well as to furnish a basis for constructing international aggregative models. The international projections were mainly concerned with evaluating the consistency between alternative targets for the growth of the developing countries and anticipation concerning international developments, in particular in the developed economies. The Commission emphasized that the considerable use and adjustment of statistics that was involved in the work of the Economic Projections and Programming Centre called for the close co-operation of the Statistical Office. It was noted that defining and utilizing statistical series for economic planning, internationally or nationally, required consultations between planners, economists and statisticians.

71. The aggregative models which have been constructed internationally employed, in the main, series of national accounting data, and problems of a statistical character have been encountered in this work. Major difficulties resulted from limitations in the extent to which comparable data were available on the industrial origin of, and sources of expenditures on, the gross domestic product in constant prices and from the lack of suitable factors for converting these series to a common basis of valuation. The Commission noted that these conditions hampered the use of national accounting and other data in other studies of economic growth as well. In view of these and other requirements, the Commission had included in the work programme studies of the concepts and methodology of compiling constant price series and of valuing national accounting and other data on a common basis and activities designed to promote the compilation of the needed data.

72. The Commission considered that it would be desirable to study the various series of derived statistics (e.g., aggregates, index numbers, ratios, rates of growth, distributions) which are required in measuring and planning economic growth in the light of the ways in which these data are utilized. Such a study would be

of assistance in devising national programmes of statistical development and in identifying new statistical areas which might usefully be explored and discussed internationally. It would supplement the study of basic statistical series in the publication Statistical Series for the Use of Less Developed Countries in Programmes of Economic and Social Development. 10/ The Commission felt that the discussion of selected aggregates on the dimensions of economic growth (document E/CN.3/321) represented a useful beginning for a study of the derived statistical series required in assessing and charting economic growth. Preparation of this study would require consultations with national statistical, planning and similar offices and with international agencies and organizations.

73. A considerable range of series would need to be dealt with in the study in view of the number of approaches that may be taken to assessing and planning economic development in addition to model building and the multi-dimensional character of the process of economic growth. Further, in each case, the type and characteristics of the statistical series required would differ in a number of respects, depending on such factors as the time-horizon (e.g., long-, medium- or short-range), the degree of aggregation or the structure of the economy. The study should, therefore, cover the definition and the modes of valuation and estimation of the various series in the light of the circumstances and ways in which the data are utilized. The study should also emphasize the need for a wide range of reliable basic data for purposes of compiling the derived statistical series.

#### B. Developments in Compilation and Related Work in National Accounts

74. The Commission discussed developments in compilations and related aspects of Secretariat work on national accounting on the basis of a report on the subject prepared by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/326). The report noted the continuing expansion and improvement in the publication of national accounting data in the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics and drew the attention of the Commission to the recent completion of a supplement to the Yearbook (National Accounting Practices in Sixty Countries 11/), describing in detail the practices of individual countries in compiling their national accounts estimates. The report also referred to the proposals of the Secretariat for the development of its work on the preparation and publication of global and regional aggregates of product and expenditure.

75. The Commission, in commenting on the report, expressed its appreciation of the work which the Secretariat was undertaking in this sphere through the publication of the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics. Internationally comparable national accounts data were of great value and extensive use was being made of the tabulations appearing in the Yearbook. Further expansion of the detail provided in these tabulations, particularly in the detail provided on general government transactions, would be justified at the present time. The Commission noted with approval that the period covered by the tabulations in the 1964 issue of the Yearbook would be lengthened from seven to eleven years and stressed the importance of publishing, or making available to users in other ways, comparable figures for as many years as practicable.

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10/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 59.XVII.10.

11/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.XVII.9.

76. The Commission welcomed the appearance of National Accounting Practices in Sixty Countries both as a detailed guide to the sources and methods used in preparing the estimates published in the Yearbook and as a medium for the international exchange of experience in the national accounting field. In its former role, the study should do much to bring to the surface the implicit incomparabilities in the published data which were now recognized to be of major importance. In the revised and expanded version of the study which the Secretariat contemplated, a particularly valuable addition would be a statement for each country of the principal adjustments made in passing from the nationally published estimates to those submitted for publication at the international level.

77. The Commission discussed at some length the conversion problem involved in comparing national accounting aggregates expressed in national currencies. It was generally agreed that this problem was an important one and that the solution obtained by using currency conversion rates based directly or indirectly on prevailing exchange rates was inadequate for many purposes. However, the alternative of exhaustively repricing the relevant product and expenditure flows was not practicable at the present time for most countries, although it might form the basis of a definitive solution for the statistically advanced countries if undertaken at relatively infrequent intervals.

78. The most promising alternative, the Commission felt, appeared to lie in the estimation of purchasing-power parities through the pricing of carefully chosen baskets of goods and services representing the flows involved. This would be adequate for the purpose of deriving weights for aggregating national indexes of product and expenditure, if not also for the comparison of the absolute levels of selected flows. General problems of comparability arising from structural dissimilarities between countries might be mitigated by restricting comparisons to groups of countries at approximately the same level of development, and, in the case of comparisons between the centrally planned economies and the market economies, by giving special attention to categories of goods, in the countries compared, for which the factors determining the prices differ substantially from those determining the prices of the bulk of goods and services in the paired countries. A network of parities covering the universe considered might then be constructed by chaining the results for the separate groups.

79. The Commission welcomed the proposal made by the Secretariat to initiate systematic work on this subject as resources permitted and recommended that, as a first step, a study of all available experience and data in the field at the international, regional and national levels should be made with a view to formulating more specific proposals for this work.

### C. Statistics of the Distribution of Income

80. For its discussion of this topic, the Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/323) giving a general account of current national practices in the field of income distribution statistics. The purpose of the report was to form a basis for the discussion of the steps which might be taken by the Secretariat to draw up international recommendations for work in this field, including the steps which might be taken to develop international guide-lines for the pursuit of this work within the national accounting framework.

81. The Commission, in commenting on the report of the Secretary-General, welcomed the renewed interest shown by the Secretariat in income distribution statistics and expressed the hope that the Secretariat would continue to develop its work in this complex and important field. The report before it was most helpful in providing a broad perspective of the nature and scope of current work and might appropriately form the basis of a more detailed study of practices and problems in the field in both the centrally planned and the market economies. Though the time had not yet arrived for the standardization of concepts and classifications, the provision of detailed information of this nature together with the development of international guide-lines, as suggested in the Secretary-General's report, would be of definite assistance to countries in establishing their own programmes of work.

82. A number of views were expressed on the question of the appropriate concepts of income and income recipient unit to be used in compiling income distribution statistics. One view was that the SNA definition of income should not be the initial objective of income distribution statistics since the income-in-kind component recognized in the definition was particularly difficult to estimate; in developed countries, distributions based solely on cash income were much more easily constructed and had proved useful for many purposes. The consensus, however, was that the SNA definition formed a satisfactory benchmark for general use and that the omission of imputed income could only result in a serious distortion of income comparisons, particularly in the developing countries. Considerable stress was laid on the value in the developing countries of an approach to income measurement from the expenditure side. This was felt to be more practicable in the developing countries than the conventional approach and at the same time more significant from many points of view.

83. With regard to income recipient units, it was agreed that the distinction between the consuming unit and the producing unit gave rise to two essentially different though interrelated systems of income distribution statistics, useful for different purposes. In practice, it was noted, the construction of family or household distributions was often given preference and tabulations in terms of individual earners drawn up as part of a supplementary analysis of this distribution. Both systems could, however, be integrated independently into the national accounting framework.

84. The Commission considered that, in comprehensive presentations of income distributions for families or households, countries should provide as much detail as practicable on the nature and composition of the recipient units, particularly detail on such basic characteristics as the number of dependants or earners in each unit. For the analysis of the factors affecting the distribution, it was frequently important also to have breakdowns in terms of such characteristics as regional location, age, educational level, industrial, occupational and socio-economic status of recipients and composition of income received. Comparable distributions of wealth were a useful adjunct to the basic income distribution in this context and might be studied at an appropriate time.

85. Within the national accounting framework, more summary presentations would have to be employed, primarily distributions by size of income and by socio-economic groups of the population. The Commission noted, in this connexion, the suggestion made in document E/CN.3/320 concerning the integration of such distributions into the revised national accounting framework and the possibility envisaged there of sub-dividing the income and outlay accounts of the household sector.

86. Turning to the question of appropriate sources of information for the compilation of income distribution statistics, the Commission discussed the respective merits of population censuses, sample surveys of households and income tax returns. The main conclusion that emerged from the discussion was that in the more advanced countries a judicious combination of all three sources offered the most promising approach to estimation, while in the developing countries primary reliance would have to be placed on sample surveys. The population census was still being developed as a source of information and, in a number of advanced countries, the experience gained had been encouraging. It was particularly useful in furnishing a basis for the detailed geographical analysis of the income distribution and in providing a wide variety of related demographic data on income recipients. Specially designed income questionnaires could do much to overcome problems of response traditionally associated with this source.

87. The Commission felt that there was considerable merit in the proposal that concepts and classifications in this field should be drawn up with a view to the articulation of these statistics within the general national accounting framework. It would be useful if the guidelines on the statistics of income distribution included suggestions concerning a stage-by-stage development of these statistics in the light of the requirements for and availability of data in a country. It should be suggested that, at an early stage, reconciliation statements should normally be provided showing the relationship of the income aggregates and components covered in the inquiry to the corresponding national accounting flows. This procedure was now carried out in many countries and, where independent sources of information were used for national accounting purposes, it was found to furnish a useful check on errors and omissions in the reported income.

88. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 8 (XIII). INCOME DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS

##### The Statistical Commission

##### Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To develop, in consultation with national statistical offices and interested regional bodies, and within the national accounting framework, international guidelines for concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations in the field of income distribution statistics;

(2) To prepare a detailed comparative analysis of problems and practices in countries with differing social and economic systems and with differing levels of economic development, as a means of promoting the international exchange of experience in this field;

(3) To report progress on this work to the Commission at its fourteenth session.

D. Problems of Input-Output Tables and Analysis

89. The Commission discussed the study on "Problems of Input-Output Tables and Analysis" (E/CN.3/317 and Add.1), prepared in response to resolution 8 (XI) of the eleventh session on which the Secretary-General was requested "to continue to follow developments in States Members of the United Nations carrying out inter-industry studies, giving attention not only to the manner in which input-output tables are constructed but also to the uses to which they are put". 12/ The study outlined the main problems of methodology, compilation and application associated with input-output tables; in addition, appendices dealt with the comparability of input-output tables and outlined the national practices of selected countries. It was pointed out that no bibliography was attached because an Input-Output Bibliography 1960-1963 13/ had been recently published, as a supplement to the Input-Output Bibliography 1955-1960. 14/

90. The Commission agreed that the study was valuable as a basic guide to the concepts and methods of input-output tables and analysis. It was felt that it was particularly useful for statistical organizations which are either beginning or developing their work in this field, and also for those which are familiar with input-output theory but have had little experience in the practical problems of actually constructing the tables. It was considered that the study should be published after revision taking account of the Commission's discussion and after consultation with national statistical offices.

91. A number of national practices were discussed and some of the points made were suggested for inclusion in the study. Among these were the usefulness of rectangular tables (industry by commodity), the utilization of sampling technique in order to estimate the cost structure of industries and the physical material inputs of individual commodities, and the method of dealing with residuals in the table. In connexion with the last point, it was felt to be necessary that the residual figures should be clearly shown in order to give some indication of the statistical limitations of the tables concerned; in addition, any redistribution of the residuals should be clearly indicated and its arbitrary nature emphasized. The need for the identification and separation of marketing costs was also mentioned. Although the possibility of a separate matrix for mark-ups and transport costs was mentioned as a method of isolating the true technical coefficients, the practical statistical difficulties of such a procedure were felt to be very great.

92. The Commission discussed the connexions between input-output tables and national accounts and other established statistical series. It was pointed out that in the present study the terminology used should be made to conform with that utilized by the present System of National Accounts. In addition, it was

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12/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 12, para. 78.

13/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.XVII.10.

14/ C.E. Taskier, Input-Output Bibliography 1955-1960 (United Nations, New York, 1961), ST/STAT/7.



suggested that the present study should contain reference to the need to ensure the connexion between the input-output tables and the national classification systems. The Commission felt that, when the details of the revised system of national accounts (see paras. 95-113 below) are accepted, a new study on input-output tables and analysis will be needed.

93. The Commission discussed several topics which it suggested should be subjects of future study. One of the most important of these was the compilation and utilization of input-output tables in developing countries. In connexion with the compilation of these tables, the scarcity of data was emphasized and it was recommended that various methods of estimation should be examined and examples of uses more applicable to these areas should be given. Further study was also felt to be required on the methods of up-dating the input-output tables, the use of the tables for short-period and long-period analysis and planning. In particular, it was pointed out that the most important aspect of economic development in the developing countries was the changing structure of the economy. For this reason, input-output tables which reflect the present structure of the economy were of only limited value for planning or projection purposes. The consequent need to adjust the coefficients obtained or to obtain totally new coefficients in the case of newly established industries, was pointed out and attention was drawn to the possibility of using detailed data from advanced countries.

94. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 9 (XIII). INPUT-OUTPUT TABLES

##### The Statistical Commission

##### Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To revise and publish the study on "Problems of Input-Output Tables and Analysis" (E/CN.3/317 and Add.1);

(2) To continue to follow the developments in this field and to prepare, after the details of the revised System of National Accounts have been accepted, a further study on input-output tables and analysis, including a study of the purposes to which input-output tables are being applied in both developed and developing countries.

##### E. Review of the Systems of National Accounts and Balances

95. The Commission discussed the review of national accounts on the basis of the documents, "Review of Systems of National Accounts and Balances" (E/CN.3/319), "A System of National Accounts (Proposals for the Revision of SNA, 1952)" (E/CN.3/320), "General Provisions on the Compiling of the National Economy Balance" <sup>15/</sup> and the "Report of the Working Group on National Accounts and Balances, Conference of European Statisticians" (Conf.Eur.Stats/WG.22/7). Document E/CN.3/319 outlined the programme for reviewing the systems of national accounts and balances in general use in countries with market economies (the SNA) and in countries with centrally planned economies (the MPS). It also indicated the

<sup>15/</sup> Document prepared by delegations of experts from the Polish People's Republic Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with the participation of officers of the secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. 1964.

portions of these reviews which had already been completed and the work which remained to be carried out. The proposals for revising the SNA presented in document E/CN.3/320 resulted from the discussions of an Expert Group, convened by the Secretary-General and which met in December 1964. The description of the MPS had been prepared by experts from a group of countries in which this system was in use, with the participation of secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The report, Conf.Eur.Stats/WG.22/7, gave the results of the discussions of the European working group on the proposals for revising the SNA and the description of the MPS, the establishment of links between the two systems, and the European programme of further work on the review of the systems of national accounts and the links between the two systems (SNA and MPS).

96. The Commission agreed that, in addition to defining the ways in which the revised SNA and MPS may be linked, one with the other, it was important to increase, to the extent that it was feasible, the common ground between the SNA and the MPS. The simultaneous review and development of the two systems furnished a timely opportunity for increasing the similarities between the SNA and the MPS. The schemes of classification utilized in the two systems appeared to be an important area where the common ground may be extended.

97. The proposals in document E/CN.3/320 were mainly concerned with the structure, and the associated concepts and classifications of an integrated and detailed system of accounting that included input-output and financial transactions accounts and tables and constant-price data. It would furnish the framework for the later addition of national and sector balance sheets and income distribution statistics. The Commission approved of the integration of input-output, financial-transaction and constant-price data into the system. It would not be opportune at this stage to include specific proposals on balance-sheet data, and it may not be practical to add detailed recommendations on income distribution statistics. None the less, the Commission considered that the two areas of statistics should be studied in the course of the current review, in order, inter alia, to specify the implications for the structure of the revised SNA of the eventual addition of statistics of balance sheets and income distribution. It was indicated that balance-sheet data were now included in the MPS and that the suggestions developed on income distribution statistics should be compatible with both systems.

98. The Expert Group on the revision of the SNA had also recommended the preparation of proposals, at an appropriate time, for systems of labour, demographic and other social statistics that were closely related to, and to some degree even integrated with, the systems of national accounts and balances. The Commission considered that a number of aspects of economic and social analysis and planning rested on the joint use of consistent and correlated labour, demographic and national accounting data. Considerable labour, demographic and other social statistics were available, but the traditional series were often not explicitly related to national accounting data. The Commission, therefore, felt it desirable to study this subject in association with the review of the systems of accounts and balances, recognizing that carrying out this complex task would take a relatively long period of time and involve specialists in a number of statistical areas in addition to national accounting.

99. The Commission considered that the revised SNA proposed in document E/CN.3/320 would materially enhance the values of the system for purposes of economic and social analysis and would furnish an appropriate framework, on the whole, for the

development of national accounting work at national and international levels. The proposed structure would also provide a valuable framework for developing systems of basic economic statistics.

100. The emphasis given in the proposal to deconsolidating the real and financial accounts, to recording transactions on a gross basis and to delineating the relationships between flows, would result in a clear and useful portrayal of economic transactions. The attention devoted to production (gross outputs, gross inputs, and the other elements of the cost structure) and to the flow of commodities (goods and services) to intermediate and end uses, the clear distinctions drawn between real and financial transactions, and the introduction of constant-price data into the system, would also enhance the analytical values of the revised SNA.

101. The use of matrices to articulate the structure of the proposed system clearly revealed the way in which the various transactions, classifications and accounts were integrated into the system and furnished a basis for co-ordinating a wide range of basic economic statistics and developing cross-checks and other operational and analytical comparisons between these data. The guidelines furnished in the proposed accounts and supporting tables on the presentation of data in accordance with the system provided a suitable basis, on the whole, for developing the compilation of national accounting data, nationally as well as internationally. In this connexion, the Commission noted that the accounts and supporting tables, not the matrices, were designed to furnish guidance on the presentation of data and that it was not proposed that the full array of data suggested be covered in international reporting. It would be necessary to adapt the proposed accounts and tables for use in international reporting after the Commission had approved a final version of the revised SNA.

102. The Commission decided that an industrial type classification of non-financial corporate and quasi-corporate enterprises in the income and outlay and capital finance accounts would increase the analytical usefulness of the system. For example, the sources of finance and assortment of financial assets and liabilities held by these enterprises and their practices with regard to the distribution of income differed from one kind of economic activity to another. The unit to be classified according to kind of economic activities in the case of financial accounts would need to be the enterprise, and not the establishment, which is utilized in the case of the real accounts. The categories of the industrial classification utilized would, therefore, need to be fewer in number and broader in scope in the case of the financial accounts than in the case of the real accounts.

103. The Commission felt that, in the final document on the revised SNA, certain changes would be necessary in the way in which the system of accounts and tables is presented in document E/CN.3/320. The concepts and definitions of the system should be dealt with separately from the description of the matrices, and the presentation of the definitions should be closely associated with the description of the accounts. Emphasis should be given to the use of the accounts to furnish an over-all view of the structure of the system supplementary to the description in the form of matrices.

104. The Commission indicated that study of the appropriate treatment of private non-profit institutions should be undertaken early in the further work of reviewing the SNA. The combination of households and private non-profit institutions serving

them into one sector obscured the data on these institutions, which were of importance in a number of countries. Other points made in the course of the discussion of the framework proposed for the revised SNA were as follows:

- (i) Some members of the Commission questioned the inclusion in the corporate and quasi-corporate sector of large non-financial private unincorporated enterprises which maintained complete balance-sheet and profit-and-loss accounts. In this view, the same practice should be followed in the case of these enterprises as was recommended in the proposal in the case of other non-financial private unincorporated enterprises, namely inclusion in the same sector as households. Similar doubt was also expressed concerning the separation of government enterprises from general government in the financial accounts.
- (ii) In one view, further consideration was needed of the classification of the monetary functions of the Treasury. In another view, the circumstances under which social security funds were included in a separate sub-sector of general government should be more restrictive; a criterion of engaging in transactions on financial market should be added.
- (iii) It was suggested that in supporting tables 1 A and 1 B, on the industrial origin of the gross domestic product at current and constant prices, a series valued at factor cost should be included in addition to the series valued at market prices.
- (iv) It was suggested that consideration should be given to further restricting the number of aggregates on which attention is focused and to the appropriate nomenclature for these aggregates.

105. The Commission noted that the system of national accounts proposed in document E/CN.3/320 postulated an advanced stage of statistical and economic development. The Expert Group had, therefore, recommended that the version of the full system be accommodated to the statistical and economic circumstances of the developing countries. The Commission agreed that this work should be done at an early stage in the further work of the SNA review, in consultation with the national statistical offices of the developing countries.

106. The Commission observed that while document E/CN.3/320 set out detailed suggestions for practically all of the schemes of classifications that were required in the revised SNA, a number of these proposals were tentative in character, and a series of consultations with national statistical offices and the interested international organizations was therefore required. In the case of the scheme for the industrial classification for establishments, or like units, initially these consultations would necessarily relate to the interim rearrangement of the present International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) for use in the revised SNA. The Commission recognized that a thorough review of the ISIC was necessary, involving detailed study of requirements and practices in the industrial classification of a wide range of statistics. The view was expressed that the revisions in the ISIC as a result of the thorough review should be kept to the essential minimum in order to maintain as much comparability over time as was feasible in series classified according to kind of economic activity. This work would, therefore, take an extended period of time. The work should also need to include an appropriate grouping within the ISIC for use in classifying

enterprises and an extension of the study "Classification of Commodities by Industrial Origin: Relationship of the Standard International Trade Classification to the International Standard Industrial Classification" (E/CN.3/307) to cover goods which did not enter into external trade and all services. In discussing classifications, some reservation was indicated concerning the suggested breakdown of financial enterprise and the view was expressed that the classification of assets and liabilities might furnish an adequate basis for international reporting but was not fully satisfactory as a basis for national compilation and presentation.

107. The Commission emphasized the importance of giving attention in the course of the review to extending the common ground between the developed SNA and MPS in the case of types of classification which were common to both systems. Classifications of kind of economic activity, consumers' goods and services and government purposes were utilized in both systems. Maximizing the common ground in the case of the classification according to kind of economic activity would be of particular value.

108. A thorough and detailed discussion of the treatment and definition of the various transactions of the proposed system was not attempted in document E/CN.3/320; this aspect of the review of the SNA remained to be carried out. Changes were proposed in the treatment and definition in the present SNA of some of the transactions of the system, and members of the Commission commented on these proposals. The effort to reduce the number of imputations recommended in the present SNA was welcomed by most members of the Commission. However, some members questioned the dropping of the imputation of bank service charges. In one view, the discarding of the imputation for net rent of government buildings was also regrettable. Some members of the Commission felt that it was inappropriate to treat the total surcharge on hire-purchase or similar sales as a service charge. It was stressed that further consideration was needed of the proposals for distinguishing between current and capital transfers and for recording imports and exports.

109. The Commission accepted the general approach and the general structure of accounts and supporting tables set out in document E/CN.3/320, modified in accordance with the comments of the Commission and the recommendations in document Conf.Eur.Stats/WG.22/7, as the basis for further work on the extension and revision of the SNA. It was recognized that the detailing of the revised SNA and the required further consultations with national statistical offices and international organizations, through regional conferences of statisticians and other means, might lead to some modifications in the structure of the system. The Commission proposed to consider a complete description of the full, revised SNA, and an adaptation of the system to the circumstances of the developing countries, at its fifteenth session. In the further work of reviewing the SNA, it would be desirable to convene two sessions of the Expert Group.

110. The Commission welcomed the provisional description of the MPS in "General Provisions on the Compiling of the National Economy Balance". The document furnished a standardized description of the material balances and tabulations, which relate to the production of the social product and its utilization in intermediate and final consumption, accumulation and the balance of exports and imports, and of the financial balance, which shows the formation of primary incomes, the process of redistribution and the utilization of final income. The description did not include a number of other balances and tables which are compiled as part of the MPS, for example, tables on capital formation, manpower balances and

several other tables. The paper provided a valuable basis for understanding the national accounting data of countries which utilize the MPS, for making comparisons between the structure of the MPS and SNA, and for an exchange of experience and views between the users of each system.

111. The Commission noted that the document had been discussed by the Working Group on National Accounts and Balances of the Conference of European Statisticians and that suggestions had been made for improving the terminology and other aspects of the description of the MPS. Suggestions had also been made for developing the MPS in certain directions. The Commission was informed that work on improving and developing the description of the MPS would continue within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

112. The work of comparing the SNA and the MPS and defining the links between the two systems was being carried forward under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians. Document Conf.Eur.Stats/WG.22/GR.1 had been issued on the results of this work, based on the present SNA and MPS. The Conference would continue the work as part of the programme of reviewing the systems of national accounts and balances. It was envisaged that in the further work, selected common aggregates would be defined in terms of each system in addition to delineating the similarities and differences in concept and definition between the two systems. The common aggregates may not necessarily be those actually in use in either of the systems.

113. The following resolution was adopted:

10 (XIII). REVIEW OF THE SYSTEMS OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AND BALANCES

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To continue the work of extending and revising the System of National Accounts, in consultation with national statistical offices and with the assistance and advice of the Expert Group on this subject, as necessary, with a view to the completion of this task before the fifteenth session of the Commission, and to prepare a report on the progress of this work for consideration at the fourteenth session of the Commission;

(2) To study the concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations of national and sector balance-sheet statistics integrated into the revised SNA, in co-operation with the International Monetary Fund and with the assistance and advice of an individual expert and the Expert Group on the revision of the SNA, and to report on the progress of this study at the fourteenth session of the Commission;

(3) To study the concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations of statistics of income distribution within the national accounting framework, with the advice and assistance of the Expert Group, and to report on the progress of this study at the fourteenth session of the Commission;

(4) To develop proposals for systems of labour, demographic and other social statistics that are closely related to the systems of national accounts and balances, with the assistance of individual experts in consultation with the specialized agencies concerned;

(5) In co-operation with the Conference of European Statisticians, to study the relationships between the System of National Accounts and the Material Products System and the adjustments needed in the data of each system in order to link corresponding concepts in the two systems and to develop common basic aggregates of special interest and to report on the progress of this work at the fourteenth session of the Commission.

F. Estimates of National Product and Expenditure  
at Constant Prices

114. The Commission discussed this topic on the basis of a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/322) reviewing some of the more important recent developments in national practices in this field. The report noted the general tendency among countries to expand the scope of their constant-price estimates of product and expenditure and to improve and refine the conceptual and statistical basis of this work. An important aspect of this development was the expansion of work on the estimation of real product by industrial origin and the related efforts made in some countries to develop systems of real product and expenditure estimates articulated within the framework of input-output tables. The report noted that, while there had been an all-round improvement in the approaches and techniques used, a considerable number of significant problems remained at both the conceptual and statistical level. These included problems of identifying and measuring the output of services of various kinds, problems of reconciling product and expenditure aggregates obtained by different approaches and problems of obtaining adequate statistical information for the rigorous application of the principles of measurement adopted.

115. The Commission, in taking note of the report, stressed the importance of strengthening work in this field at both the national and international levels. While it was a relatively difficult field from almost every point of view, the adjustment of aggregates for price changes was an essential part of national accounting work and its many problems had to be faced. The analysis of value aggregates to distinguish price changes and quantity changes, respectively, was a process that involved certain assumptions which needed to be made explicit, since otherwise they tended to be overlooked in applications of the results. The Secretary-General's report, which was a useful contribution to the discussion, would have been more valuable if the subject had been approached on a broader basis and a more detailed examination made of the ways in which countries were dealing with the basic problems of concept and measurement.

116. The Commission referred incidentally to a number of significant problems mentioned only in summary fashion in the report before it. The basic problem was still that of resolving the current values of the various types of transactions into consistent price and quantity elements appropriate to their proposed uses, and this problem appeared to be increasing in complexity with the broadening array of goods and services produced and consumed and the growing importance in this

array of new or changing products. It was noted that a number of aspects of this problem were dealt with in document E/CN.3/328, which was before the Commission in connexion with the discussion of principles and practices in the collection and compilation of price statistics (see paras. 118-123 below). Comprehensive study of national practices, problems and experience in compiling constant-price data would be essential.

117. The Commission felt that it was too early to begin work at this time on a manual on constant-price estimation, as suggested in the Secretary-General's report, in view of the work which was taking place on the revision of the SNA and the rapid development of techniques in this field at the national level. The compilation of such a manual should, however, remain as a long-term objective. For the present, the Secretariat should pursue its study of the conceptual and practical aspects of work in this field, giving special attention to the problems involved in the development of interrelated systems of price and quantity indexes of product and expenditure.

#### G. Principles and Practices in the Collection and Compilation of Price Statistics

118. For the discussion of this topic, the Commission had before it document E/CN.3/328. The document dealt with the need for revisions in the recommendations on statistics of wholesale (producer) prices that the Commission had adopted at its seventh session in 1953, in the light of developments in national statistical requirements and programmes. It was suggested that these developments called for extending the Commission's recommendations to include guidance on a full, integrated system of index numbers and other statistics of price which fitted into the national accounting framework; a model of such a system of price statistics was proposed. Also included in the document were suggestions for modifications in the guidelines that the Commission adopted in 1953 concerning the primary price series to be gathered and the index numbers and other derived measures to be compiled. In addition, the document dealt with the problems, principles and methods of compiling representative and comparable price series in the case of changes in the characteristics of transactions (quality changes), the appearance of new products and unique goods.

119. The Commission welcomed the comprehensive approach to the study of price statistics furnished in document E/CN.3/328 and considered that intensive work in this important area of statistics needed to be continued. Statistics of prices were required for many purposes, for example, compiling national accounting and other data, data in constant prices, measuring economic trends and market conditions in some detail, and devising various economic policies. A number of countries needed to review and develop their price statistics programmes, and would welcome international discussion leading to more current international guidance. Document E/CN.3/328 furnished a valuable basis for international consideration of the problems, concepts and methods of price statistics. The value of the document would be enhanced by the addition of a survey of national practices and a more thorough-going discussion of some of the proposals.

120. The Commission commended the approach taken in document E/CN.3/328 towards a system of index numbers and other statistics of prices. The delineation of these series in the light of their uses within a national accounting framework yielded an



integrated system of price statistics which was related to and co-ordinated with other economic statistics. Price statistics of sales at retail were an essential part of this system in view of their uses in connexion with private consumption expenditures, the output of the retail trades, and trade margins.

121. In the course of the discussion of the proposed model of a system of price statistics, various views were expressed with respect to the elements of the model. In one view, the model delineated a comprehensive and well-balanced system of price statistics. In another view, emphasis should have been given to a general wholesale price index in view of the value of this series for general economic analysis. In a third view, gross-weighted index numbers would be of value in the case of only some elements of the system and the limitations on the usefulness of gross-weighted indexes due to duplication should be given detailed consideration.

122. The Commission felt that the discussion of the problems and methods of gathering price statistics in document E/CN.3/328 indicated the type of modifications required in its 1953 recommendations. In this connexion, the Commission noted that the criteria and techniques of gathering representative prices should differ, in at least some respects, in the case of retail and producer (wholesale) prices. The Commission found that the document dealt with the main problems, concepts and methods of compiling comparable price series in the case of quality changes and unique goods and the circumstances under which the various techniques could be employed to advantage.

123. The following resolution was adopted:

#### 11 (XIII). PRICE STATISTICS

##### The Statistical Commission

##### Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To revise and expand the document entitled "The Gathering and Compilation of Statistics of Prices" (E/CN.3/328) in the light of the discussions of the Commission and in consultation with the specialized agencies concerned;

(2) To consult with national statistical offices and interested international agencies on the new version of the document;

(3) To prepare a draft set of guiding principles and a technical report on statistics of prices for consideration by the Commission, based on the results of the aforementioned consultations.

#### H. Classification of Government Accounts

124. The Commission had before it a "Progress Report on Classification of Government Accounts" (E/CN.3/324) as well as "A Note on Classification of Public Debt Transactions" (E/CN.3/325). At its twelfth session, the Commission had also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a model simplified cross-classification of government expenditures by economic and functional categories. It was, however, pointed out in the progress report that it would be more advantageous to undertake

this work during the second phase of the review of the system of national accounts, since there is a close relationship between the simplified model classification and the treatment of public sector transactions within the framework of the revised system of accounts.

125. With regard to other developments, the Commission was informed of the workshops and working groups that had been held in the various regions.

126. Note was taken by the Commission of the considerable increase in the use of the economic and functional classifications of government transactions. This was reflected in the improved presentation of public finance data in the United Nations Statistical Yearbook.

127. During the discussion, reference was made to the increasing co-ordination among treasuries, ministries of finance and the national statistical services in the functional classification of government expenditures and to the fact that reclassifications were closely based on models suggested at regional budget workshops.

128. The Commission considered the draft scheme for the classification of public debt transactions contained in document E/CN.3/325. The scheme provided a preliminary definition of outstanding gross debt and its classification both in detail and in summary form. It also provided classifications in respect of some important characteristics of public debt transactions such as structure of interest rates, maturity and ownership of debt. The discussion of public debt transactions was related to the central government sector as defined in A Manual for Economic and Functional Classification of Government Transactions. <sup>16/</sup>

129. In the course of discussion in the Commission, varied views were expressed on whether useful international comparisons were practicable, having regard to the difficulties of defining the central government sector in a uniform way. Other points raised were the usefulness of original and current maturities in relation to interest rates and yields, the problem of bearer debt in analysing ownership and the amount of detail required in classifying debt by ownership and maturity.

130. With regard to public debt classification, the Commission considered that work should be continued in this field. The Commission stressed the need to relate the classification of public debt transactions to the national accounts and sector balance sheets and in particular to clarify concepts, terminology and develop alternative classifications as well as to attempt to promote international comparability in this field. It was suggested that this work should be brought to the attention of the Expert Group appointed to examine a revision of SNA and that a more comprehensive document be submitted to a subsequent session of the Commission.

131. The Commission further requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at a subsequent session a progress report on further developments in the field of classification of government accounts.

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<sup>16/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.. 58.XVI.2.

## I. Balance-of-Payments Statistics

132. The Commission received a "progress Report on Balance-of-Payments Statistics" (E/CN.3/327) prepared by the International Monetary Fund. The report described developments in the Fund's work in this field. The Commission noted that the period covered had been one of consolidation and expressed its satisfaction concerning the work carried out. The view was expressed that further discussion among countries should be encouraged with the object of improving the actual data in this field. Of particular importance was the question of how to classify the data in order to meet the requirements of economic policy and how to deal with errors and omissions. Satisfaction was also expressed concerning the training activities conducted by the IMF on balance of payments.

## VII. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

### A. 1960 World Population and Housing Census Programmes

133. The Commission received with appreciation a "Report on the 1960 World Population and Housing Census Programmes" (E/CN.3/329 and Corr.1) which dealt with national participation in the Programmes, the topics investigated by countries, the availability of results of the censuses and technical assistance rendered.

134. Under the Programmes, the United Nations had provided assistance by means of the establishment of principles and recommendations, the publication of the Handbook of Population Census Methods <sup>17/</sup> and National Programmes of Analysis of Population Census Data as an Aid to Planning and Policy-Making, <sup>18/</sup> the organization of regional training centres and seminars on census methodology and on the evaluation and utilization of census data, and direct technical assistance in census methodology to individual countries.

135. Although most countries investigated all or very many of the first-priority topics included in the United Nations recommendations for the 1960 censuses of population and housing, the census results made available for publication fell short of expectations.

136. In spite of the great progress achieved in the 1960 round of censuses, the Commission observed that there was still a comparative lack of published results from many of these censuses on certain important topics. For this reason, the Commission felt that it would be important, in the recommendations for the 1970 census programmes, to stress the need for prompt tabulation and publication of results. It was suggested moreover that the Secretariat explore the feasibility of publishing a collection of the 1960 census data available.

137. The Commission drew attention to the efforts which had been made to improve international comparability in connexion with the 1960 censuses and, in this respect, it considered that good results had been obtained. The importance of comparable data for planning and evaluating international programmes such as the United Nations Development Decade and the Freedom from Hunger Campaign was stressed. It was hoped that the 1970 programmes would ensure that a larger number of countries would carry out censuses than in the past and that the quality of the data would be improved, with technical assistance being given to countries that had never carried out a census or whose census coverage had been incomplete.

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<sup>17/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 58.XVII.6 (vols. I, II and III).

<sup>18/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.XIII.4.

## B. 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes

138. The Commission considered a "Progress Report on the 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes" (E/CN.3/337), covering activities to date and future plans in regard to (1) development of standards for censuses of population and housing, (2) the promotion of censuses and improved census methods, (3) the promotion of the development of current population and housing statistics, and (4) the dissemination of census results.

139. The World Population Census Programme, which was the third such programme sponsored by the United Nations, was intended to ensure that population censuses would provide the basic demographic data required for planning national economic and social development. The World Housing Census Programme was the first formal international programme for housing censuses and was designed to encourage the collection of comparable data by the adoption of the world-wide and regional recommendations, which, in addition to their usefulness in the formulation of housing programmes, would also provide adequately for the calculation of the housing components of levels of living. Both programmes would emphasize the use of population and housing censuses as part of an integrated system of data collection and would stress the importance of evaluating the accuracy of census results, of considering the role of sampling in census-taking and of adopting modern methods of data processing to speed up the release of census results.

140. Technical assistance efforts would include the provision of assistance through the regular regional statistical advisory services and through the appointment of supplementary regional advisers to assist Governments at national or sub-regional census-training centres and to render individual advice on short notice. In addition, census experts would be assigned to countries for longer periods, as required, and programmes of bilateral assistance were expected to continue.

141. For further assistance to Governments and for use in direct training activities, it was intended to issue a revised edition of the Handbook of Population Census Methods, which would take account of the experience of countries with the series of population censuses carried out during 1955-1964. Experience with housing censuses during the same period would be set forth in a first edition of a handbook of housing census methods. In addition, there would be a technical manual on methods of evaluating the completeness and accuracy of population censuses.

142. It was considered desirable that assistance to Governments in training national population and housing census personnel should take place at the national level or possibly at sub-regional levels, with intensive short-term instruction in small, technically homogeneous groups where local problems could be discussed in greater depth than they could in the larger groups which were assembled in regional centres for extended periods of time during the 1960 Programmes. Assistance in organizing and conducting these national training projects would be provided by advisers attached to the regional commissions, who would be experts in population census, housing census, data processing and cartography.

143. The 1970 World Population Census Programme would endeavour to promote the development of links between the organization of a population census and inter-censal field inquiries and the registration of vital events, with the objective of maximizing the usefulness of the results from each source. The 1970 World Housing Census Programme would promote the development of appropriate links among housing censuses, surveys and current housing statistics.

144. Attention was drawn to the regional participation already achieved in the development of the 1970 Programmes and to the fact that both the draft "Principles and Recommendations for a Population Census" (E/CN.3/330) and the draft "Principles and Recommendations for a Housing Census" (E/CN.3/332) already reflected regional needs to some extent. Further consultation with, and review by, Member States, regional economic commissions and other regional agencies would ensure an even greater degree of representation of regional requirements in the final world-wide recommendations.

145. The results of the 1970 population censuses would normally be published serially in the Demographic Yearbook, and perhaps, at a suitable time, they could be brought together in an international compendium of population census data. With the expected increase in the quantity and improved quality of data to become available as a result of the 1970 World Housing Census Programme, consideration would be given to the feasibility of disseminating the results in the same way as those of the population censuses.

146. The Commission commended the plans for the 1970 Programmes and stressed the importance of the widest possible participation by countries in these Programmes. It was considered especially important that countries which have never had a census or did not participate in either of the 1960 Programmes should make provision to take part in the 1970 Programmes.

147. The recognition in the Programmes of the importance of an integrated system of data collection was welcomed. The Commission drew attention to the opportunity this would provide for the development of data in the fields of demography and manpower as a parallel to the similar data in the System of National Accounts.

148. The Commission noted that population censuses, housing censuses and censuses of agriculture should be components of an integrated system of data collection. The use of population census results for establishing a frame for the agricultural census and the collation of the results of the two censuses could increase the utility of the data from each source. It was recommended that the Secretary-General should further investigate the possibilities of such collation.

149. The following resolution was adopted:

12 (XIII). 1970 WORLD POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS PROGRAMMES

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Economic and Social Council to adopt the following draft resolution:

/For the text of the draft resolution, see chapter XIII./

C. 1970 Draft Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses

150. The Commission reviewed the "Principles and Recommendations for a Population Census: Draft Recommendations for the 1970 Censuses" (E/CN.3/330), which constitutes the provisional United Nations recommendations for carrying out the

1970 population censuses. The same draft had been examined by the Population Commission at its thirteenth session and the Statistical Commission had, for its information, a detailed summary of the comments and suggestions of the Population Commission (E/CN.3/331) in regard to the document. The Commission also had before it "Principles and Recommendations for a Housing Census: Draft Recommendations for the 1970 Censuses" (E/CN.3/332). In accordance with the Commission's request at its tenth session, this document was based on the experience acquired in carrying out past housing censuses and on anticipated future requirements for housing census data.

151. The Commission was informed that the documents were provisional drafts. It was proposed that, after their consideration by the Commission, the provisional drafts would be circulated for comment to Governments, specialized agencies and regional commissions; they would then be revised, taking into account the comments of the Statistical Commission, the Population Commission, Governments and other bodies. It was suggested that the revised drafts would include an illustrative sketch table for each recommended tabulation. The revisions would be placed before a small group of experts in population census, housing census and demography and, together with the comments of the group, they would be reviewed by the Statistical Commission at its fourteenth session. It was hoped that final approval might be obtained at that session in order that the recommendations could be made available to countries in time for them to be utilized effectively in planning the 1970 censuses.

152. It was noted that previous United Nations recommendations concerning population censuses had been developed primarily at the international level and later adapted by the regions to their needs. There were no specific recommendations for the 1960 round of housing censuses because of the lack of experience at that time on which to base such recommendations. The General Principles for a Housing Census 19/ was intended to serve only as a guide to countries planning to take housing censuses or to collect housing information in connexion with population censuses. The draft recommendations before the Commission therefore represented a significant step forward in this respect.

153. Development of the 1970 recommendations had been planned to take advantage of the regional working groups in population and housing censuses so that preliminary regional action and opinions on topics and tabulations were, to some extent, already reflected in the draft documents. The international recommendations were conceived as a reflection of generally applicable principles and practices which may be adapted or supplemented in formulating regional programmes appropriate to the needs of the countries concerned.

154. The members of the Commission expressed general agreement with the draft "Principles and Recommendations for a Population Census" and felt that it demonstrated the value of regional working groups and discussions. Suggestions were made concerning terminology, certain of the principles of organization and administration, the exposition of the use of sampling in connexion with a population census and clarification of topics and tabulations.

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19/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 58.XVII.8.

155. The Commission considered that the documents provided a positive basis for the further development of recommendations relating to the 1970 population censuses and the 1970 housing censuses. It noted with satisfaction the initiative which prompted the Secretary-General to promote the work on the recommendations in the three-year interval during which the meetings of the Statistical Commission were suspended.

156. The following resolution was adopted:

13 (XIII). 1970 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POPULATION  
AND HOUSING CENSUSES

The Statistical Commission,

Having reviewed the draft recommendations for population and housing censuses,

Recognizing the continuing need for reliable data on population and the ever-increasing need for reliable data as a basis for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of housing programmes,

Emphasizing the importance of ensuring that final recommendations for carrying out population and housing censuses should be available sufficiently in advance of the 1970 censuses for countries to take them into account in preparing their census plans,

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To circulate the draft recommendations to States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies, to regional economic commissions, to other regional bodies and to interested specialized agencies for their review;

(2) To prepare second drafts, taking into account the suggestions of the Commission and the comments received as a result of the action taken in accordance with sub-paragraph (1) above;

(3) To convene a small group of experts to examine the revised drafts prior to the fourteenth session of the Statistical Commission and to recommend such changes as they deem necessary;

(4) To present the second drafts, together with the recommendations of the group of experts, for consideration at the fourteenth session of the Statistical Commission.

D. Population Projections

157. The Commission received reports on the progress of the Secretariat's work in the field of demographic projections and on the recommendations adopted by the Population Commission at its thirteenth session with regard to future work in this field (E/CN.3/333 and Add.1).



158. The Statistical Commission agreed on the importance of demographic projections as aids to development planning and policy-making, and on the need to accelerate and extend the scope of the Secretariat's work in this field along the lines of the Population Commission's recommendations. The recent publication in provisional form of a series of world population projections and the completion, with the co-operation of UNESCO, of a manual on methods of projecting school-age population and school enrolments were noted, although these achievements were modest in relation to the magnitude and urgency of the needs.

159. The Statistical Commission agreed with the population Commission's recommendations with regard to the programme of work and priorities in the field of demographic projections for the period 1965-1966 and to the future development of work on such projections in the frame of the proposed long-range programme of work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in population fields. The priorities given to the preparation of projections of urban and rural population, economically active population, and households, and of technical manuals on the methods of such projections were noted. The Commission also supported the recommendation to develop a unified system for calculating and maintaining up to date the principal varieties of demographic projections on a world-wide scale, with the use of the electronic computer. In this connexion, it stressed the need to avoid over-simplification of assumptions and procedures and to take careful account of the limitations of comparability in the basic data, especially for projections of urban and rural population.

#### E. Centre for Population Data

160. As part of its consideration of methods of developing a co-ordinated system of international statistics in current circumstances, the Commission had for consideration a proposal to initiate, in the Secretariat, work on the application of electronic data processing to compilation and tabulation of international population statistics (E/CN.3/311, paras. 10-14).

161. The Commission was informed that this proposal was a second phase in the Secretariat's response to General Assembly resolution 1710 (XVI), which in operative paragraph 4 (h) called for review of "facilities for the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of statistical and other information required for charting economic and social development and for providing a constant measurement of progress toward the objectives of the United Nations Development Decade". Application of electronic data processing to population statistics appeared to offer a fruitful field for experimentation in view of (a) the Economic and Social Council resolution 820 B (XXXI) of 28 April 1961, which contained provision for intensifying efforts to "ensure international co-operation in the evaluation, analysis and utilization of population census results and related data, especially in less developed countries", and (b) the action of the Population Commission at its thirteenth session in which it gave unanimous support in principle to the proposal for a data bank of population census statistics, 20/ and its programme for the study of the use of electronic computers for expediting and enlarging the scope of demographic analysis, endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 933 A (XXXV). Since the scope of demographic analysis is

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20/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 9, para. 83.

dependent upon the availability and comparability of basic population data, it seems appropriate for the Secretariat to explore ways of organizing international population data so as to be able to bring to bear the efficient processing techniques provided by electronic computers.

162. The Commission noted that the project might involve for countries problems of a legal, financial and technical nature. It was agreed that further information was necessary on the proposal before the Commission could formulate a considered judgement. It was also agreed that the development of the idea should be pursued in close and continuous consultation with Member States, in order that full advantage could be taken of national experience.

163. Bearing in mind these considerations, the Commission requested the Secretary-General (1) to continue to study the collection, tabulation and analysis of population census statistics at the international level in the light of possible applications of electronic data processing, and (2) to prepare a report on the scope of the project for a centre for population data and the procedures necessary to implement it, for consideration by the Statistical Commission.

#### F. Vital Records and Statistics

164. A review of developments in connexion with demographic statistics other than those from population censuses was placed before the Commission in document E/CN.3/334.

165. The Commission was informed that a survey of current practice in vital statistics, designed to bring up to date the Principles for a Vital Statistics System 21/ and the Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods, 22/ was being prepared by the Secretariat.

166. The striking deficiencies in statistics derived from vital registers, especially in developing countries, were clearly brought out in the Secretariat study. It was noted that establishment of a system of reliable vital registers was essential not only for their statistical use but also because the records serve as legal and public-administration instruments as well. However, since development of reliable registers requires a long lead time as exemplified by Canadian experience, data from other sources, such as sample surveys, are required on an interim basis to meet the immediate need in developing countries. Surveys also may be utilized to evaluate the reliability of statistics obtained from vital registers in developed countries, but it was emphasized that installation of a system of surveys should not be permitted to obscure the long-range goal of the establishment and maintenance of reliable vital registers.

167. In this connexion, the attention of the Commission was drawn to two experiments in the establishment of vital records and statistics systems under United Nations auspices in Africa. These are the Kenya and Senegal projects, both of which seek to utilize the vital registration approach and sample survey methods to obtain the best estimate of the birth and death rate and to develop a sound system.

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21/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 53.XVII.8.

22/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 55.XVII.1.

168. It was pointed out that the United Nations had a responsibility to promote the development of balanced programmes of vital statistics as part of an integrated system of data collection. In order that the full impact of regional and international efforts might be brought to bear on this problem, the following resolution was adopted:

#### 14 (XIII). VITAL RECORDS AND STATISTICS

##### The Statistical Commission,

Being aware that deficiencies in the coverage and quality of national vital statistics represents a serious gap in world demographic knowledge,

Recognizing that vigorous efforts should be exerted by the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and the Member States to push forward with the development of reliable vital records and statistics,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to support the conclusions of the Second Inter-American Seminar on Civil Registration 23/ and the recommendations of the African Seminar on Vital Statistics, 24/ including:

(a) Intensifying efforts and co-ordinating activities of the specialized agencies to promote the establishment and maintenance of adequate national systems of vital records and statistics;

(b) Making use of bilateral aid as available, providing regional advisers in vital registration, and training of national personnel in this field under the United Nations technical assistance programme;

(c) Sponsoring a programme of studies and research in sample household survey methods for obtaining demographic data, particularly in providing information on vital rates;

2. Recommends:

(a) That States Members of the United Nations which do not yet have a reliable vital statistics system consider organizing sample survey and/or sample registration areas as interim measures while taking recommended long-range steps toward improving the entire vital records and statistics system;

(b) That States Members of the United Nations whose vital records and statistics systems are highly developed be requested to make available experts to advise in this important area under United Nations or bilateral programmes of technical assistance.

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23/ See annex I below.

24/ See annex II below.

#### G. Statistics for Social Programmes

169. The Commission had before it a progress report covering the period 1962-1964 on the development of statistics for social programmes (E/CN.3/335). In connexion with the over-all development of such statistics, the Commission emphasized the desirability of establishing a closer relationship between social statistics and economic statistics, particularly those relevant to the system of national accounts.

170. The Commission expressed the view that the Secretary-General should continue work on the general lines discussed in the document (E/CN.3/335) and prepare a further progress report for the Commission at its fifteenth session.

## VIII. FIVE-YEAR PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

171. The Commission considered a report entitled "Five-Year Programme of International Statistics" (E/CN.3/336) prepared by the Secretary-General in collaboration with the other agencies working in the field of international statistics. This report had been prepared in response to the request of the Commission at its twelfth session, where it had discussed "the need to obtain a judicious balance among the different programmes, both as regards the emphasis to be accorded to various subjects and as regards the regional activities in statistics of the United Nations and the specialized agencies". 25/ The Commission had decided that "it would be desirable to ask the statistical agencies, including the regional statistical organizations, if they would, before the 1964 [subsequently changed to 1965] session of the Commission, draw up in as much detail as possible, programmes of activities for at least five years ahead, and perhaps in more general terms, programmes for the next ten years". 26/

172. The Commission welcomed the information presented in the report which enabled it, for the first time, to review the international statistical programme as a whole. To facilitate the Commission's task, however, it would be essential that for future sessions the material should be arranged according to subject matter and more information should be provided on the resources required as well as on the timing and method of carrying out the projects by the secretariats of the organizations concerned and the feasibility of carrying them out in the changing circumstances of each agency over the period covered.

173. The report before it enabled the Commission to review the broad subject of co-ordination of the statistical activities of organizations concerned. It was recalled that it was part of the functions of the Statistical Commission to advise the Secretary-General on the development of the statistical services of the Secretariat and on the co-ordination of the statistical work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. The view was expressed that the Commission had perhaps in the past devoted insufficient time to this aspect of its work, and it was felt that the subject should be given more attention in future sessions. The Commission was informed that there had been a Consultative Committee on Statistical Matters, which was abolished some years ago. The Commission felt that, in spite of the difficulties hitherto encountered it was imperative that positive efforts should be made by the Secretary-General to achieve a co-ordinated international statistical programme.

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25/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13, para. 10.

26/ Ibid., para. 11.

174. The following resolution was adopted:

15 (XIII). INTEGRATED PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

The Statistical Commission requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To circulate the document entitled "Five-Year Programme of International Statistics (E/CN.3/336) to national statistical offices with any revisions of the work programmes that agencies and regional secretariats may wish to make;

(2) To revise and bring up to date an integrated five-year programme of international statistics, extended to the year 1971, in accordance with the views expressed by the Commission, for consideration by the Commission at its fourteenth session;

(3) To initiate discussions with each of the principal agencies working in the field of international statistics, with a view to reporting to the Commission at future sessions on the main problems of co-ordination in each subject field;

(4) To present a report on the progress made to the fourteenth session of the Commission.

IX. PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES<sup>27/</sup>

175. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of the annex to resolution 402 B (XIII) of the Economic and Social Council, where procedures are recommended in connexion with the establishment of priorities of the work programme, the Commission considered document E/CN.3/L.64 and Corr.1. In the light of the probable requirements of the United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 1710 (XVI)), the Commission adopted the priorities of the work programme set forth below.

176. Continuing projects of high priority

(1) Systematic collection, compilation and publication of international statistics, together with the development of appropriate indexes and bibliographies.

(2) Collection, processing and dissemination of data on international trade by electronic data processing methods; extension of electronic data processing methods to other fields of international statistics.

(3) Maintenance and development of publications dealing with statistical methods, with particular reference to the need for the inclusion in these publications of material concerning the practices of national offices in solving problems of collection and analysis.

(4) Maintenance and development of arrangements for regional consultations and for regional advisers on statistical questions, especially in connexion with

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<sup>27/</sup> For a statement of the financial implications, see annex III.

the statistical needs of the less developed countries, in co-operation with the specialized agencies and other institutions concerned.

(5) Maintenance of activities for the training of middle-level and higher professional personnel in the less developed countries, in co-operation with inter-governmental and national institutions.

(6) Other activities designed to assist the more rapid development of national statistics required for the planning of economic and social development, (a) by means of increased utilization of the facilities of the technical co-operation programmes, and (b) by active participation in the Economic Projections and Programming Centre envisaged in resolution 1708 (XVI) of the General Assembly.

(7) Continuation of the work of improving the comparability of statistical data of Member States having different economic and social systems in order to contribute to the development of mutually advantageous economic ties between them.

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

- (a) Population and housing censuses;
- (b) Vital statistics;
- (c) Statistics for social programmes;
- (d) Industrial statistics;
- (e) Index numbers of industrial production;
- (f) External trade and transport statistics;
- (g) Distribution statistics;
- (h) National accounts;
- (i) Capital formation statistics;
- (j) Statistics of prices;
- (k) Classification of industrial and related data according to kind of economic activity;
- (l) Basic statistical series for use in programmes of economic and social development;
- (m) Housing statistics;
- (n) Energy statistics;
- (o) Questions of methodology, including sampling, and information on electronic data processing.

177. Ad hoc projects of high priority

In formulating the list, there was some doubt as to the date of the fourteenth session of the Commission and the programme was, therefore, established as one that could be covered by the time of the fifteenth session assuming it would take place in early 1968. While the Commission recognized that, in accordance with resolution 402 B (XIII) of the Economic and Social Council, it was not necessary for it to indicate the relative importance of the ad hoc projects of high priority, nevertheless in view of the possibility that the Commission might meet again in 1966 it felt that it was desirable to state that it attached particular importance to substantial progress being made before the fourteenth session of the Commission on the items in the fields of national accounts and population censuses, particularly on items 9, 10, 11 and 19, as well as on items 31 and 32.

(1) Compilation and publication of recommendations for the definition and statistical treatment of the main categories of commodities in the inward and outward flows of international trade, together with descriptions of national practices in this field.

(2) Arrangements for consultations of statisticians and customs officials to improve the international availability of detailed external trade statistics.

(3) Interim revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification as required for use in the revised systems of national accounts.

(4) Revision and publication of cross-classification of the items of the Standard International Trade Classification and the International Standard Industrial Classification.

(5) Study of the indicators of industrial activity.

(6) Preparation of recommendations for a selected list of commodities for use in industrial statistics.

(7) Review of recommendations on annual and more frequent industrial inquiries.

(8) Revision and publication of the study on construction statistics.

(9) Revision and extension of the System of National Accounts; study of the Material Product System and methods of linking the two systems.

(10) Study of the concepts, classifications and methods of statistics of income distribution within the framework of the systems of national accounts and balances, and the incorporation of the appropriate parts of these statistics into the System of National Accounts.

(11) Study of the concepts, classifications and methods of balance-sheet statistics that are integrated into the System of National Accounts.

(12) Study of the measurement of economic growth.

(13) Study of statistics of manpower and population in relation both to the systems of national accounts and balances and to the needs for such data in programming and planning.



(14) Study of methods of assessing requirements for scientific and technological manpower and of expenditure on scientific and technological research.

(15) Revision and publication of the study on problems of input-output tables and inter-sector balances.

(16) Study of systems of price indexes and the concepts and methods of estimates in constant prices with particular reference to national accounting aggregates.

(17) Study of techniques for improving international comparisons of the main aggregates of the national accounts by the use of common methods of valuation.

(18) Revision of the study of the national accounting practices of countries.

(19) Recommendations for population and housing censuses to be taken around 1970, including regional consultations.

(20) Study of the methods of developing vital statistics registration systems and of interim methods of providing vital rates by appropriate survey methods.

(21) Study of demographic sample survey methods.

(22) Preparation of a new issue of the Compendium of Social Statistics.<sup>28/</sup>

(23) Revision and issuance of the Handbook of Household Surveys.<sup>29/</sup>

(24) Revision and issuance of the Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods.<sup>30/</sup>

(25) Experimentation in methods of establishing a centre for population data.

(26) Revision of the Handbook of Population Census Methods.<sup>31/</sup>

(27) Publication of a handbook on housing censuses and revision of Statistical Indicators of Housing Conditions.<sup>32/</sup>

(28) Review of methods in international travel statistics, in co-operation with interested international and regional organizations.

(29) Study of methods in transport statistics relating to movement of goods in international trade, in co-operation with the regional economic commissions.

(30) Initiation of a study of methods of training in statistical technology, designed to assist in the economic development of the under-developed countries.

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<sup>28/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 63.XVII.3.

<sup>29/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.XVII.13.

<sup>30/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 55.XVII.1.

<sup>31/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 58.XVII.6.

<sup>32/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 62.XVII.7.

(31) Progress report on co-ordination of the international statistical programme, including the relationship between the recommendations for the 1970 population and housing censuses and those of the 1970 agricultural census.

(32) Revision of an integrated five-year work programme of international statistics, extended to the year 1971.

178. Ad hoc projects of lower priority

In view of the heavy work programme consisting of items of high priority, the Commission felt that it would not be possible for the Secretariat to carry out any projects of lower priority in the period before its fourteenth session (when it would again review its priorities) and, consequently, did not include any such items in the work programme.

## X. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

179. In accordance with resolution 1272 (XIII) of the General Assembly and resolution 742 II (XXVIII) of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission considered a memorandum by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/L.65) on control and limitation of documentation and noted that the number of pages of documentation rose from 664 for the twelfth session to 1,619 for the thirteenth session. It also noted that this increase was brought about partly because of the three-year period which elapsed between the twelfth and thirteenth sessions (whereas the usual period between sessions was two years) and partly because of the nature of the documents themselves.

## XI. DATE OF THE NEXT SESSION

180. The Commission took note of Economic and Social Council resolution 936 (XXXV) which inter alia:

"1. Requests the regional economic commissions, the functional commissions and the standing committees of the Council to review the number and timing of their meetings and of those of their subsidiary bodies with a view to eliminating all those which are not essential and to reducing the frequency of others...;

"2. Further requests these commissions and committees to include in their next reports to the Council a statement of the results of this review and of the considerations on which they are based..."

181. In reviewing this matter, the Commission considered not only the timing and frequency of its own sessions but also the timing and frequency of related international statistical meetings, as well as those of the regional conferences of statisticians. It noted that the International Statistical Institute holds biennial sessions in the odd-numbered years, as does the United Nations Population Commission. The conferences of statisticians which operate under the aegis of the regional economic commissions and of the Statistical Commission have varying periodicities. Thus, the Conference of European Statisticians meets annually, the Conference of African Statisticians biennially, and the Conference of Asian Statisticians every eighteen months. The cancellation of the Commission's 1964 session, which was caused by the construction of the conference area at United Nations Headquarters in that year, had meant that the Commission held only one session in the three years elapsed since the twelfth (1962) session. In consequence, the programme of work of the Statistical Commission had been interrupted and in particular the schedule of work on the revision of the system of national accounts and on the 1970 censuses of population and housing had been delayed.

182. The Commission reviewed this matter in the light of its work programme, and particularly having in mind the necessity for speedy progress in the work on national accounts and balances as well as for the completion of the work on

censuses of population and housing in time to enable countries to finalize their own programmes for the 1970 censuses. The Commission for these reasons decided to recommend that its fourteenth session should be held in early October 1966, its fifteenth in April-May 1968, and thereafter sessions should be held at biennial intervals. The Commission recommended that its fourteenth session should be confined to a period of not more than ten days, and that it should be devoted to the urgent subjects of:

- (1) The revision of the draft principles and recommendations for the population and housing censuses to be taken about the year 1970;
- (2) The revision of systems of national accounts;
- (3) A progress report on co-ordination of the international statistical programme, including the relationship between the recommendations for the 1970 population and housing censuses and those of the 1970 agricultural census;
- (4) The revision of an integrated five-year work programme of international statistics, extended to the year 1971.

## XII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

183. At the 238th meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted the report of its thirteenth session.

## XIII. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

### 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes<sup>33/</sup>

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the reports of the thirteenth sessions of the Population Commission <sup>34/</sup> and the Statistical Commission,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 1710 (XVI) of 19 December 1961 on the United Nations Development Decade, which requests the Secretary-General to develop proposals for the intensification of action in the fields of economic and social development with particular reference to the need to review facilities for the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of statistical and other information required for charting economic and social development and for providing a constant measurement of progress towards the objectives of the Decade,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to proceed with the development of 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes;

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<sup>33/</sup> See paras. 138-149.

<sup>34/</sup> Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 9.

2. Further requests the Secretary-General to give assistance under the Technical Co-operation Programme to countries which require technical advice and help in the conduct of their censuses;

3. Recommends that States Members of the United Nations undertake to carry out population and housing censuses during the period 1965-1974, and preferably around the year 1970, and that they take into account the international recommendations in order that the censuses may meet national requirements and facilitate the study of population and housing problems on a world-wide basis.

ANNEXES

Annex I

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SECOND INTER-AMERICAN SEMINAR  
ON CIVIL REGISTRATION a/

"The discussions at the Second Inter-American Seminar on Civil Registration lead to the following conclusions:

"(a) The juridical function of civil registration is as important as ever. At the same time, the statistical function is also of great importance because of the data furnished for development planning and the study of social change. To facilitate the full performance of both these functions, civil registration should represent a felt need for the whole community, and should be an institution that forms part of the national process of development planning.

"(b) The resolutions of the First Inter-American Seminar on Civil Registration are still fully applicable. Consequently it is desirable that countries should do all they can to carry them out.

"(c) The international agencies that have an interest in the efficient functioning of civil registration, including the United Nations Statistical Office, the Latin American Demographic Centre, the Pan American Health Organization, the Inter American Statistical Institute and the Inter American Children Institute, could co-ordinate their activities in order to make the best use of any resources that may be made available for this purpose. To this end it is suggested that a committee should be set up consisting of representatives of the agencies concerned, which will undertake to promote an integrated programme for improving the civil registration services in the Americas.

"(d) Countries that are without modern legislation on civil registration should review and amend their laws in the light of the indication and recommendations of the present Seminar.

"(e) Similarly, the civil registration services must revise and redefine their aims in accordance with the functions they should perform as part of the modern organization of government, and with the activities they carry out in co-operation with other institutions.

"(f) It is an urgent task to evaluate the degree of omission from the registers and carry out studies to determine the cause. Such studies

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a/ Report of the Second Inter-American Seminar on Civil Registration (E/CN.12/704), paragraph 60. The Seminar was held at Lima, from 30 November to 11 December 1964.

should be made regularly and should take the form of a co-operative undertaking by the institutions that participate in the production of vital statistics.

"(g) It is advisable that countries should try out methods of organization and operation that could be used by the national committees on vital and health statistics that, it is suggested, might more appropriately be called national committees on civil registration and vital and health statistics, because of the part that they can play in promoting an improvement in civil registration.

"(h) A competent organization should prepare and publish a statistical manual for registrars, describing in simple terms the elementary technical principles involved.

"(i) Countries should work out a five-year programme to cover the period 1965-1969, for improving their civil registration services, in line with the suggestions and the outline put forward at the present Seminar. This programme should form part of the country's development plans. Although the chief responsibility for the formulation and development of such programmes falls to the Governments, their success cannot be assured without co-ordinated, full-scale and prompt assistance from international organizations."

Annex II

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION OF THE AFRICAN SEMINAR ON  
VITAL STATISTICS a/

"The Seminar recommended that:

"i. Recognition be given by governments to the fundamental importance of establishing a comprehensive civil registration system in each country of the region at the earliest possible opportunity. In the light of limitations of resources in certain countries, suitable priorities should be adopted for phasing the implementation of registration schemes.

"ii. Recognition be given to the equally fundamental need for sustained efforts both by governments and international agencies in all projects aimed at obtaining reliable vital statistics on a continuing basis.

"iii. The United Nations should give the fullest possible support to the promotion of civil registration in Africa including material contribution and technical assistance in personnel.

"iv. Pending the achievement of complete coverage of vital events through registration, the United Nations should assist to the fullest possible extent in schemes, such as those discussed at the Seminar, for obtaining temporary substitutes for the vital rates.

"v. Experimentation and analytical studies should be continued (a) to improve the efficiency of sample design through suitable variability studies and (b) to improve the quality of data by adopting methods for detecting and adjusting for non-sampling errors and biases, including use of demographic models.

"vi. The Economic Commission for Africa through working groups or other means, should take up studies aimed at standardizing the classification and definition of substitute measures for civil registration, taking account of the provisional list supplied at the Seminar by one of the consultants."

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a/ Report of the African Seminar on Vital Statistics (E/CN.14/333-E/CN.14/CAS.4/VS/14), paragraph 69. The Seminar was held in Addis Ababa, from 14 to 18 December 1964.



### Annex III

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION AT ITS THIRTEENTH SESSION

1. While the majority of the items on the work programme for 1966-1967 (see chapter IX) can be undertaken from within resources currently available and expected to be available for 1966, there are a few which could entail additional expenditures in 1966 and 1967 as set out below:

##### A. Continuing projects of high priority

- (i) Under item 2 the extension of electronic data processing methods to other fields of international statistics is envisaged. With the installation of a United Nations computer system in October 1965, the only additional costs will be those for programming. Taking, for 1966, demographic statistics as the first of the areas for the application of electronic data processing methods, an amount of \$10,000 will be required for fees for a programming consultant.
- (ii) Item 3 calls for the maintenance and development of publications dealing with statistical methods, with particular reference to the need for the inclusion in these publications of material concerning the practices of national offices in solving problems of collection and analysis. This project would involve a compilation about 250 mimeographed pages long of recommendations of the Commission over the years, and of material provided by Governments on national practices. The compilation could be undertaken during 1966 from within available resources. Its publication in the three languages early in 1967 would cost about \$7,000, and provision would be made in the initial estimates for 1967 for this expenditure.

##### B. Ad hoc projects of high priority

- (i) Item 2 calls for consultations of statisticians and customs officials to improve the international availability of detailed external trade statistics. It is hoped that a meeting could be convened in New York in the latter half of 1966. On the assumption that the participants at the meeting will be no more than 30/35, that their travel costs would be met by their respective Governments, and that the meetings last no more than one week, no additional costs would be entailed. It is hoped that the work load on the translation and reproduction of the preparatory documentation (300 pages), and the report on the meeting, 50 to 60 pages (which would require about \$7,000 if costed separately) could be absorbed within available resources.
- (ii) Items 10 and 11, which call for studies on the System of National Accounts, would require (a) the use of consultants, and (b) the convening of a group of up to eight experts, in 1966 and again in 1967. It is estimated that approximately eight man-months of consultant

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