



STATISTICAL COMMISSION
REPORT ON THE SIXTEENTH SESSION
(5-15 October 1970)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS: FIFTIETH SESSION
SUPPLEMENT No. 2

UNITED NATIONS



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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.**

E/4938
E/CN.3/417

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CHAPTER I

ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Opening and duration of the session

1. The Statistical Commission held its sixteenth session at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 5 to 15 October 1970.

Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of twenty-two of the twenty-four States members of the Commission (Thailand and Uganda did not send representatives) and by representatives of specialized agencies and of other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. A full list of those attending is given in annex I.

Elections of officers

3. At its 275th meeting, the Commission unanimously elected the following officers:

Chairman: J. Ripert (France)

Vice-Chairman: J. Kazimour (Czechoslovakia)

Rapporteur: C.A. Moser (United Kingdom)

Agenda

4. At the 275th meeting, the Commission adopted unanimously the provisional agenda (E/CN.3/391) but changed the order. At the 283rd meeting, item 10 (c) was added. The final agenda was as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Developments in national accounts and balances and related subjects
4. System of Material Product Balances (MPS) and links between MPS and the System of National Accounts (SNA)
 - (a) Final version of MPS
 - (b) Progress in defining links between MPS and SNA

5. The balance-sheet and revaluation accounts of SNA
6. Statistics of the distribution of income and wealth
7. Balance-of-payments statistics
8. Statistics of prices and quantities
9. Integrated system of demographic, manpower and other social statistics
10. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes
 - (a) Report on the consultations between a working group of the Statistical Commission and the representatives of the United Nations and the specialized agencies
 - (b) International statistical programmes, 1971-1975
 - (c) International Computing Centre
11. Central directories of establishments and enterprises
12. Recommendations for the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics
13. Development of recommendations of statistics of distributive and service trades
14. External trade statistics
 - (a) Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC)
 - (b) Revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)
 - (c) Analysis by mode of transport
15. Demographic and housing statistics
 - (a) Recommendations for improvement and standardization of vital statistics
 - (b) Migration statistics
 - (c) Progress report
16. Time and place of the seventeenth session
17. Programme of work and priorities
18. Other business
19. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

CHAPTER II

NATIONAL ACCOUNTING

A. Developments in national accounts and balances and related subjects

5. The Commission discussed those aspects of developments since the fifteenth session, and of future work, in national accounts and balances not dealt with under other items of the agenda, based on document E/CN.3/395.

6. The Commission was pleased to note that data are being sought in the 1970 National Accounts Questionnaires based on the revised System of National Accounts (SNA) in the case of market economies and based on the developed System of Material Product Balances (MPS) in the case of centrally planned economies. The Commission noted that the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development are now using essentially identical SNA questionnaires. While it was considered to be appropriate to request relatively detailed input-output tables in respect of 1968 or proximate years in the 1971 version of the SNA and MPS questionnaires, since a number of countries will not have the figures by 1971 it will be necessary to provide for such countries to supply these data in later versions of the questionnaires.

7. The Commission emphasized the necessity and importance of assisting the developing countries in founding, improving and extending suitable systems of national accounts and correlated basic statistics. Technical assistance is required in the form of seminars, workshops and training courses, regional advisers or country experts, and technical manuals. The technical manuals should deal with the various aspects of the process of formulating and compiling national accounts in the light of the circumstances of the developing countries - for example, the interpretation and application of troublesome or difficult concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations of the SNA, the nature and sources of the required basic data and the methods of estimation. The difficulty of preparing documents effectively covering such a wide range of subjects was mentioned, and the Commission felt that a less ambitious approach to the preparation of the manuals might be advisable. It was noted that work was well advanced on two manuals: one on the production, income and outlay and capital finance accounts of the revised SNA; the other on data of the system in respect of the public sector. The Commission considered that in view of the relative urgency with which developing countries require guidance, manuals on additional subjects should, as far as is feasible, be prepared in the following order of priority: (i) national accounting in constant prices and statistics of prices and quantities; (ii) household accounts and statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth; (iii) input-output analysis and accounts in respect of goods and services; (iv) flow-of-funds and balance-sheet statistics and accounts; and (v) regional accounting. It was suggested that the methodology of the MPS should be used in the preparation of the manual for the developing countries, where appropriate.

8. The Commission noted with approval that the first draft of a classification of goods and services (SI/STAT.47) that is linked with the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities had been completed. The classification will be valuable for such purposes as input-output analysis, co-ordinating data on goods and services and data on producing units and compiling quantity and price statistics. It should also be of assistance in detailing the purpose classifications for government and private non-profit services, in the national accounts for use in the social service accounts of a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics. The Commission considered it desirable that work start on a functional classification of the intermediate and primary inputs of producing units for use in statistics of research and development, other related breakdowns such as those referring to the conditions of labour and of the environment and also breakdowns related to the distinction between direct and overhead costs, which are co-ordinated with the national accounts and balances. Attention was drawn to the need to take into account in this work the reporting burden placed on respondents whose co-operation is required. It was also emphasized that clarification is needed concerning the relationships between the activity, purpose and functional classifications and the units of observation to be used in each case.

9. The Commission agreed that the systems of national accounts and balances furnish invaluable frameworks for purposes of developing co-ordinated and coherent bodies of basic and more detailed economic statistics which could be used in conjunction with each other and with the national accounts and balances in statistical compilation and analysis at various levels of detail. In the course of formulating the bodies of data, note must also be taken of the accounting records and practices of respondents and the special requirements and problems in the case of each body of data.

10. The Commission considered that, in view of the close relationships between research and development and economic growth, the concepts, definitions and classifications of the system of statistics of research and development which is being worked out by the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, should, to the extent relevant and feasible, fit in with the national accounts and balances. Attention was drawn to the importance in the case of the developing countries of including in research and development information on such activities as meteorological services, medical services, geological and mineral surveys of national resources, and scientific and technical manpower at all levels of education and training. Attention was also drawn to difficulties of international comparisons and to the urgent need for studies to formulate standards for the improvement of the comparability of statistics, in the case of the developing countries.

11. At the 289th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 4 (XVI).)

B. System of Material Product Balances (MPS) and links between
MPS and the System of National Accounts (SNA)

12. The Commission had before it "Basic methodological rules for the compilation of the statistical balance of the national economy" (E/CN.3/396). The document contains the final version of the description of the MPS, prepared under the

auspices of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and approved by its Standing Statistical Commission.

13. The Commission was informed that the document furnished a generalized description of the concepts, definitions, classifications and balances used by the members of CMEA in compiling national accounting data. Since the document is based on the common ground in the practices of these countries, it was often not feasible to give definitions and classifications at the level of detail used by each of them.

14. The MPS furnishes data on the transactions, stocks of goods and manpower of an economy in the form of balances and supplementary tables. The main balances relate to: (i) the material balance - the production, consumption and accumulation of goods and material services; (ii) the financial balance - the production, distribution, redistribution and final disposition of the global products and of national income; (iii) the balances of fixed assets; and (iv) the manpower balance. Each of these balances is supplemented by more detailed balances in respect of certain aspects and tables in respect of additional or more detailed classifications of data. Key classifications of the MPS concern the sphere of the economy, the kind of economic activity, the kind of goods and material services, the sector of transactions and the object of final consumption.

15. The Commission considered that the document presents a comprehensive and valuable description of the MPS. It furnishes a sound basis for the collection of internationally comparable data from the countries with centrally planned economies, for understanding and interpreting their national accounting data, and for delineating the links between the MPS and the SNA. It also provides an explanation of the concepts and characteristics of the MPS which, it was felt, would be of considerable interest to a number of developing countries in connexion with their own systems of national accounts. The Commission, therefore, agreed that the final version of the description of the MPS should be issued as a publication of the United Nations and be given wide circulation. Before publication, certain deficiencies in the translations of the document into English and French and in the definitions should be corrected by using, where appropriate, a terminological guide in the three languages with respect to national accounts and balances.

16. The Commission discussed "Conceptual relationships between the revised SNA and MPS" (E/CN.3/397/Rev.1). The document delineates the adjustments and steps required to convert the aggregates of the SNA in respect of the supply and disposition of goods and services and the incomes originating in production into the corresponding aggregates of the MPS and vice versa, based on an inventory of the similarities and differences in the definition and classification of the pertinent transactions of the two systems. The inventory of similarities and differences is used to delineate the elementary flows in which the transactions of the SNA and MPS need to be expressed in order to identify the elements of the flows which are treated similarly and differently in the two systems. These elementary flows are the building blocks used in converting the aggregates of one system into those of the other. Matrices are used in the document in order to portray the similarities and differences in structure between the SNA and MPS and to exhibit the character and place of the adjustments.

The delineation of the conceptual relationships between the SNA and the MPS and the adjustments required to convert the aggregates of one system to those of the other have at this juncture been restricted to the supply and use of goods and services and the incomes from production (the materialsphere in the MPS and the production of goods and all services in the SNA) primarily because these flows are least affected by the differences in institutional arrangements between market-economy and centrally-planned-economy countries. In addition, the document defines a common concept of total consumption of the population and indicates the way in which data in the concept may be compiled from elementary flows in the case of each system.

17. The Commission considered that the document is a valuable description of the relationships in structure and flows between the SNA and MPS accounts on goods and services and the incomes from production and of the adjustments required to convert the aggregates of one system in respect of these transactions to those of the other. These questions are dealt with clearly and the document represents a marked step forward in the work on this subject. The document furnishes useful information for purposes of the comparison and analysis of the economies of MPS and SNA countries and for purposes of comparative studies of national accounting systems.

18. The Commission, therefore, concluded that the stage has been reached where a technical document on the conceptual relationships between the SNA and MPS should be published. The publication should include numerical illustrations of the conversion of the relevant national aggregates of selected countries using the SNA and the MPS to those of the other system. These illustrations should furnish interesting data for purposes of comparing SNA and MPS economies, indicate the orders of magnitude of the various adjustments involved in passing from the aggregates of one system to those of the other, and test the procedures described in the publication. It was noted that work on numerical illustrations had already started, and certain member countries of the Commission offered to co-operate in the project. The Commission also considered that work on the conceptual relationships between the SNA and MPS should continue in respect of the redistribution of the incomes from production.

19. In the course of discussing E/CN.3/397/Rev.1, members of the Commission suggested that the following points should be considered in preparing the document for publication:

- (i) Combination of certain of the matrices in order to simplify the presentation, bearing in mind, however, the need to present a logical step-by-step discussion.
- (ii) Identification of the entries in the adjustment tables in respect of the conversion of aggregates of the SNA to those of the MPS in terms of the codes used in the National Accounts Questionnaire based on the SNA. In the case of the adjustment tables for passing from the MPS to the SNA, the codes of the National Accounts Questionnaire based on the MPS should be used.
- (iii) More attention to indicating the flows of the SNA and MPS which, because of institutional differences, are non-comparable in economic meaning though comparable in definition.

20. The Commission recommended that data, in current and constant prices, on aggregates in respect of the production, supply and disposition of goods and services should be gathered and published in terms of the SNA from countries using the MPS and in terms of the MPS from countries using the SNA. This should be done more frequently than once every five years though the more frequent estimates may not be as firmly grounded. It may often be necessary to use relationships derived from the more ample basic data that may be available only in input-output tables once every five years or other special studies in order to make more frequent estimates.

21. At the 239th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted two resolutions. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolutions 5 (XVI) and 6 (XVI).)

C. The balance-sheet and revaluation accounts of the
System of National Accounts (SNA)

22. The Commission discussed this item on the basis of documents E/CN.3/398 and Add.1. It noted that these documents had already been discussed by a working group of the Conference of European Statisticians.

23. The Commission felt that the documents furnished a valuable discussion of the complex and difficult problems of designing and preparing balance-sheet accounts. The Commission none the less considered that a number of these questions required further study and discussions with national statistical authorities before conclusions could be reached.

24. The Commission questioned the proposals to treat military and consumer durables, land and leases, transactions in respect of unfunded pension funds and social security, and the undistributed profits of subsidiaries differently from the way they are dealt with in the transaction accounts of the SNA. It was agreed that every effort should be made to achieve complete consistency between these two parts of the SNA. The mode of valuation which should be adopted in respect of securities, leases on land and buildings, etc. and the treatment of problems of timing needed further study and elaboration. A review of issues related to the treatment of non-financial intangible assets and to the presentation of industrial detail and of an issuer-holder classification was also suggested. The proposed tables should be reviewed with a view to using them as a means of presenting the balance-sheet data completely and simply. It would be desirable also to provide more detailed discussion of the uses of balance-sheet statistics.

25. The Commission recommended that in addition to dealing with fixed assets as part of the financial balance-sheet accounts, draft guidelines should be worked out in respect of stocks of fixed assets from the point of view of their use in production. This will involve, for example, classification according to the kind of economic activity of the user of the assets and a link with the establishment unit.

26. The Commission noted that national experience in the collection and compilation of balance-sheet statistics was limited. In formulating the guidelines in respect of balance-sheet accounts and revaluation, adequate time should be

allowed for careful and thorough consideration and discussion of the questions which are likely to arise when this work is undertaken. It was suggested that in starting to compile balance-sheet data national offices might wish to give priority to the accounts of financial institutions.

D. Statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth

27. The Commission discussed statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth based on documents E/CN.3/399 and Add.1, E/CN.3/400 and E/CN.3/415. Documents E/CN.3/399 and Add.1 presented a study of national practices in this area of statistics, including the inquiries undertaken, the items of data sought and compiled and the classification used in tabulations. Document E/CN.3/400 set out a draft system of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth which is complementary to the systems of national accounts and balances; it dealt with the objectives, scope and character of the draft system, its relationships to the SNA and MPS, the proposed definitions and classifications of the statistical units and of flows, and tabulations. Document E/CN.3/415 gave the comments and conclusions of the first meeting of an expert group concerning the proposed system.

28. The Commission emphasized the importance of work on statistics of the distribution of income and consumption in the case of both developed and developing countries. These data are needed in dealing with a wide range of social and economic problems, but do not exist in the case of a number of developing countries and fall far short of requirements in the case of many developed countries.

29. The study of national practices in document E/CN.3/399 should be designed so that it will be of assistance to countries in starting or improving their income distribution and related statistics. To enhance the values of the study for this purpose, it should discuss the methods of combining and integrating basic statistics from a number of sources in order to estimate coherent data on the distribution of income, consumption and wealth. The sources of basic data, the methods of estimation and the estimates obtained should be dealt with in depth in the case of a few countries with advanced practices, but always bearing in mind the particular needs and problems of developing countries. It is also desirable to use the same approach in the analysis of other aspects of national practices.

30. The Commission commended the attempt made in document E/CN.3/400 to formulate a system of accounts in respect of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth that is complementary to the SNA and MPS. The accounts proposed would furnish a useful means of organizing and articulating the statistics and linking the complementary system with the national accounts and balances, which enhances the analytical values of the data. The definition of certain flows of the complementary system must, however, differ from that of the national accounts and balances because of the far greater difficulties of estimating micro data on the distribution of income and consumption than the macro data of the SNA or MPS. The desirability of treating transactions in the same way as households view them also contributes to these differences. In this connexion, however, it was suggested that where differences existed, the possibility of modifying the present SNA should be examined. It has often been

found necessary to leave the institutional population out of the statistics because of their lower order of priority and the difficulties of collection of the data. It was noted that statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth form an important part of the proposed system of social statistics.

31. It was agreed that data in constant prices should be included in the complementary system, but with a lower order of priority than data in current prices. It was also pointed out that the problems were more complicated than in other constant-price work and would need considerably fuller treatment than in document E/CN.3/400.

32. While the system should include statistics on the distribution of wealth, these data should be assigned a far lower order of priority than data on the distribution of income and consumption, since it would in any case not be possible to formulate definitions and classifications for wealth statistics until guidelines have been adopted for balance sheets. But this should not hold up work on the distribution of income and consumption.

33. The Commission felt that the number of suggested tables should be kept to a minimum and that the section of the guidelines devoted to the tabulations of the system should include a discussion of the uses to which the various data can be put. It was recommended that the general discussion of the uses of the data of the complementary system in document E/CN.3/400 should also be expanded considerably. The suggestion was made that the guidelines in respect of tables should consist of a core of basic tables and indications as to the kinds of tables that it would be useful to add in order to satisfy certain requirements. It was thought that additional series of data should be included in the tables in respect of the income of individuals and per capita income and consumption.

34. The Commission considered that the guidelines should include a discussion of the methodology of dealing with a number of problems which arise in gathering and compiling data on the distribution of income and consumption and related statistics. Sample household surveys are the primary means of gathering relevant data, particularly in the developing countries. Such surveys also permit the estimation of the total margin of uncertainty, and it is important that this possibility should be fully taken into consideration. Moreover, attention should be drawn generally to the desirability of compiling information on the validity of basic data by the use of cross-checks. The problems involved in the definition of the income-recipient unit should also be more fully discussed. These include alternative definitions of the family, the reconstruction of the family unit when its composition changes over time and the presentation of classifications based on the individual rather than the family as the income-recipient unit.

35. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 7 (XVI).)

E. Balance-of-payments statistics

36. The Commission discussed a report of the International Monetary Fund (E/CN.3/403), reviewing developments in the Fund's work on balance-of-payments statistics since its last session. The report explained changes made in the

Fund's balance-of-payments presentation to account for the allocation of special drawing rights (SDRs) in January 1970 and for country holdings of SDRs, and explained related changes in the reserve movements entries for countries' transactions with the Fund to record directly increases or decreases in countries' Reserve Positions in the Fund or in their use of Fund credit. The report referred to the work that has been done to seek consistency between the Fund's Balance of Payments Manual and the rest-of-the-world account in the SNA. A revision of the Manual to give effect to changes made for this purpose is in process.

37. The Commission expressed the wish that the revision of the Manual be completed before its next session. It also requested that, if complete reconciliation between the Manual and the SNA were not achieved, the appropriate links should be clearly shown.

F. Statistics and prices and quantities

38. For purposes of the discussion of a system of quantity and price statistics which fits into the framework of the national accounts and balances, the Commission had documents E/CN.3/401 and E/CN.3/402 before it. Document E/CN.3/401 dealt with the scope, framework, series and classification of the proposed system; document E/CN.3/402 concerned methods of collecting and compiling quantity and price statistics.

39. The Commission stressed the importance of formulating guidelines in respect of a system of quantity and price statistics in view of the uses to which these series are put in economic and social analysis. It had to be recognized that there were difficulties in achieving international comparability in this field. The international guidelines should be framed to assist countries in improving and expanding their national statistics in this field and, above all, in determining national priorities for these improvements; in this way, the guidelines will help in extending the comparability of the data reported to international organizations.

40. The Commission considered that the documents before it outlined a good and useful system of quantity and price statistics but that much work remained to be done in respect of a number of aspects of the system. Bringing these statistics together in a national accounting framework would enhance the value of the data for statistical and analytical purposes. Further study and elaboration were required in respect of the following aspects of the proposed guidelines:

- (i) It would be useful to extend the scope of the system to include quantity and price indexes in respect of direct inputs into production and to include the valuation of outputs at factor income.
- (ii) The proposals in respect of the order of priority to be assigned to various series should be more specific. It was suggested that indexes in respect of the distributive trades, financial institutions, consultative and other similar services should be assigned a very low priority.

- (iii) More attention should be given to the problems of including traditional price indexes in the system; this may affect the priority and frequency to be attached to current-weighted price indexes.
- (iv) The discussion of index number problems, e.g., aggregation, weighting, the use of these indexes and the choice of the formula, should be amplified.
- (v) The discussion of the measurement of government and private non-profit services in constant prices and of quality changes should be fuller and more definitive.

41. The inclusion of proposals in respect of the collection of basic data in the guidelines was questioned. It was suggested that national statistical offices would find it more helpful to have full descriptions of the practices of a selection of countries with experience in this field, preferably representing developing as well as advanced countries. It would be helpful if these descriptions also covered traditional index numbers. Such material should be included in the proposed manual on national accounting in constant prices and price and quantity statistics.

CHAPTER III

A SYSTEM OF DEMOGRAPHIC, MANPOWER AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

42. The Commission discussed the character of, and programme of work on, a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics based on documents E/CN.3/394 and E/CN.3/416. Document E/CN.3/394, which was prepared by Professor Richard Stone as consultant to the Secretariat, outlined a system consisting essentially of (i) demographic accounts in matrix form on human populations covering stocks (status or circumstances of people at a point of time) and flows (changes in status or circumstance between two points of time); (ii) economic accounts on social services and production; and (iii) distribution accounts on income, consumption, wealth and social benefits. The demographic accounts related to the population and its education, employment, health, delinquency, social mobility, etc.; the social service accounts concerned educational, health and other services and were linked to the demographic accounts in order to relate costs to the human numbers served, as well as to the national economic accounts; and the distribution accounts, in conjunction with the preceding accounts, provided the basis for relating benefits to costs. Document E/CN.3/416, the report of the first session of an expert group on the subject, in addition to commenting on the proposals in document E/CN.3/394, dealt with the objectives, scope and character of a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics and the programme of work on this subject.

43. The Commission welcomed the undertaking of work on a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics and endorsed the aims of such a system, as set out in paragraph 4 of document E/CN.3/416. It was emphasized that the objectives are of great importance both to makers of social and economic policies and to those responsible for improving statistics. There are serious gaps in the social statistics of most countries and the available data are often too inconsistent in definition or classification to be correlated for purposes of detecting, describing and dealing with social problems. The delineation of a coherent body of these statistics will be of considerable assistance in identifying and remedying these deficiencies. The building of a system will also help in co-ordinating international guidelines and programmes in respect of statistics. The Commission was pleased to note the interest and co-operation of the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization in the work on the system.

44. The Commission considered that the proposals in document E/CN.3/394 made a major contribution to the framework of a system. The three major aspects of a system - (i) data in respect of the attributes and circumstances of the population and changes in these conditions, (ii) the services, costs and resources of social organizations, and (iii) the distribution of these services and of income, consumption and wealth over the population - were covered in the proposals; these three aspects of social statistics were related one with another. Furthermore, the social service, distribution and manpower accounts were linked with the national accounts and balances. The matrices in which the accounts on human stocks and flows were incorporated provided powerful tests of the coherence and consistency of the data and effective means of organizing data in respect of the

past and present for purposes of making projections into the future. Information could also be compiled from the matrices as to status and circumstance at a point of time, the succession of states and the time spent in each state.

45. The Commission stressed that approaches to defining, organizing and presenting data in addition to that set out in document E/CN.3/394 would need to be included in the system. It was doubtful whether matrices could suitably accommodate all the types of data which should be included in the system, e.g., multiple cross-classification of series, data in respect of time budgets or certain social indicators; and indeed for many of the fields to be covered by the system, data on stocks - i.e., circumstances at a particular time - and on net flows (as opposed to gross flows shown by the matrices) would be sufficient. Nor would it be feasible or necessary to array all of the series of a system into sequences in time. The type and degree of integration which should, or could, be forged between series would vary from one body of data to another. Since the system should cover a wide range of data and be adaptable to societies at different stages of social and economic development, a less articulated framework would often be required for the system. In fact, the Commission felt that in developing the system, flexibility and adaptability to particular national circumstances were vital. Much would also depend on whether countries had individual data systems, or would have to rely on basic data from longitudinal surveys, retrospective questions or inventories of the situation at a given point of time. With this in mind, the Commission urged that it would be desirable also to prepare simplified versions of the system for use in situations where the full system would be over-demanding in respect of data of adequate validity.

46. The Commission considered that the approaches adopted for collecting, defining, organizing and presenting the data of the system should contribute to the following aims: (i) identification of the data required to describe social conditions and to deal with social problems in the case of diverse societies; (ii) organization of the data into a consistent and coherent whole; (iii) delineation of the significant links and interactions between the various series; and (iv) presentation of the data of the system so as to facilitate their use for a wide range of purposes. It is essential that series of the system should be consistent in concepts, definitions and classifications. The use of a set of common definitions and classifications in respect of selected attributes of persons and households would be the most valuable means of connecting up the various series. The gathering of many of the series of the system in respect of persons and households by means of integrated multi-purpose sample surveys or censuses of households would also be of considerable value in co-ordinating and interrelating these data especially in developing countries.

47. The Commission attached great importance to work on social indicators. National statistical offices are under great pressure to develop social statistics which related directly and immediately to social concerns of the general public and political authorities. Examples of series - that is, social indicators - which throw light on areas of social concern are those which would measure the adequacy of income, job satisfaction, opportunities to different income and social groups for the same level and quality of education, rates of violent crime and the impact of pollution on the comfort and safety of life. The construction of social indicators is often, for understandable reasons, given higher priority at the national level than the long-term work on other aspects of the system of demographic, manpower and social statistics. In view of the urgency of the development of social indicators in the national offices, the

Commission considered this phase of the work of equal priority with the development of the basic series, definitions and classifications. The work on these two phases should, therefore, go forward hand in hand and on a consistent and mutually compatible basis.

48. The Commission decided that the next immediate step in the work on a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics should be the preparation of a study of the series and social indicators - items of data, concepts, definitions and classifications - which should be included in the system. In this, as well as in all of the work on the system, special attention should be devoted to the circumstances and problems of the developing countries. The study would furnish the basis for defining the scope and content of the system. It would also provide the means for establishing the order of priority in which detailed work should be carried on in respect of definitions, characteristic classifications and tabulations of the various bodies of data of the system and in respect of the common classifications of the system. Furthermore, the study should be of assistance to national statistical offices in making an inventory of the available social statistics in their country and in formulating plans for filling gaps in these series and improving the coherence and presentation of the data. The Commission agreed that the work on the various parts of the system and its framework should proceed hand in hand.

49. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 8 (XVI).)

CHAPTER IV

CO-ORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES

50. The Commission considered the problems of co-ordination and integration of international statistical activities of the United Nations system under the following three headings: (a) the most suitable approach to be followed for the preparation and presentation of the integrated five-year plans on international statistical programmes; (b) the most important statistical policy trends and high-priority programmes for the period 1971-1975; and (c) co-ordination of electronic data processing within the United Nations system.

51. The Commission had before it the following documents: "Consultations between a working group of the Statistical Commission and representatives of the United Nations and the specialized agencies" (E/CN.3/392), "International statistical programmes, 1971-1975" (E/CN.3/393 and Add.1, Add.2), together with several background papers concerning the Directory of International Statistics (informal Secretariat drafts, English version). Available also for information were copies of the report of the Auditor-General of Canada on "Electronic data processing in the United Nations family of organizations" (A/8072), of the special report by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the same subject (E/4893) and of Economic and Social Council resolution 1551 (XLIX) on inter-agency co-operation relating to computers.

A. International statistical programmes: the approach towards co-ordination and integration

52. The Commission took note of the consultations between the working group of the Statistical Commission and the representatives of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, which took place in Geneva from 10 to 13 March 1969, and on 7 October 1970, pursuant to resolution 1306 (XLIV) of the Economic and Social Council. The Commission expressed satisfaction at the progress made during these consultations and reaffirmed the position taken by the working group that:

(a) The Commission, in accordance with its terms of reference, seeks to bring about a fully co-ordinated and integrated statistical programme of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Such co-ordination and integration are essential if close interrelation is to be achieved among the programmes of the international organizations, and between these programmes and those of the national statistical offices.

(b) The Commission recognized that its influence must be exercised by means of review, comment and advice and not by budgetary or other administrative controls over the statistical activities of all the organizations concerned.

53. The Commission welcomed the fact that for the first time the document on the international statistical programmes (E/CN.3/393) was presented to it as a formal joint report prepared by the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the

statistical services of the specialized agencies. The Commission felt that both the presentation and the conceptual outline of the five-year programmes and the type of background material contained in the proposed Directory constituted very considerable progress towards the aims set out by the Commission at its fifteenth session and by the subsequent working group meeting. In particular, the Commission expressed approval of:

(a) The identification in E/CN.3/393 of a number of major statistical policy alternatives for use in the planning of international statistical activities and the grouping of programmes within these broad statistical policies;

(b) The envisaged provision in the Directory of a substantially increased amount of background information on the organization, responsibility and functioning of the statistical services within the United Nations system, including listings of the current output of international statistics both in terms of statistical series compiled by each organization and the statistical standards adopted.

54. In considering the type of document needed for a fruitful discussion of international programmes, the Commission emphasized that the reports from organizations should be policy-oriented and concentrate on major strategies of statistical development. That is, the reports describing statistical programmes should be organized around the major economic and social issues of concern to Member States, as reflected in the interests of international organizations.

55. The Commission recognized that, because of the internal procedures governing the programmes of individual organizations, statistical programmes for the period immediately ahead - say, the next two years - would be too firm to allow a major determining influence by the Commission. The Commission, therefore, agreed that the main role of the discussion of international statistical programmes was to comment and advise on plans for between two and five years ahead. These plans would range from fairly well worked out projects to more tentative undertakings. The Commission felt it could and should play a constructive role in considering these medium-term plans.

56. For this purpose the Commission should have before it a document along the lines of E/CN.3/393 but with some additional information. As regards programmes for the next two years, a listing of major programmes would be needed, together with a brief statement on (a) the purpose, (b) the timing, and (c) the resources required for each programme. For programmes relating to from two to five years ahead, again a brief statement of purpose would be needed, together with an indication - if possible - of the timing and resources required for the programme, and the priority attached to it. The Commission, of course, recognized that it would often not be practicable to give details of resources required so far ahead.

57. The representatives of the statistical services of the organizations concerned assured the Commission that their organizations would continue to co-operate fully in the provision of suitable materials for the development of the five-year international statistical programmes, including estimates of resources required for their programme elements. They believed that the review, comment and advice of the Commission on their long-term plans would be of assistance and encouragement for the development and discussion of their statistical programmes

within their own organizations. The consultations with the working group of the Commission proved to be very helpful in clarifying the issues of integration and co-ordination of programmes. The latest developments within the various organizations for the adoption of longer-term plans for their entire range of activities will be of considerable advantage in meeting the needs of the Commission for long-term planning.

58. The Commission emphasized that the improved co-ordination of statistical programmes aimed at in these new arrangements also needs a major effort at national levels. At present, there is in many countries insufficient co-ordination between the statistical authorities and other departments of government. The consequence is that national representatives to decision-making meetings of the international organizations often agree to programmes with statistical implications which have not previously been agreed with the statistical authorities in their own countries. The Commission, therefore, emphasized the importance for Member States to seek improved procedures for ensuring that statistical matters were dealt with in a co-ordinated manner.

59. The Commission requested that national statistical offices be informed at the earliest possible time, directly or through the Statistical Office of the United Nations, of new statistical programmes or important changes in existing statistical programmes of all the organizations in the United Nations family.

60. The Commission agreed that, to perform its proper role for integrating and co-ordinating international statistical programmes, it needed much more background material than had been available in the past. In this context, the Commission received with satisfaction the proposed Directory covering the four parts as indicated in E/CN.3/393. Subject only to minor comments, the Commission felt that this Directory was along the right lines and expressed the hope that it could be published before the seventeenth session of the Commission even if in stages or in a preliminary form.

61. The Commission stressed the need for increased activities to develop statistics in Latin America. The Commission felt that increased efforts to this end should be made by the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Latin America, in co-operation with the Inter-American Statistical Institute.

62. The Commission considered that there is a need for increased help for the developing countries and for improved co-ordination in the technical assistance activities in statistics under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The latest developments in the organization of UNDP activities, in particular the heavier emphasis on country programmes, are expected to lead to such increased co-ordination.

63. The Commission appreciated the co-operative approach that was evident on matters of co-ordination at its current session. It commended the work of the Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the Directory and the "International statistical programmes, 1971-1975" (E/CN.3/393 and Add.1, Add.2).

64. The Commission agreed that the working group established under ECOSOC resolution 1306 (XLIV) should be continued and its activities concentrated on the review of all major issues in the area of co-ordination and integration, and on matters of the co-ordination of electronic data processing, where the interests of the national statistical offices in the future work of the international organizations are of particular importance.

65. The Commission felt that the discussion of the international statistical programmes should be a high-priority item on the agenda of its next session. The review of statistical policy trends and programmes and related questions on co-ordination constitutes an extremely important function of the Commission. At the next session of the Commission, the agenda should be so concentrated as to provide the time needed for the discussion of these topics, within the two-week time span envisaged for each session.

66. At the 288th meeting on 14 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 1 (XVI).)

B. International statistical strategies and high-priority programmes, 1971-1975

67. The Commission had a thorough discussion of the broad strategic goals and of the high-priority programmes in statistics of the organizations within the United Nations system, submitted for its consideration in sections II, III and IV of documents E/CN.3/393 and Add.1. The secretariats of the organizations noted the detailed points made on the items of the international statistical programme for 1971-1975. The Commission, in addition to the detailed points made on several programmes, gave certain broad indications on the programme for 1971-1975 as follows.

68. The Commission noted the great increase in the demand for improved statistics being experienced in all parts of the world and the pressures this involved for the international organizations. This made it doubly important to be clear about priorities, and the Commission paid consistent attention to this throughout its discussion of international statistical programmes. While the Commission agreed with the five major statistical policy trends presented in the report, it considered it necessary in future also to present programmes in terms of their relation to broad economic and social strategies. In other words, statistical programmes should be described in their bearing on, for example, policies on economic growth, full employment, income distribution, educational opportunities, social and economic disparities, and so forth.

69. The Commission agreed that policy in relation to recurrent statistical activities should involve a critical review. Such a review should provide for the exclusion of outdated activities, as well as changes in the priority of certain activities, which, though deserving to be continued, need a lesser emphasis with the lapse of time. In this way, room could be found for the inclusion of new priority projects.

70. The Commission was very conscious that the economic and social development programmes of the developing nations made particularly important calls on the improvement of statistics and on the building up of historical series of data and that it was, therefore, necessary to give heavy emphasis in the international statistical programmes for 1971-1975 to the particular needs of developing countries, including increased technical assistance in statistics. Because of the particular needs for assistance in electronic data processing, the functions in training and other forms of help envisaged by the future International Computing Centre in Geneva were considered to be of great importance. Appreciation was expressed to the Statistical Office of the United Nations for its work in the statistical institutes in Rabat, Tokyo and Kampala.

71. The Commission realized that an extremely important element of co-ordination in international statistical activities consists in the standardization of concepts, definitions and classifications. The elaboration of the basic series, classifications and concepts of the systems of national accounts and also of social, demographic and manpower statistics is an example in this respect, since it covers the fields of activity of most of the organizations within the United Nations system.

72. The Commission considered that the effective organization of national statistical services continues to be one of the major concerns of many countries, both developed and developing. The Commission agreed that this question should be included as a high-priority item in the work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations. In particular, the Commission suggested that the Handbook of Statistical Organization ^{1/} issued in 1954 by the Statistical Office should be up-dated to serve the needs of the developing and developed nations in reviewing their statistical services in the 1970s. In view of the complexity of the problem of statistical organization, the Commission thought it necessary to have a seminar organized along the lines of the International Seminar on Statistical Organization, held in Ottawa in 1952. It was also considered that this being a topic of actual and direct interest to the directors of national statistical services, the question of organization of national statistical services should be included in the agenda of the seventeenth session of the Commission.

73. The Commission also noted the growing interest in a number of countries in statistics related to the costs and benefits of specific government programmes, and also in the establishment of management information systems appropriate for government administration. It was felt that this was an important subject for future study, and that it should be included in the work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations.

74. At the 289th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 2 (XVI).)

C. Co-ordination of developments in the electronic data processing (EDP) field

75. On the subject of the co-ordination of the EDP work of the United Nations and specialized agencies, the attention of the Commission was drawn (E/CN.3/393/Add.2) to the proposals contained in the report prepared by the Auditor-General

^{1/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1954.XVII.7.

of Canada on "Electronic data processing in the United Nations family of organizations" (A/8072). The Commission also had available to it a special report by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination on the same subject (E/4893).

76. The Commission noted that the proposals made in these documents were currently being considered by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Of particular interest to the Commission was the proposal to establish an International Computing Centre (ICC) to serve a number of organizations of the United Nations family. The decisions on this proposal would have implications for the statistical work of the United Nations itself and for the co-ordination of statistical work within the United Nations family. The Commission considered that its responsibility for advising ECOSOC on these questions would require it to pay close attention to the methods of implementing the proposals. Following the decisions to be taken in the near future by ECOSOC and the General Assembly, the Commission wished to be informed of the methods of implementing the proposals and of the changes that would result in the Statistical Office of the United Nations. It wished also to know the arrangements foreseen for computer work at United Nations Headquarters in the event that the ICC is established in Geneva. It was felt that it would be necessary to ensure the maintenance of adequate computer facilities at United Nations Headquarters. The view was also expressed that the ICC could prove of considerable value to the developing countries and that it should, therefore, examine ways of providing special facilities for developing countries in relation to the supply of data, access to its data bank, computer work and training.

77. At this stage, the main concern of the Commission was with two aspects of the proposed computer arrangements: their bearing on the co-ordination of international statistical programmes and the way they would affect national statistical organization. As regards co-ordination, the Commission emphasized that international data banks were one of the most important ways of achieving better co-ordination among statistical programmes and of ensuring compatibility of definitions, concepts and classifications. Since data banks were now being developed by several organizations of the United Nations family and by other international organizations, it was most important that these should be well co-ordinated. The Commission also emphasized the implications these international data banks would have for national statistical offices. On the one hand, they would affect the supply of data from Member States to the international organizations and, on the other hand, they would provide extensive sources of data of interest and importance to Member States. The Commission felt that prompt and efficient access to the individual data banks by national statistical offices was an essential aim in building up future arrangements.

78. Because of the importance the Commission attached to these aspects of EDP facilities, it was agreed that the Commission's working group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination should have an early meeting to consider (a) aspects of co-ordination of the various international data banks, and (b) ways of ensuring that the national statistical offices have prompt and efficient access to the international data banks. Moreover, the Commission attached importance to having an opportunity of discussing this subject again fully at a relatively early stage, and from this point of view would find it useful to have its next meeting early in 1972.

79. At the 289th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 3 (XVI).)

CHAPTER V

CENTRAL DIRECTORIES OF ESTABLISHMENTS AND ENTERPRISES

80. The Commission discussed the objectives, concepts and methods of constructing and maintaining central registers of economic units, based on document E/CN.3/414.

81. The Commission considered that central registers of economic units played a very important role in the collection, processing and tabulation of statistics of economic units and in the co-ordination of these data, and that they were in fact one of the highest priorities in the development of coherent and efficient statistical systems. Although the preparation and maintenance of registers were expensive operations, the benefits were very substantial, and the Commission was unanimous in the importance it attached to them. The registers should be designed to eliminate or avoid duplication between various inquiries in the construction of lists of units, and to foster comparability and continuity in the data that are gathered and compiled. The registers could also be valuable for administrative purposes, and some countries were developing them to serve administrative and statistical functions at the same time; this had the added advantage of enabling statistical data to be extracted directly from administrative sources. However, in attempting this, account needs to be taken of the confidentiality of statistical and administrative information.

82. The members of the Commission exchanged experience and views on the subject of central registers. It was emphasized that there were significant differences between the statistically advanced and less advanced countries in respect of the sources of information and methods which could be used for those purposes, primarily because of the much greater proportion of small and household-type units and the lack of suitable information from governmental administrative sources in the case of the latter countries. Attention was called to the low costs and complete coverage that could be achieved by using certain governmental administrative sources (e.g., value added tax registers, social security records) in building and maintaining registers in the case of a number of statistically advanced countries. It was emphasized that in considering whether or not certain types of units, e.g., small or agricultural units, hierarchies of units or items of information, should be covered in registers, the value of having the information should be weighed against the costs and difficulties involved. In the case of some countries, difficult questions of the confidentiality of statistical information arose in putting registers to use.

83. The Commission emphasized that the construction and maintenance of a central register was a large-scale and complex task, which required careful and systematic planning and detailing of the composition and content of the register in the light of the uses to which it was to be put, of each step in building and maintaining the register, and of the sources of information, equipment, data storage and procedures for these purposes. The exchange of information between national statistical offices concerning practices, experience and problems in building and maintaining registers would therefore be of considerable value.

84. The Commission agreed that the preparation and circulation of a handbook and of detailed descriptions of national practices and experience would provide a valuable means of exchanging information and views concerning the purposes, construction and maintenance of central registers. The handbook should provide an analysis of this subject based on the more detailed descriptions in respect of the central registers of selected countries with advanced practices. It would be essential to have the co-operation of the national statistical authorities of the selected countries in preparing the detailed description. The handbook and the national descriptions should cover in depth the procedures and costs of creating and maintaining the registers and the problems of administration involved, in addition to the question of aims, concepts and contents, records and equipment and sources and methods of building and maintaining registers, which are dealt with in outline form in document E/CN.3/414. The handbook should discuss these questions in the light of the requirements and circumstances of the statistically advanced and less advanced countries.

85. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 10 (XVI).)

CHAPTER VI

THE 1973 WORLD PROGRAMME OF INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS

86. The Commission discussed the proposals for the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, based on documents E/CN.3/404/Rev.1, E/CN.3/405 and Add.1 and E/CN.3/406 and Add.1. Document E/CN.3/404/Rev.1 defined the objectives of the 1973 World Programme and indicated the appropriate methods of carrying out inquiries as part of the Programme, based on the existing international recommendations in respect of industrial statistics. Document E/CN.3/405 specified a standard list of selected products and materials for which production and consumption data should be compiled. Document E/CN.3/406 was the first draft of a manual on the organization and conduct of the national inquiries, focusing on the problems faced by countries at an early stage of statistical development.

87. The Commission considered that the documents on the whole provided suitable guidance in respect of inquiries which are to be undertaken as part of the 1973 World Programme, and stressed the importance of periodically undertaking comprehensive industrial inquiries of this kind. The following suggestions were made for elaborating, modifying or supplementing the recommendations in respect of the inquiries of the 1973 World Programme.

- (i) It was necessary to amplify and clarify the application of the definition of the statistical unit in certain situations, e.g., non-industrial services rendered by establishments, industrial activities carried on by households, and multi-unit enterprises. It might be desirable to allow for use of the kind-of-activity unit.
- (ii) It was desirable to allow flexibility in the criteria for valuing stocks and expenditures in fixed assets, taking account of the accounting records of respondents.
- (iii) Man-days worked would be a more practical concept than man-hours worked in the case of developing countries.
- (iv) It was emphasized that sampling methods could be extremely effective in this field. Attention was drawn to the need to revise the section of the recommendations dealing with sampling methods which, as they stood, were inadequate and did not expose the full possibilities of sampling methods for the inquiries. In this connexion, reference should be made in the document to the very pertinent material contained in the publication entitled Recommendations for the Preparation of Sample Survey Reports. 2/

2/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 64.XVII.7.

That document, which was basically the work of the Commission's Sub-Commission on Statistical Sampling as revised by a group of experts in 1963, would be extremely useful, particularly for the developing countries, for work in this field.

- (v) The guidelines should include a discussion of the methodology of gathering data for small units.
- (vi) It would be useful to prepare a technical supplement, including concrete examples, concerning the various stages in planning and conducting industrial inquiries in order to assist countries with limited experience in this field.

88. Members of the Commission indicated that they had additional suggestions which they would submit to the Secretariat in writing.

89. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 11 (XVI).)

CHAPTER VII

STATISTICS OF THE DISTRIBUTIVE TRADES AND SERVICES

90. The Commission discussed statistics of the distributive trades and services based on document E/CN.3/407. This document was a first draft of a background study on national practices in this field prepared in response to a request of the Commission. An attempt was made in the document to evaluate the current international recommendations in respect of statistics of the distributive trades and services, which were adopted by the ninth session of the Commission, in the light of recent national practice and experience.

91. The Commission felt that the document discussed most of the problems which national statistical offices were encountering in work on statistics of the distributive trades and services and provided valuable information for purposes of up-dating and revising international recommendations. The Commission considered that a number of questions required further study in order to prepare a revised set of recommendations. The following questions were raised and suggestions were made:

- (i) It was desirable to deal separately with the statistics of the distributive trades and statistics of the services. The distributive trades play a very different role in the economy from that of the services; their cost-structure, operations and organization also differ.
- (ii) It was important to consider statistics of retail trade from the point of view of their use in describing the flow of goods to households.
- (iii) The concepts, definitions, classifications and terminology used in statistics of the distributive trades and services and the priorities assigned to these data should fit in with those of the national accounts.
- (iv) The list of items of data to be gathered and statistics to be published set out in annex A of document E/CN.3/407 was too ambitious and should be modified in the light of national practices.

92. The Commission noted that the tabular analysis of national practices set out in annex B of the document would be revised in the light of information received after the document was prepared. It was, therefore, recommended that national statistical offices should provide as much information as possible for this purpose.

93. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 12 (XVI).)

CHAPTER VIII

EXTERNAL TRADE STATISTICS

A. Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC)

94. The Commission received a report on the classification of commodities in international trade by Broad Economic Categories (BEC) (E/CN.3/408). This classification had been drawn up in accordance with the wishes expressed by the Commission at its previous session. A number of delegations indicated their intention of conveying to the Secretariat points of detail to which they wished to draw attention before the classification was completed.

95. The Commission was unanimous in considering that the classification met the requirements which it had specified at previous sessions. It recommended that the classification should be published and distributed for international use as soon as possible. The Commission recognized that countries might wish to adapt the classification for national purposes in different ways to meet national requirements. Consequently, the classification was not to be regarded as a "standard" classification in the same sense as was, for example, the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). The Commission noted that the classification by broad economic categories would be used by the Statistical Office of the United Nations for the summarization of data on international trade.

96. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously adopted a resolution. (For the text, see chapter XIV, resolution 9 (XVI).)

B. Revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)

97. The Commission received a report on the progress of work on the revision of the SITC (E/CN.409). Note was taken of the progress made to date. It was noted that the expert group on the revision tended to favour methods of accommodating changes with a minimum of disturbance to the existing structure, particularly in view of the importance of maintaining historical continuity. The Commission felt that essential changes would not necessarily be foregone in favour of historical continuity and that each change should be evaluated on its merits. The Commission recommended that the close link between the SITC and the BTN should be maintained. It was also felt that one objective was to provide a commodity nomenclature which would be useful for analytical purposes other than international trade and which would be closely linked to the SITC, Revised. It was felt that efforts should be made to complete the revision by the time of the seventeenth session of the Commission.

98. The Commission also took note of the preparatory work being done by the Statistical Office of the United Nations, the Secretariat of the Conference of European Statisticians and the Secretariat of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance on producing a satisfactory translation key between the SITC, Revised, and the revised COMEA trade classification.

C. External trade statistics analysed by mode of transport

99. The Commission received a report concerning the need for data analysing international trade by mode of transportation (E/CN.3/410). It was noted that much of the required information was being collected on the customs documents filed by exporters and importers. These documents in many countries showed (a) mode of transport, (b) port of loading or unloading, (c) nationality of carrier, (d) description of merchandise, (e) net quantity of merchandise, (f) value of merchandise. The problem involved was that of processing the data in order to obtain arrays of trade statistics distinguishing goods moving by (i) air, (ii) sea and (iii) land transport. It was noted that many countries would have difficulty in supplying quantities in gross weights. Moreover, the cost of processing the large volume of data was likely to be high and consequently study should be made of the likely cost in relation to the purposes which the material would serve. It was felt also that some flexibility should be introduced so that countries might undertake this work for groups of commodities which were important in their trade. The Commission recommended that the Secretary-General should continue his study of this subject and should investigate the possibility of collecting international trade data, analysed by air, ocean and land transport, for processing in the International Trade Statistics Centre of the United Nations.

CHAPTER IX

DEMOGRAPHIC AND HOUSING STATISTICS

A. Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system

100. The Commission discussed the principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system based on documents E/CN.3/411, E/CN.3/411/Annex and E/CN.3/411/Add.1. Documents E/CN.3/411 and E/CN.3/411/Annex presented a detailed revision and extension, with illustrative tables, of the Principles for a Vital Statistics System ^{3/} adopted in 1953. Document E/CN.3/411/Add.1 contained the comments of the Population Commission and of the working group on Social Demography (Division of Social Affairs, United Nations Office at Geneva) on E/CN.3/411, together with supplementary notes by the Statistical Office.

101. The Commission emphasized the importance of collecting accurate, comprehensive vital statistics and noted the need to improve such statistics in both developed and developing countries. Accordingly, it welcomed the presentation of the "Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system" as an important step in the effort to develop adequate vital statistics throughout the world.

102. The Commission emphasized that the system of priorities presented in the "Principles" would not be equally suited to every country and that, in particular, countries that were just beginning to collect vital statistics might be expressly cautioned not to attempt establishment of a complete system all at once.

103. The Commission recognized that, even among those items given first priority in the "Principles", not every item was of equal importance in every country and that the system of priorities proposed in the document itself was of a very general nature only.

104. It was suggested that the Secretariat might undertake more detailed consideration of the role of population registers in the collection of demographic data and also that it might investigate further the opportunities offered by programmes of "data linkage", mentioned in paragraph 414 of the "Principles".

105. The Commission approved the "Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system" and requested that they be augmented by an index and glossary of terms and that they be published in English, French, Russian and Spanish and given wide dissemination throughout the world.

106. At the 290th meeting, on 15 October 1970, the Commission unanimously approved a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. (For the text, see chapter XV.)

^{3/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1953.XVII.8.

B. Improvement of migration statistics

107. The Commission discussed document E/CN.3/412 and took note of the need for more statistical data on migration and for improvements in the techniques of collecting such data, both in the developed and the developing countries, concerning both internal and international migration.

108. The Commission also noted that, despite increased interest in certain aspects of migration - such as urbanization, the "brain drain", refugee and nomadic movements, and the expansion of international tourism - the international standards on the collection of statistics on migration had not been changed since their adoption in 1953.

109. In consequence, the Commission recommended that a review be undertaken of the present situation in regard, first, to information on international migration: that is, the methods of collection, types of data collected, definitions employed and tabulations published - an undertaking which would, in effect, constitute an up-dating of selected parts of Problems of Migration Statistics 4/ and of the Analytical Bibliography of International Migration Statistics, Selected Countries, 1925 - 1950. 5/ The Commission further recommended with reference to international migration that, following this review of the present situation, the Secretariat should consider convening one or more groups of international experts (perhaps at regional meetings) to consider the steps to be taken in amending or extending the 1953 recommendations and in widening the United Nations programme of collection and dissemination of national data.

110. Concerning internal migration, the Commission felt that the collection of data on this topic might not yet be an appropriate subject for world-wide recommendations because of the diversity of regional and even of national situations. However, the Commission felt that expert consideration of possible techniques (e.g., population register systems, multi-round sample surveys) and of the types of information of particular regional significance might be an appropriate activity to be undertaken by regional meetings. It, therefore, recommended that the subject of internal migration be studied by the Secretariat with a view possibly to convening a meeting of experts on this subject in 1972.

C. Progress reports on demographic and housing statistics

✓ 111. The Commission considered progress reports (E/CN.3/413 and Add.1) on the improvement of demographic and housing statistics. An account was given of the World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics, the 1970 World Population Census Programme, demographic sample surveys and housing and related statistics.

112. The Commission expressed its satisfaction with the progress achieved in carrying out those programmes. There was, however, regret that some countries had postponed their censuses because of shortage of funds. The hope was expressed that ways might be found to assist these countries.

4/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1950.XIII.1.

5/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1956.XIII.1.

113. In view of the fundamental nature of population census data for long-term planning, the Commission recommended that all possible assistance be given to these countries through the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and the United Nations Development Programme.

CHAPTER X

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES^{6/}

114. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of the annex to resolution 402 B (XIII) of the Economic and Social Council, in which procedures are recommended in connexion with the establishment of priorities of the work programme, the Commission approved the following programmes and projects of high priority.

A. Continuing projects of high priority

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

(2) Co-ordination of statistical activities of the United Nations and specialized agencies to ensure a co-operative, harmonized and non-duplicative system for the collection, processing, compilation and publication 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, processing, analysis and dissemination, paying special attention to the needs of the developing countries.

(4) Maintenance and development of arrangements for regional consultations and for regional advisers on statistical questions, especially in connexion with the statistical needs of the developing countries, in co-operation with the specialized agencies and other institutions concerned.

(5) 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 work on economic projections and programming and similar efforts envisaged by the resolutions of the General Assembly.

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

(7) Improvement of 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.

^{6/} For a statement of the financial implications, see annex II.

(8) Strengthening of the International Trade Statistics Centre to enable it to provide data on request, without delay, to Governments and other institutions.

(9) Development of computer programming, processing and dissemination of international statistics by electronic data processing methods; gradual extension of electronic data processing methods, and the assembly of data banks for international statistics in co-ordination with the specialized agencies; expansion of the current set of generalized computer programmes.

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

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

(11) Activities in connexion with the services to the Statistical Commission and ad hoc advisory groups assembled from time to time; provision of statistical services for the Committee on Contributions, the Expert Committee on Post Adjustments and other bodies of the United Nations.

B. Ad hoc projects of high priority

115. The Commission considered that, in accordance with resolutions 402 B (XIII), annex, and 1264 (XLIII) of the Economic and Social Council, it was desirable to state that it attached particular importance to substantial progress being made before the seventeenth session of the Commission on the following projects (references given after individual items refer to relevant paragraphs and/or resolutions in this report):

Planning and co-ordination of international statistics: organization

(1) Preparation, jointly with the other organizations of the United Nations system, for consideration by the Commission, of a concise policy-oriented document on an integrated five-year programme of international statistics (para. 54).

(2) Provision of services and documents required by the Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination, including those concerned with the review of international data processing activities (resolution 1).

(3) Preparation and publication of a Directory of International Statistics (para. 60).

(4) Preparation and publication of a revised Handbook of Statistical Organization 7/ (para. 72).

(5) Arrangement, if possible, with the help of the United Nations Development Programme, of a seminar on the organization of national statistical services (para. 72).

(6) Study of statistics related to the costs and benefits of specific government programmes and to management information systems appropriate for government administration (para. 73).

Electronic data processing

(7) Extension of computer applications designed to assist developing countries, including the provision of training facilities as part of the technical assistance programme (para. 76).

(8) Development of statistical data banks, including an increase in the number of the specific subject data bases and the study of the establishment of multi-subject data bases. Co-ordination of these developments with the corresponding data banks of the specialized agencies in their fields of activity. Study of methods of providing rapid access to the international data banks on economical terms by national statistical offices (para. 77).

7/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1954.XVII.7.

Economic statistics

(9) Publication and wide circulation of the study "Basic methodological rules for the compilation of the statistical balance of the national economy" (E/CN.3/396) (para. 15).

(10) Preparation and publication of a technical publication on the conceptual relationships between the revised SNA and MPS, including illustrations of the conversion of selected aggregates of the SNA to the corresponding aggregates of MPS and vice versa (para. 18).

(11) Preparation and publication of technical manuals on: (a) data in current prices on the production, income, outlay and capital finance accounts of the SNA; (b) national accounting in respect of the public sector; (c) national accounting in constant prices and quantity and price statistics; (d) household accounts and the distribution of income, consumption and wealth; (e) input-output tables and analysis and commodity balances and the SNA accounts on goods and services; (f) the flow-of-fund and balance-sheet accounts of the SNA; and (g) regional accounting (para. 7).

(12) Formulation of international guidelines on definitions, classifications and standard accounts and tables for the national and sector-balance-sheet and revaluation accounts of the new SNA (para.25).

(13) Completion of a comparative analysis of national practices on statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth; formulation of international guidelines on the concepts, definitions, classifications, tabulations and methods of an integrated system of these statistics needed to complement the systems of national accounts and balances (paras. 29-34, resolution 7).

(14) Formulation of international guidelines on the series, concepts, definitions, classifications and methodology of a system of statistics of prices and quantities needed to fit in with the systems of national accounts and balances (paras. 39-41).

(15) Formulation of concepts, definitions and classification for statistics of research, development and prospecting needed to fit in with the systems of national accounts and balances (paras. 8, 10).

(16) Formulation of the following classifications: (a) the cost structure of production and related aspects of the national accounts and balances according to function; (b) detailed purpose and activity classifications of the SNA in respect of government and private non profit bodies for use in a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics; and (c) an international standard classification of goods and services (para. 8).

(17) Preparation of a handbook on the objectives, content, construction and maintenance of central registers of economic units (para. 84).

(18) Continuation of the comparisons of the real products, prices and purchasing power of currencies of selected countries in order to develop, test and describe general comparison techniques.

(19) Continuation of the work concerning the preparation of the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, including the publication of a manual on the practical problems of conducting industrial inquiries (para. 87).

(20) Revision, with expert help, of the study Index Numbers of Industrial Production. 8/

(21) Preparation of a study of national practices and experience in distributive- and service-trade statistics and revision and extension of the existing international recommendations in this field (resolution 12).

(22) Compilation and publication of internationally comparable industrial data, including the annual publication of industrial commodity production statistics on a selective basis and of establishment-type statistics on production, employment and other major indicators of industrial activity and structure.

(23) Publication and dissemination of the classification of international trade by Board Economic Categories (BEC) and publication of statistics in accordance therewith (para. 95).

(24) Preparation of a general revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), Revised; consultation with the Customs Co-operation Council for determining the appropriate approach towards revision (para. 97).

(25) Study of external trade by mode of transport (para. 99).

Social and demographic Statistics

(26) Development of international guidelines for a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics including the basic series, social indicators, concepts and definitions, classifications, tabulations and frameworks of the system (para. 48, resolution 8).

(27) Further work in connexion with the 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes, including (1) development of standards; (2) promotion of census-taking and of improved methods; (3) provision of technical assistance, as requested; (4) provision of training at national and subregional levels; (5) provision of handbooks on census methods; (6) development of integrated programmes linked to surveys, registers, etc.; (7) international publication of results of censuses.

(28) Work on the World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics. This work will be carried out in collaboration with the Population Division and the

8/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1950 XVII.4.

specialized agencies and will focus attention on the deficiencies in these important statistics and the need to improve them in order that they may take their rightful place in an integrated system of statistics.

(29) Completion of the Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods (parts I-VII), including a part on statistical cartography.

(30) Study of sampling methods for obtaining housing statistics with a view to publication of a manual.

(31) Revision of the Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods. 9/

(32) Preparation of a yearbook of housing statistics.

(33) Publication of the "Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system" (E/CN.3/411 and E/CN.3/411/Annex), augmented by an index and glossary of terms (para. 105).

(34) Development of statistics on migration and international travel (para. 109).

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

CHAPTER XI

OTHER BUSINESS

116. The Commission discussed the composition of its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination. It was felt that the nature of the tasks to be undertaken between the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Commission required an expansion of the membership of the working group. The Commission decided that, until the seventeenth session, the working group should be composed of the following members:

J. Ripert (France), Chairman
J. Kazimour (Czechoslovakia)
C.A. Moser (United Kingdom)
J. Shiskin (United States)
J.E. Tandoh (Ghana)
L.M. Volodarsky (USSR)

CHAPTER XII

DATE AND PLACE OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION

117. The Commission took note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1264 (XLIII) concerning the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. The Commission reviewed its method of work and calendar of conferences. The current session had been restricted to two weeks, which it was felt would normally be sufficient. It wished to record that it had made substantial efforts to limit the documentation and had at its present session, as at its fifteenth session, dispensed with summary records.

118. The Commission considered it essential that its next session should take place in February 1972. It was emphasized that the interval of two years and eight months that had been imposed between the fifteenth and sixteenth sessions had made it difficult for the Commission to maintain the necessary continuity in its work and had considerably increased the pressure on delegations at its current session. The Commission wished to draw to the attention of the Economic and Social Council the fact that the necessity of holding the seventeenth session in February 1972 arose from the nature and status of its present work programme, particularly in the fields of co-ordination of international statistics, the achievement of a broad strategy in the development of statistics, the determination of priorities and the pressing problems of the relationship of national statistical offices to the proposed International Computing Centre.

119. The Commission also recommended that the seventeenth session should take place in New York, a location which had the advantage of enabling delegates to confer directly with the staff of the Statistical Office of the United Nations on many matters of detail in the work programme and in relation to the flow of data between national offices and the Statistical Office.

120. The Commission requested that, in the interests of its work programme, its views on the date and place of the next session be given favourable consideration by the Economic and Social Council.

CHAPTER XIII

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

121. At the 290th meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted the report of its sixteenth session.

CHAPTER XIV

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION

1. (XVI). Co-ordination of international statistical activities^{10/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To prepare, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, a Directory of International Statistics, furnishing detailed information on the statistical responsibilities of the organizations concerned, as well as on the statistical series compiled and statistical standards adopted by them;

(2) To publish the Directory before the seventeenth session of the Commission;

(3) To provide, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, a means of keeping national statistical offices informed of new international statistical programmes and of important changes in the existing statistical programmes of all the organizations in the United Nations family;

(4) To prepare jointly with the other organizations of the United Nations system, for each session of the Commission, a concise, policy-oriented document on international statistical programmes, concentrating on plans for the period two to five years ahead, with brief information on purposes, timing, priorities and, where possible, the resources involved;

(5) To maintain the co-operative work of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities, particularly with regard to the compilation of the Directory and the presentation of the five-year programmes of international activities;

(6) To provide the services required by the Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination in the discharge of its functions, including the additional tasks involved in the co-ordination of data processing activities in relation to international statistical programmes and services to national statistical offices.

^{10/} See paras. 52-66 above.

2. (XVI). International statistical programmes, 1971-1975^{11/}

The Statistical Commission

Takes note of the international statistical programmes for the period 1971-1975 to be undertaken by the organizations of the United Nations family;

Expresses appreciation for the collaborative work of the statistical services of the organizations in preparing the integrated programme;

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To inform, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, the appropriate authorities of the organizations within the United Nations system of the results of its review of the international statistical programmes, 1971-1975;

(2) To take all possible steps to increase, and also to improve co-ordination of the technical assistance activities in statistics among the organizations concerned;

(3) To assist the developing countries in the application of electronic data processing methods by means of training facilities at the international level and expert advice to individual countries, with the object of achieving an information system which maximizes the usefulness, for administrative and policy purposes, of the available statistical data;

(4) To arrange, if possible, with the help of the United Nations Development Programme, a seminar on the organization of national statistical services;

(5) To prepare and issue a revised Handbook of Statistical Organization^{12/} for use by Member States.

3. (XVI). Interagency co-operation relating to computers^{13/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) In planning the data processing work of the Organization, to take account of the substantial interest of national statistical offices in having prompt access to the data banks of international statistics at reasonable cost;

(2) To arrange for a meeting of the Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination early in 1971 to receive a report on this subject, to consider co-ordination among the various data banks of international statistics now being developed and to consider how the needs of national statistical offices may best be met.

^{11/} See paras. 67-74 above.

^{12/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 1954.XVII.7.

^{13/} See paras. 75-79 above.

4. (XVI). National accounting^{14/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To prepare technical manuals with the assistance of expert consultants, as necessary, and as far as possible in the following order of priority, on:
(a) data in current prices on the production, income and outlay and capital finance accounts of the System of National Accounts (SNA), (b) national accounting in respect of the public sector, (c) national accounting in constant prices and quantity and price statistics, (d) household accounts and the distribution of income, consumption and wealth, (e) input-output tables and analysis of the SNA and commodity balances and the SNA accounts on goods and services, (f) the flow-of-funds and balance-sheet accounts of the SNA, and (g) regional accounting;

(2) To assist the developing countries in evolving and improving their systems of national accounts and correlated bodies of basic statistics, by convening seminars, workshops and training courses and providing technical assistance and fellowships under the United Nations Development Programme;

(3) To keep under review and to report to the Commission, from time to time, the progress made by countries in applying the SNA, together with any conceptual or practical difficulties encountered;

(4) To elaborate, in consultation with national statistical offices, specialized agencies and other interested bodies, the purpose and activity classifications of the SNA in respect of the government and private non-profit bodies serving households, for use in the system of demographic, manpower and social statistics, taking into account the treatment of social and community services in the "Draft International Standard Commodity Classification of All Goods and Services" (ST/STAT.47);

(5) To formulate, in consultation with national statistical authorities and interested international agencies, a draft classification of the cost-structure of production for use in statistics of research and development, and other purposes related to function and to other aspects of the national accounts and balances;

(6) To co-operate with UNESCO, and with the assistance of expert consultants as necessary, in developing concepts, definitions and classifications in respect of a system of statistics of research and development which is co-ordinated with, and complementary to, the system of national accounts and balances.

^{14/} See paras. 5-11 above.

5. (XVI). System of Material Product Balances (MPS)^{15/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To publish and circulate widely the study "basic methodological rules for the compilation of the statistical balance of the national economy" (E/CN.3/396);

(2) To prepare, in the light of the comments of the Commission and in consultation with member countries of the Conference of European Statisticians, a technical publication based on "Conceptual relationships between the revised SNA and MPS" (E/CN.3/397/Rev.1).

6. (XVI). Links between the Material Product Balances (MPS) and the System of National Accounts (SNA) 16/

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To gather, compile and issue data periodically on the national accounting aggregates in respect of the supply and disposition of goods and services and the incomes from production in terms of the MPS in the case of countries using the SNA and in terms of the SNA in the case of countries using the MPS;

(2) In co-operation with the Conference of European Statisticians, to continue the study of the relationships between the SNA and MPS, in particular in respect of the flows on the redistribution of incomes, in order to extend the conceptual framework and adjustment rules for linking corresponding concepts and with a view to developing common basic aggregates of special interest.

7. (XVI). Statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth 17/

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To elaborate and extend the comparative analysis of national practices and plans in respect of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth in countries with differing social and economic systems and with differing levels of economic and social development;

^{15/} See paras. 12-19 above.

^{16/} See paras. 20 and 18 above.

^{17/} See paras. 27-35 above.

(2) To continue the work, in co-operation with the interested international agencies, if necessary with the advice and assistance of a group of experts, and in consultation with national statistical authorities, of formulating draft international guidelines in respect of a system of statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and wealth which is complementary to the systems of national accounts and balances;

(3) To prepare a simplified adaptation of the system, giving special consideration to the utilization of sample household surveys, for use by the developing countries with such expert assistance as may be necessary;

(4) To report on the work to the seventeenth session of the Commission.

8. (XVI). A system of demographic, manpower and social statistics 18/

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To prepare a study of the basic series, concepts and classifications of a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics, in co-operation with the interested international agencies and in close consultation with national statistical authorities;

(2) To study, with the advice and assistance of experts, as necessary, the series, concepts, definitions, classifications, collection and presentation of data for a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics, appropriate to the circumstances and problems of the developing countries;

(3) To establish as an equal priority field of social statistics, both for developed and for developing countries, the development of a set of social indicators which throw light on the status and trends in major areas of social concern;

(4) To conduct in a consistent and mutually compatible way the work on social indicators and on the basic series and the necessary concepts and classifications of a system of demographic, manpower and social statistics;

(5) To continue work on the framework and content of a system and the techniques of analysing the data of the system, with the aid and assistance of experts; and also to prepare a simplified version of the system;

(6) To report on the progress of this work to the seventeenth session of the Commission.

Calls the attention of the Secretary-General and of the appropriate specialized agencies to the importance and urgency of furnishing technical assistance to the developing countries in improving and expanding their social statistics.

18/ See paras. 42-49 above.

9. (XVI). Classification of international trade by Broad Economic Categories (BEC) 19/

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General to publish the classification of international trade by Broad Economic Categories (BEC) (E/CN.3/408) for international use and as a guideline for national use.

10. (XVI). Central directories of establishments and enterprises 20/

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) Considering the particular importance of central registers in the development of statistical systems, to gather and circulate detailed descriptions of the practices, experience and problems of countries which are building or maintaining advanced central registers of economic units;

(2) To prepare a technical publication on the purposes, concepts and content of central registers and on the sources of information, methods and procedures, data storage and equipment for building and maintaining the registers in the case of statistically advanced and less advanced countries;

(3) To report on the progress of this work to the seventeenth session of the Commission.

Recommends to the national statistical authorities of States Members of the United Nations that they provide the Secretary-General with any detailed descriptions of their aims, practices, experience and problems in respect of central or similar registers which he requests.

11. (XVI). 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics^{21/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To revise documents E/CN.3/404/Rev.1, E/CN.3/405 and E/CN.3/406 in the light of the suggestions of national statistical authorities, interested international organizations and the views of the Commission at its sixteenth session;

19/ See paras. 94-96 above.

20/ See paras. 80-85 above.

21/ See paras. 86-89 above.

(2) To issue the revised documents as the international recommendations for the 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics.

12. (XVI). Statistics of the distributive trades and services^{22/}

The Statistical Commission

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To prepare a revised study of national practices in respect of statistics of the distributive trades and services, based on document E/CN.3/407 and in the light of the comments of national statistical authorities and the views expressed by the Commission;

(2) To draft a revised version of the international recommendations in respect of statistics of the distributive trades and services in the light of national and international requirements for these data and national practices;

(3) To report on this work to the seventeenth session of the Commission.

^{22/} See paras. 90-93 above.

CHAPTER XV

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system^{23/}

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the report of the sixteenth session of the Statistical Commission and the adoption by the Commission of a set of principles and recommendations for the improvement of vital statistics,

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",

Further recalling its resolution 1307 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, which requested the Secretary-General to undertake a World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics,

Recognizing the important role of vital statistics as a primary source of national data for achieving the above-mentioned purposes,

1. Requests the Secretary-General to publish the "Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system" (E/CN.3/411 and E/CN.3/411/Annex) in English, French, Russian and Spanish and to distribute them widely to States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, to regional economic commissions and other appropriate regional bodies, and to specialized agencies.
2. Further requests the Secretary-General to give assistance to Governments in the implementation of these principles and recommendations by mobilizing all available resources, both international and bilateral, to help in the very large task of assisting countries to develop, improve and maintain civil registers of vital events, and to use these registers for statistical purposes as well as other sources of vital statistics as provided in the World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics.

^{23/} See paras. 100-106 above.

ANNEX I
ATTENDANCE
MEMBERS

Australia: J.P. O'Neill, J.G. Miller,* D.V. Youngman*

Belgium: R. Dereymaeker

Brazil: I. Kerstenetzky

Cuba: F. Ortiz Rodríguez

Czechoslovakia: J. Kazimour

Denmark: N.V. Skak-Nielsen

France: J. Ripert, A. Vanoli,* J. Thibau*

Ghana: J.E. Tandoh

India: P.C. Mahalanobis, N.T. Mathew*

Indonesia: M. Abdulmadjid

Ireland: T.P. Linehan

Libya: A.S. Zoghni

Morocco: M. Benjelloun, T. Bencheikh*

Panama: C.O. Quintero Alfaro

Philippines: T.A. Mijares

Poland: W. Kawalec

Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic: V.F. Burlin

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: L.M. Volodarsky, D. Dumnov**

United Arab Republic: G. Askar

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: C.A. Moser, R.E. Beales,*
J.N.C. Hancock,* T.A. Evans**

United States of America: J. Shiskin, H.F. Venneman,* G. Jaszi,* L. Felsenthal**

Venezuela: M.A. López Pacheco

* Alternate
** Adviser

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

Statistical Office: P.J. Loftus, Director of the Statistical Office,
A. Aidenoff, L. Day, Z. Kenessey, C. Molestina

Population Division: N.P. Powell

Secretary of the Commission: R.F. Grossman

Economic Commission for Europe: B.N. Davies, M. Jansen

Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East: T.V. Viswanathan

Economic Commission for Latin America: G.F. Loeb

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: B. Ivanović

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

International Labour Organisation (ILO): H.P. Lacroix, K.J. Penniment,
H. Gallis, K. Bashir

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): R.D. Narain

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):
K.G. Brodin, L. Goldstone

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): N.S. Detière

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

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD): A. Tiemann

International Monetary Fund (IMF): E. Hicks

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT): L. Till

OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Asian Statistical Institute: R.T. Bowman

Council for Mutual Economic Assistance: I. Rizhov, F. Küster

Nordic Statistical Secretariat: J. Nielsen

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development: R. Bertrand

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Category II

Inter-American Statistical Institute: C.O. Quintero Alfaro

ANNEX II

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF DECISIONS TAKEN

1. The Commission's attention was called to the following financial implications of decisions taken during the sixteenth session:

Costs of publication in English, French, Russian and Spanish

Directory of international statistica	\$10,700
Publication on a system of social and demographic accounts . . .	\$8,900
MPS	\$4,300
Principles and recommendations for a vital statistics system . .	\$10,700
	<u>\$34,600</u>

2. Translation costs of \$15 per standard page of original per language must be added to the above.

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
A/8072	10 (c)	Electronic data processing in the United Nations family of organizations
E/4893	10 (c)	Development and co-ordination of the activities of the organizations within the United Nations system
E/CN.3/391	2	Provisional agenda
E/CN.3/392	10 (a)	Consultations between a working group of the Statistical Commission and representatives of the United Nations and the specialized agencies
E/CN.3/393	10 (b)	International statistical programmes, 1971-1975
E/CN.3/393/Add.1	10 (b)	International statistical programmes, 1971-1975. Addendum, Major programmes of the World Health Organization
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