



**STATISTICAL COMMISSION**  
**REPORT ON THE NINETEENTH SESSION**  
8-19 November 1976

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**  
**OFFICIAL RECORDS: SIXTY-SECOND 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.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
CCCN	Customs Co-operation Council Nomenclature
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America
EEC	European Economic Community
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICGS	International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMCO	Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities
MPS	Material Product Balances System
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
SNA	System of National Accounts
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WHO	World Health Organization

I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

1. The Statistical Commission approved the following draft resolutions and draft decision for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

I

Financing of training of statisticians, especially  
through the regional funds of the United Nations  
Development Programme 1/

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered the report of the Statistical Commission on its nineteenth session,

Recognizing the crucial role played by training in the over-all development of statistical services of developing Member States,

Noting with satisfaction the considerable past assistance rendered by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, and other sources to the financing of training of statisticians, which has had a favourable impact on the statistical services of developing Member States,

Further noting the necessity to increase and consolidate the quantity and quality of technically competent statisticians in the countries of the developing world, who should collect, compile and analyse statistical data required for preparing and monitoring economic and social development plans of developing countries,

Emphasizing the fact that sound development policy and evaluation can only proceed on the basis of adequate data concerning important development sectors,

Expressing concern over the rapidly declining trend of assistance rendered by the United Nations Development Programme to the financing of training of statisticians, especially through its regional funds,

Further concerned that, because of the lack of necessary financial and personnel resources, developing countries are unable on their own to set up and maintain an effective vehicle to train all levels of statisticians,

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1/ See paras. 152-161 below.

Requests the United Nations Development Programme to take a sympathetic view of the requirements of developing member States for financing of training of statisticians, especially through its regional funds, and to increase this component in its assistance with a view to fostering the long-term and lasting development of the statistical services of developing countries.

## II

### National Household Survey Capability Programme 2/

#### The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the report of the Statistical Commission at its nineteenth session and, in particular, of the high priority it assigned to the proposal by the Economic Commission for Africa for a regional programme of technical assistance to developing countries designed to enable them to establish or improve a continuing national household survey capability, and of the broad relevance of such a programme to other developing regions,

Recalling paragraph 74 of the World Population Plan of Action adopted by the World Population Conference in 1974 3/ that, inter alia, encourages all countries that have not yet done so to establish a continuing capability for taking household surveys,

Recalling also resolution 272 (XII) adopted by the Economic Commission for Africa at the twelfth session of the Commission and third meeting of the Conference of Ministers 4/ that, inter alia, urged the undertaking of a multipurpose programme of household surveys for the collection of integrated demographic, social and economic data through the establishment of a field survey mechanism,

Recalling further the recommendation contained in paragraph 30 of the Programme of Action adopted by the World Employment Conference held at Geneva from 4 to 17 June 1976 5/ that, inter alia, invited international bodies and interested countries to consider the feasibility of initiating a world-wide programme in support of household surveys,

Realizing that the renewed emphasis on approaching development efforts on an integrated basis, as exemplified by the decisions of the World Population Conference, the World Food Conference 6/ and the World Employment Conference, implies an increased need for countries to have integrated statistics available for planning, management and evaluation of programmes arising from these efforts,

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2/ See paras. 162-174 below.

3/ See E/CONF.60/19 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XIII.3).

4/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 10, part III.

5/ See E/5857.

6/ See E/CONF.65/20 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3).



1. Considers that national sample surveys, carried out on a continuous and integrated basis, by focusing on the individual and the household, are able to provide important quantitative information on economic, social and demographic conditions, and changes therein, for the entire population and the special groups within it, including the most disadvantaged groups such as the rural poor;

2. Draws the attention of developing countries in all regions to the value of a continuing national household survey capability in serving their national needs for reliable and integrated statistics as a necessary complement to periodic census programmes;

3. Calls the attention of developing countries to the possibility of using funds available to them through their United Nations Development Programme country programme facility to support the establishment or upgrading of such national survey capabilities as an important component of developmental infrastructure;

4. Requests the Secretary-General and the United Nations Development Programme, in co-operation with the World Bank and in consultation with other multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, to convene a meeting, as soon as is practicable, to consider ways and means of carrying out this necessary and important development activity, including the provision of resources for needed intercountry technical advice and training in this statistical field;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, to provide all necessary support for this programme and to submit a progress report to the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session.

#### DRAFT DECISION

At its ... meeting on ... 1977, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its nineteenth session and approved the objectives and work programme recommended by the Commission in its report.

2. The Commission also decided to make the following recommendations.

#### A

The Commission decided to recommend strongly that its twentieth session be held at United Nations Headquarters early in 1979, on dates to be determined. The recommendation was made without prejudice to the possibility of holding its twenty-first session in the fourth quarter of 1980. 7/

#### B

The Commission decided to recommend that the seventh session of its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination be held at Geneva on 23 and 24 June 1977. 8/

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7/ See paras. 203-205 below.

8/ See paras. 175-180 below.

## II. ECONOMIC STATISTICS

### A. Price and quantity statistics

3. In considering agenda item 5 (a), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on draft guidelines on principles of a system of price and quantity statistics (E/CN.3/475). Work in that area had been initiated at the fifteenth session of the Statistical Commission, and progress reports had been considered at the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions and at various regional meetings, as well as by an expert group that met in June 1975.
4. The Commission was informed that the report covered both collection of data and compilation of indexes. The structure of the system of price and quantity statistics proposed was based upon the national accounts and balances, and it made use of standard international classification systems. But that did not imply that all index computations were subordinated to the national accounts and balances. The system was designed to include indexes that could be derived from disaggregated price and value components defined and classified according to standard definitions and classification systems. Aggregation was accomplished in ways that respected the boundaries of standard classifications and took advantage of input-output relationships. While the approach was flexible, the result was still a system, tied together by a common data base and common definitions and classifications. If consistently followed, it would result in a much more comprehensible and coherent picture of price and quantity relationships.
5. The Commission welcomed the report, and considered that it was a great improvement over the previous versions and that it should be revised and published as soon as possible. The multiplicity of needs for price and quantity data, the use of standard classifications, and the data base concept were especially appreciated. Some concern was expressed that the treatment of the national accounts had lost specificity in the process. In that connexion, the Commission was pleased to learn that a manual on national accounts in constant prices was in process and that completion of the manual could be expected early in the new year. High priority was attached to the preparation of similar technical manuals on other types of price and quantity statistics and indexes, if necessary with the assistance of consultants.
6. In the course of the discussion a number of points were noted where a change of emphasis or expanded treatment would be desirable. They included the use of net sector output weights, probability sampling, and the discussion of alternative types of prices - such as transactions versus list prices. A number of specific changes in the report were suggested to the Statistical Office.
7. Particular concern was expressed about the treatment of prices in international trade, where several different views emerged. That area was judged to be a high priority one, for which a technical manual should be prepared, as quickly as possible. Several topics not currently covered in the report were noted, including changes in inventories, capital consumption, indirect taxes, and factor payments. It was recognized that those were particularly intractable problems, but

nevertheless it was considered that it would be helpful to discuss them. Several countries suggested re-examination of tables 4 and 5 from the point of view of developing countries, but it was felt that it might not be appropriate in that document to make such a distinction. The Commission also considered that the addition of a bibliography would be helpful.

8. The Commission noted the special problems of developing countries in collecting price and quantity statistics, especially in circumstances where there were no established sellers or selling prices, and where markets were informal. It was considered, however, that such problems were more conveniently discussed in technical manuals on sources and methods, rather than in the guidelines.

9. In response to a question concerning proposed changes in the international base year, the Statistical Office proposed to prepare a note for the Working Group meeting in June 1977, following discussions with the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities.

#### Action taken by the Commission

10. The Commission:

(a) Recommended the international guidelines in the report (E/CN.3/475), modified in the light of the discussions of the Commission, for the use of countries in developing and improving their price and quantity statistics;

(b) Requested the Secretary-General:

(i) To prepare, print and circulate a publication on guidelines on price and quantity statistics; 9/

(ii) To prepare, in full co-operation with the agencies and with the assistance of consultants if necessary, manuals on specific aspects of the sources and methodologies of gathering and compiling statistics of prices and quantities, in particular on the design of appropriate samples and on the composition of appropriate indexes for specific areas, including producers' prices, prices in external trade, and others, giving special attention to the needs and circumstances of developing countries.

#### B. Energy statistics

11. The Commission based its discussion of agenda item 5 (b) on the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/476), which was prepared in response to the request, made at its eighteenth session, to include energy statistics in the agenda for its nineteenth session.

12. The report outlined a programme for the Statistical Office to develop a global system of integrated energy statistics (SIES) comprising the extension of the

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9/ For the financial implications, see annex III below, para. 8 (c).

statistical base already available rather than the development of a radical redesign of the base. In preparing the programme, account had been taken of the experience and the existing data availability of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and other organizations, in particular OECD, OPEC and EEC. The keystone of the proposed programme was the compilation of energy balances, covering different energy forms (primary and secondary) and different stages of operation from production through trade and stockage to conversion and final end use. It was proposed to convene an expert group to consider the preparation of an international classification of energy and the adoption of a common unit of measurement for interfuel comparisons.

13. The Commission was informed that the report, document E/CN.3/476, had been considered and generally supported at a recent meeting on general energy statistics held under the programme of the Conference of European Statisticians.

14. The Commission welcomed the Secretary-General's report. It agreed that the development and integration of energy statistics should have high priority in the Commission's programme, in view of the importance of energy questions both nationally and internationally. The Commission also agreed on the use of energy balances as a key instrument in the co-ordination of work on energy statistics and the provision of data in a suitable form for understanding and analysing the functioning of the energy economy and the interrelationships between its constituent elements.

15. The Commission particularly welcomed the approach of building on and extending the existing statistical base rather than radically redesigning that base. It noted with approval that SIES would harmonize with the work of the regional commissions on energy statistics and that account would continue to be taken of the work of the other international bodies concerned. In that connexion, the Commission stressed the importance of avoiding duplication in the collection of data from countries, and welcomed the arrangements by which, for example, data already collected by the ECE secretariat, OECD and EEC, would be obtained from those organizations and not directly from the countries concerned.

16. In discussion, the question was raised whether the programme of the United Nations Statistical Office should be extended to include statistics of energy prices for which no direct provision had been made. Great importance was attached to that topic. It was noted that the Statistical Office would continue to follow closely developments in that difficult area, working with the World Bank and other interested bodies.

17. Attention was drawn to the importance of developing data on final uses of energy, as distinct from availabilities. It was agreed that that was an important but also a difficult area.

18. Attention was also drawn to the importance for many developing countries of non-commercial fuels, such as firewood, straw and paddy husk, for which only indirect provision was made in the programme. While attempts should be made to cover those fuels, it was noted that data concerning them were sparse and irregular. The topic, however, would be given continuous attention.

19. Some members drew attention to the difficulty of securing both timeliness and comprehensiveness in detail for data relating to energy. It was agreed that the details of the proposed collection and publication programme should be reviewed.

20. Several members referred to the composition and the terms of reference of the proposed expert group. It was agreed that the participation of energy experts, as well as statisticians, would be most desirable, and that the regional commissions and other interested international bodies should participate. As regards the group's functions, while it was noted that the main questions considered would be the classification and the common unit, it was suggested that, if possible, the group should consider other selected aspects of the programme as well. The question was also raised whether the expert group would be expected to work within the limits of the existing international classifications concerned, i.e., ISIC, SITC, CCCN and SNA/ICGS, or would be able to propose amendments to those classifications, and it was noted that if the group were to find it unavoidable to propose amendments, those would have to await the operation of the general procedures for reviewing the classification concerned.

#### Action taken by the Commission

21. The Commission:

(a) Approved the programme for developing energy statistics set out in detail in paragraph 33 of document E/CN.3/476;

(b) Recommended the convening of an expert group 10/ to consider:

(i) The preparation of an International Classification of Energy in order to provide an effective basis for the further development and harmonization of international statistics of energy;

(ii) The adoption of a common unit of measurement of interfuel comparison for use in energy balances on a global scale;

(c) Suggested that a consultant be engaged for the preparatory work in connexion with the proposed working group. 10/

#### C. System of national accounts and balances

22. The Commission considered agenda item 5 (c) on the basis of a report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility of welfare-oriented measures to complement the national accounts and balances (E/CN.3/477), together with a summary of the recommendations of an expert group which met in March 1976 to consider welfare-oriented supplements to the national accounts and balances and other measures of levels of living (E/CN.3/477/Add.1). The Commission was also informed orally of the other activities of the Statistical Office in the area of national accounts and balances.

23. The Commission considered the report (E/CN.3/477) was an excellent survey on the topic, and requested that it be published and widely circulated. It was agreed that an attempt to develop international standards for an alternative aggregate

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10/ For the financial implications, see below, para. 207 and annex III, paras. 6 and 7.

designed to measure welfare was inappropriate. Currently, that was a more suitable area for research than for statistical compilation, and what was considered important would vary from country to country. A variety of statistics, among which social and demographic statistics played a very important role, were needed to assess welfare. Individual items drawn from national accounts were also of value, and particular attention was directed to the elements entering into the concept of total consumption of the population. A view was expressed that the well-being of a society could not adequately be assessed by monetary measures alone and that it would be appropriate to use non-monetary indicators also for that purpose.

24. The priorities for future work set out in document E/CN.3/477 were broadly endorsed by the Commission. Those were: (a) the development of a system of environment statistics; (b) the promotion of a more functional analysis of expenditures by general government, providing a separation particularly of expenditures which supplement private consumption so as to allow the calculation by function of total consumption of the population, and (c) further study of the techniques, definitions, interpretation and use of time-budget data. In addition to those concerns, the Commission considered that several additional topics should be added to the priority list, including the distribution of income by age, social group, and size class; the effect on real income of changes in the terms of trade; and the special needs of developing countries. The Commission agreed that when the paper was issued a preface should be added setting forth its views on those additional concerns.

25. The Commission noted that work on the topic was initiated at the request of the Committee for Development Planning, 11/ and decided that the report, together with the preliminary guidelines and illustrative series of social indicators, should be transmitted to the Committee in fulfilment of that request. Further work on the topic could be expected to take place under the specific headings shown in the list of priorities, all of which were part of the regular programme of the Statistical Office.

26. The Commission was informed that an interregional seminar on the revised SNA 12/ had been held at Caracas in December 1975, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Government of Venezuela. The purpose of the seminar was to provide a stocktaking of the revised SNA in the light of developing countries' experience in using it. It was noted that a number of substantive points of concern had emerged in the discussions at the seminar; two of the points in which much interest was shown were the treatment of non-monetary productive activity and the question of sectoring.

27. In connexion with the discussion of an expanded treatment of non-monetary productive activity, one member of the Commission expressed the view that attention should be given to the concepts of traditional or informal and subsistence production as well as to non-monetary production, and informed the Commission of work being done in that area. It was noted that for some purposes a distinction

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11/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 5, para. 17.

12/ A System of National Accounts (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.69.XVII.3).

based on type of technology employed was more appropriate, whereas for other purposes market structure and degree of monetization were important.

28. The Commission was also informed of the continuing monitoring and review activities of the Secretariat, undertaken in response to the Commission's requests. It was noted that the ECE work programme included a meeting to be held in 1978 to review both SNA and MPS, 13/ and that for that meeting the Secretariat would prepare a survey paper that would collect and systematize the questions that had arisen in correspondence, seminar papers, discussions, technical assistance reports and other available materials which dealt with the revised SNA, in order to discover areas where clarification, reconciliation, simplification, or extension of the system were wanted, as well as parts of the system that were thought to be impractical or not useful. The paper would also include an empirical study of the actual implementation of SNA by countries, on the basis of a study of replies to questionnaires of the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics and of country publications, as well as responses to a Secretariat questionnaire on sources and methods. The study would seek to identify those parts of the system that had proven to be most generally useful and practical, and on the other hand where definitions and classifications had not been followed, and where the proposed accounts or tables had not been found worth while. The Commission expressed much interest in the review, and agreed that it should also be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.

#### Action taken by the Commission

29. The Commission:

(a) Requested the Secretary-General to publish and circulate widely the report on the feasibility of welfare-oriented measures to supplement the national accounts and balances, with a preface setting forth the Commission's views;

(b) Agreed that the report, together with the preliminary guidelines and illustrative series of social indicators, should be transmitted to the Committee for Development Planning in fulfilment of its request for a study on the topic;

(c) Noted with interest the forthcoming report of the interregional seminar on the revised SNA held at Caracas in December 1975;

(d) Requested that a survey paper reviewing countries' experiences in implementing the revised SNA and discussing the problems that have arisen in doing so be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.

#### D. Public sector statistics

30. For its discussion of agenda item 5 (d), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/478) on the reconciliation of the United Nations "Draft manual on public sector statistics" and the International Monetary

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13/ Basic Principles of the System of Balances of the National Economy (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.71.XVII.10).

Fund draft "Manual on government finance statistics". The Commission also had before it a report of the Secretary-General on the draft detailing of the classification of the purposes of government (E/CN.3/479). The Commission noted that the preparation of a manual on public sector statistics had been part of the work programme of the Statistical Office since the adoption of the revised System of National Accounts in 1968. 14/

31. The Commission was informed that the "Draft manual on public sector statistics" had been circulated to national statistical offices and interested international agencies in November 1975 by the Secretariat, and that IMF had circulated the draft "Manual on government finance statistics" to Governments in June 1974. The latter had been considered by five regional seminars, and both manuals had been discussed at a meeting held under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in July 1976. While the two manuals were designed to meet somewhat different needs and therefore necessarily differed in some respects, there was a clear benefit in ensuring that they were as closely reconciled as possible. The report under consideration on the reconciliation of the two manuals (E/CN.3/478) outlined the solutions that were proposed.

32. The Commission welcomed the efforts being made to reconcile the two manuals, and agreed that the proposals outlined in the report for the revision of the United Nations manual would lead to a substantial improvement over the current draft, and should be implemented. As an immediate objective, reconciliation of the data called for in the two manuals was an acceptable approach. For the longer run, while it was recognized that the two manuals did meet somewhat different needs and that some benefits were to be derived from the proposed separate format, the Commission urged that work directed towards the preparation of a single manual be continued. Such a combined manual could start with a description of the basic budgetary accounts and other basic data sources. It could then proceed to show how those basic sources could be used to construct in turn the government finance statistics and the public sector transactions of the national accounts. Where in practice some parts of either the government finance statistics or the public sector transactions of the national accounts could not be built up in that way, the manual should also cover alternative sources and methods. The Commission stressed the value of such a combined manual in promoting closer relationships between those who compiled national accounts and those who were concerned with the government financial accounts.

33. The Commission gave some consideration to the appropriate scope and coverage of public sector statistics. The growing importance of the public sector was stressed, and the view was expressed that the statistics of that sector were somewhat underdeveloped. The Commission agreed that it was not necessary to confine the public sector accounts to those called for in SNA, where accounts for institutional sectors were limited to income and outlay and capital finance; it would also be possible to construct production accounts, which would be useful for the study of such questions as productivity, the impact of public actions on welfare, and the regional distribution of public costs and benefits. Such an extension would also be of relevance in looking forward to a future revision of SNA.

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14/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 10, para. 24, resolution 1 (XV).



34. The Commission also noted the relationship of the work described in the report to the ongoing work on conceptual and empirical links between SNA and MPS. The Commission was informed that new work was in progress in the latter area, and that a report on that topic would be made to the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session.

35. With regard to the draft detailing of the classification of the purposes of government (see E/CN.3/479), the Commission was informed that that question had also been considered at the meeting held under the auspices of CES in July 1976. It was further informed that OECD had adopted a similar draft which was in full accordance with the current SNA and that a group of experts would meet shortly to reconsider the latter in the light of the Commission's comments. At the CES meeting a number of substantive revisions had been proposed. The Commission agreed that the classification should be reviewed by the Secretariat, taking into account the suggested changes proposed at the meeting and the other comments received, and that a revised version should be prepared and circulated to national statistical offices and international agencies, and then submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session. In making the revision, the assistance of a consultant might be needed. It was stressed that the revised version should include a discussion of the fundamental principles underlying the classification.

#### Action taken by the Commission

36. The Commission:

(a) With respect to the manual on public sector statistics:

- (i) Approved the approach to reconciliation of the United Nations draft manual on public sector statistics and the IMF draft manual on government finance statistics described in E/CN.3/478, as a first objective;
- (ii) Urged that work directed towards the preparation of a single manual in the longer run be continued;
- (iii) Noted that, in view of the increasing importance of the public sector, the scope of such a manual might need to be widened beyond the current content of SNA;

(b) With respect to the draft detailing of the classification of the purposes of government:

- (i) Requested that the draft classification be revised in the light of the comments received, if necessary with the assistance of a consultant, and circulated to national statistical offices and interested international agencies;
- (ii) Asked that the new draft classification, as amended, be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.

### III. SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

#### A. 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme

37. The Commission based its discussion of agenda item 6 (a) on documents E/CN.3/480 and E/CN.3/481. The second document, dealing with cartography in the work of a national statistical office, was prepared with the assistance of Mr. Parmeet Singh (Kenya). The Commission decided to discuss the two documents separately.

38. The Commission considered that document E/CN.3/480 was a timely and comprehensive report. It urged the Secretariat to assign very high priority to completing work on preparations for the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme. The Commission stressed that it was essential that the regional commissions take an active role in developing detailed recommendations on the content of the census, as it had agreed at its eighteenth session. <sup>15/</sup> In that connexion, it was pleased to note that the regional commissions and IASI had canvassed their members on their views on proposals for changes in the existing international and regional recommendations for population and housing censuses in the light of national experiences in carrying out population and housing censuses in the 1965-1974 census decade.

39. Many members were of the view that by the time the Commission had final draft recommendations before it at its twentieth session a substantial number of countries planning to carry out censuses in 1980 or 1981 would have already made final decisions on their national census plans. For that reason, the Commission stressed that it was essential that the consideration of the 1980 recommendations by the regions and by the interregional expert group proceed as rapidly as possible. The Commission also welcomed the suggestion that the Secretariat send to all national statistical offices a document containing interim proposals with respect to the 1980 recommendations for consideration. It suggested that chapter III of document E/CN.3/480, which contained such proposals, should be revised promptly to accord with the Commission's comments and should be circulated on an urgent basis.

40. The Commission considered that section A of chapter III, dealing with census content, was in need of substantial revision. It noted that, based on the results of the inquiries carried out by the regional commissions and IASI, there was an emerging consensus that the recommendations on census content adopted for the 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programmes and their regional variants <sup>16/</sup> remained largely valid for the 1980 Programme. Unfortunately, section A of chapter III appeared to place undue emphasis on specific proposals for change. Accordingly, the Commission requested that the Secretariat, in revising the document, should place any discussion of possible additions, deletions or

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<sup>15/</sup> Ibid., Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 and corrigendum, para. 58.

<sup>16/</sup> Principles and Recommendations for the 1970 Population Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.67.XVII.3) and Principles and Recommendations for the 1970 Housing Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.67.XVII.4).

modifications of census content more clearly and explicitly in the context of the recommendations adopted for the 1970 Programmes and their regional variants.

41. With regard to the specific proposals on census content, many Commission members were of the view that it would be extremely difficult to collect information on income and that that item should not be included as a recommended topic. The modified definition of a household suggested in the document received little support and it was felt to be more advantageous to continue with the same definition as the one used in the 1970 recommendations. It was pointed out that a common household definition was difficult to apply in nations with diverse cultural conditions.

42. It was agreed that information on migration would be more satisfactorily obtained in terms of the address of the individual on the same day of the preceding year. That should be adequate both for obtaining statistics on internal and international migration.

43. There was some difference of opinion on which criterion should be adopted for determining the economic activity of an individual - current status (generally, not more than a specified week) or the usual status (over a longer period such as a year). A number of Commission members felt that the concept of usual status was much more relevant for the developing countries and perhaps even for some developed countries. It was recognized, however, that it was difficult to ascertain usual status in a clear-cut manner and that no international standards existed. In that connexion, several members pointed to the need for continued methodological work in field testing those and other concepts used in measuring economic activity, and it was suggested that an appropriate definition of usual status be included in the 1980 recommendations. A suggestion was also made that the criterion for the classification of individuals by educational attainment be reviewed within the context of ISCED.

44. Many members expressed the view that further work was necessary with respect to urban-rural classifications, socio-economic classifications, and classifications of households by type. There was general agreement, however, that such work must take place at the regional level. Several members considered that while tabulations by size of locality were useful, they had definite limitations and that it was necessary to use additional criteria in developing residence classifications.

45. The Commission noted that section B of chapter III, dealing with census methods and operations, contained several important proposals for additions to the existing census recommendations. There was broad agreement that the Statistical Office should pursue those initiatives further.

46. Development of appropriate computer software for editing census data and for storage and retrieval of census information was considered to be extremely important. The Commission agreed that developing countries should be helped to obtain modern data-processing capabilities, including census-oriented computer software, and was pleased to learn of the efforts of several national statistical offices, the regional commissions and the Statistical Office in that regard.

47. The Commission considered that the maintenance of a census data base and the availability of census data for small areas would expand the usefulness of the census results considerably. Both, however, could pose problems in terms of

confidentiality and a resulting reluctance on the part of the general public to furnish information. Most members agreed that issues relating to confidentiality, privacy and respondent burden must be given increased attention at the national and international levels.

48. The Commission agreed that all possible precautions should be taken so that the use of concepts or methods involving sex-based stereotypes would not prejudice census results. In that connexion, the problem posed by the term "head of household" in a number of countries was noted. The concept was largely out-of-date in the context of modern social and labour force conditions in many countries. The Commission agreed that, whatever solutions were developed for that or other problems, the census instructions for enumerators should be clear and should not leave any room for variations in interpretation by individual enumerators. In the discussion, the view was expressed that the Commission should also take action on implementation in other relevant fields of statistics relating to paragraphs 161 to 169 of the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year adopted by the World Conference of the International Women's Year. 17/

49. Because a population census was one of the most essential and far-reaching activities of any national statistical system, the Commission believed that every effort should be made to enable developing countries to participate in the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme by the provision of the requisite technical and other assistance as called for in paragraph 2 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1947 (LVIII). The Commission welcomed the various technical assistance activities and proposals described in chapter IV of document E/CN.3/480. The proposal for a series of census training workshops was considered to be of particular importance, given the key role that sound statistical management plays in the success of a census.

50. Several members regretted that, because of inadequate resources, the Handbook of Population and Housing Census Methods could not be completed; 18/ they further regretted that an analysis of 1970 practices had not been completed and urged that that work be expedited.

51. The Commission welcomed the substantial progress that had been made towards greater compatibility between the concepts and definitions recommended by FAO for agricultural censuses and the United Nations for population and housing censuses as described in chapter V of document E/CN.3/480. It drew attention to the importance of co-ordination of work on the two activities in each country. The Commission emphasized that such co-ordination did not necessarily imply an attempt to combine population and agricultural censuses into a single field operation, which in fact might place a very great burden on the staff. However, many countries found that they could combine their population and housing censuses into a single operation with a consequent savings in resources.

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17/ See E/CONF.66/34 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1), chap. II, sect. A.

18/ The following parts have already been issued: part III, Topics and Tabulations for Housing Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.XVII.6); part IV, Survey of Population and Housing Census Experience, 1955-1964, sects. 1 and 2 (United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.70.XVII.7 and E.70.XVII.7/Add.); and part VI, Sampling in Connexion with Population and Housing Censuses (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.XVII.9).

52. In its discussion of document E/CN.3/481, "Cartography in the work of a national statistical office", the Commission noted that, although the document was being considered under agenda item 6 (a) (1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme), the subject of cartography had relevance to many other statistical programmes. For example, many members of the Commission stressed the importance of a statistically-oriented cartographic capability to agricultural censuses and surveys. The particular importance of ensuring the close co-ordination between cartographic work for the agriculture census and the population census was also stressed, as was the need to provide a continuing capability during the intercensal period. Some members described promising work involving the use of geographic co-ordinates or uniform squares in the analysis and presentation of statistical data, indicating that that type of work depended upon the existence of a robust cartographic capability.

53. The Commission agreed that the use of remote sensing from artificial satellites was an important technological innovation. It noted that remote sensing could assist and supplement conventional methods of data collection in several important ways, but that remote sensing could not replace them. The Commission considered that that was an important area for collaboration at the international and regional levels and it expressed the hope that the Secretariat would pursue the matter further.

#### Action taken by the Commission

54. The Commission:

(a) Requested the Secretary-General to circulate the contents of chapter III of document E/CN.3/480, amended to reflect the Commission's views, to Member States for their consideration in planning for their 1980 population and housing censuses;

(b) Noting that, in accordance with the Commission's decision at its eighteenth session, <sup>19/</sup> the Secretary-General planned to convene an interregional expert group to consider draft international recommendations for the 1980 population and housing censuses - drawing, as appropriate, on the 1970 world and regional census recommendations, regional recommendations developed for the 1980 censuses, the views expressed by the Commission at its current session and other relevant materials - further requested the Secretary-General to circulate those draft recommendations widely, as soon as possible after the meeting of the expert group, for the information of countries in their census activities, and to submit final draft recommendations to the Commission for consideration at its twentieth session;

(c) Endorsed the other aspects of the programme described in document E/CN.3/480, including, inter alia, the steps taken to facilitate the transfer of technology between countries in relation to the application of modern data-processing technology to various phases of census work and the plans to provide training to national statistical personnel in developing regions both in over-all census management and in the specialized skills required for census work;

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<sup>19/</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 and corrigendum, para. 61.

(d) Strongly urged that the quantum of assistance available to developing countries from international and bilateral sources in connexion with the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme should not be less than what was available for the 1970 Programme.

55. The Commission also:

(a) Expressed its appreciation to Mr. Singh for preparing document E/CN.3/481, which it considered to be a very useful report, and to the Secretariat for its presentation;

(b) Endorsed the view that it was important for national statistical agencies to develop a continuing cartographic capability to serve their specialized cartographic needs in connexion with census and sample-survey operations and the analysis and presentation of statistical data, although it recognized that, in some countries, it was possible to meet the cartographic needs of those agencies by other institutional arrangements;

(c) Called upon international agencies to provide the technical and other assistance required to facilitate the establishment in developing countries of cartographic services oriented to the needs of the national statistical agencies, stressing the cost advantages for many developing countries and the international funding agencies if suitable regional, subregional or other multicountry arrangements could be organized;

(d) In the light of the promise that imagery obtained by remote sensing of the earth by aerial photography and satellite imagery appeared to hold for planning large-scale statistical undertakings, such as population, housing and agriculture censuses, and for certain types of statistical measurements, requested the Secretary-General to bring possible applications of the new technology that were of relevance to national statistical agencies to the attention of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, with a view to ensuring that future national and international work on remote sensing would take appropriate cognizance of such applications.

## B. Migration statistics

### 1. Statistics of international migration

56. For its consideration of the subject, under agenda item 6 (b), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/483) containing draft recommendations on statistics of international migration.

57. The Commission noted that the all but final results of the study of national practices which, at its seventeenth session, it had requested the Secretariat to carry out 20/ confirmed the summary of provisional results provided in document E/CN.3/483.

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20/ Ibid., Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 2, para. 126.

58. The Commission commended the Secretariat for producing a comprehensive, logical and balanced document that represented a very substantial improvement over both the existing international recommendations in that field, which it had adopted at its seventh session, 21/ and the proposals submitted to it at its seventeenth session. It considered that the draft recommendations before it provided a clear and integrated view of the long-term goals towards which national efforts should be aimed. The Commission recognized that the impact, character and volume of international migration varied markedly among countries. It stressed that in moving towards those goals countries would necessarily assign different priorities to that field and would give attention initially to those aspects of the recommendations most relevant to both their own needs and circumstances and those of countries to which they were linked by major migration streams. While acknowledging that many of the recommendations would be difficult to implement, several members considered that it would be desirable for countries to develop specific and step-by-step programmes that would contribute to the long-term objectives embodied in the recommendations.

59. The Commission agreed that that was a highly appropriate field for further international action and urged the Secretariat to modify its programme of work, to the extent possible, to provide interested countries with various forms of specific technical guidance relating to a phased programme for improving statistics of international migration; technical manuals, detailed guidelines relating to specific issues and the convening of an expert group were suggested.

#### Action taken by the Commission

60. The Commission:

(a) Adopted the draft recommendations contained in document E/CN.3/483, modified to reflect its views, as recommendations on statistics of international migration;

(b) Requested the Secretary-General to print and circulate those recommendations, as modified, for the use of Member States and others; 22/

(c) Requested the Secretary-General to use resources that might become available, inter alia, to prepare, with the assistance of a consultant, draft guidelines on consolidated statistics of all arrivals and departures, and to convene an expert group to consider that and other aspects of a programme aimed at providing countries with further technical guidance in that field of statistics. 23/

#### 2. Statistics of internal migration

61. The Commission based its discussion of the topic on a report by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/484).

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21/ Ibid., Fifteenth Session, Supplement No. 5, annex 4.

22/ For the financial implications, see annex III below, para. 8 (a).

23/ Idem, paras. 2 and 3.

62. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing the report and carrying out the study of national practices on which it was based. It agreed that, although internal migration was an extremely important phenomenon for most countries, having important demographic, economic and social consequences, the wide diversity of national needs and practices made it difficult to formulate recommendations on internal migration statistics currently. Several members, however, considered that it would be desirable if internationally comparable definitions and concepts could be developed. It was also suggested that in any future work on the subject, the Secretariat should: (a) develop a system of concepts consistent with those used in the population census; (b) examine further the role of population registers in the collection of statistics of internal migration; (c) consider the need for the collection and tabulation of internal migration statistics for regional population estimates in the intercensal period; and (d) take into account the phenomenon of seasonal migration. The Commission considered that the report (E/CN.3/484) would be of use to national statistical offices and others concerned with the problems of collecting or analysing migration statistics, and urged that it be issued and circulated together with the final results of the study of national practices.

#### Action taken by the Commission

63. The Commission requested the Secretary-General:

(a) To revise document E/CN.3/484 in accordance with its discussion and the final results of the study of national practices;

(b) To issue and circulate the revised document, together with the final results of the study of national practices, as a technical report, for the information of Member States and others.

3. The improvement of statistics on the outflow of trained personnel from developing to developed countries (the brain drain)

64. The Commission based its discussion of the topic on document E/CN.3/485.

65. The Commission considered the report useful, and noted that it had been prepared in response to paragraph 5 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1904 (LVII), which in turn reflected the urgent need felt by the Committee on Science and Technology for Development for improved statistics on that important topic. The Commission welcomed the interest of the Committee on Science and Technology for Development in the matter and considered that document E/CN.3/485, amended in the light of the Commission's comments, should be sent to the Committee. In so doing, it wished to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that substantial improvements in that field depended upon long-term improvements in basic statistical services both in developing and developed countries. In particular, although the new recommendations on statistics of international migration which the Commission had adopted (see para. 60 above) were prepared in the light of document E/CN.3/485, the Commission cautioned that improvements in that area were likely to be slow and that trained, and especially highly-trained, personnel formed but a small part of all international migrants.

66. The Commission agreed with the conclusion of the report that a number of



sources, in addition to statistics of international migration, might be used to generate statistics on the topic. It also agreed that those countries which had received trained personnel from developing countries would be in the best position to develop the required statistics from several of those sources.

67. A number of the agencies and countries referred to in document E/CN.3/485 had specific comments on those paragraphs dealing with their own work, and it was agreed that the Secretariat should send those portions of the text to the relevant organizations for correction and updating. In addition, several members suggested that greater attention be given to the value of sample surveys and special tabulations of census data. Reference was also made to the intercountry comparison of census data that was being carried out in the Latin American region.

#### Action taken by the Commission

68. The Commission requested the Secretary-General:

(a) To revise document E/CN.3/485 in accordance with its discussion and to provide the revised document to the Committee on Science and Technology for Development, together with the new recommendations on statistics of international migration adopted by the Commission (ibid.) and the relevant portions of the present report;

(b) To issue and circulate document E/CN.3/485, as revised, in conjunction with the recommendations on statistics of international migration, as adopted, to members of the international statistical community for their attention in future work on the outflow of trained personnel from developing to developed countries.

#### C. Tourism statistics

69. The Commission based its discussion of agenda item 6 (c) on documents E/CN.3/486 and E/CN.3/487 and on an oral statement by a representative of the World Tourism Organization (WTO).

70. The Commission recognized that international tourism was a very important matter for a number of countries, particularly in the developing regions, and that there was a consequent need for a wide variety of statistics relating to tourism. It welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat, EEC and WTO, and the earlier work of UNCTAD in providing guidance to countries to facilitate the improvement of their tourism statistics. The Commission was pleased to learn of the close co-ordination between the work of the United Nations and WTO. It noted, for example, that WTO would be preparing a technical manual focused on the use of sampling in the collection and compilation of tourism statistics, obviating the need for the United Nations technical manual called for in paragraph 5 of document E/CN.3/486. The Commission stressed the importance of continued close co-ordination between the statistical work of the United Nations and WTO as it related to both the work programme of the two organizations and the increased harmonization of the concepts employed.

71. The Commission broadly agreed with the comments, summarized in document E/CN.3/487, on the draft guidelines. In particular, many Commission members

considered the programme of work described in the draft guidelines too ambitious, even allowing for the phasing of the work. They also considered that many of the tables and classifications proposed were far too detailed and gave a misleading impression of rigidity. However, the Commission recognized that for some developing countries the importance of international tourism in the national economy was so great that extensive statistical programmes were justified. Moreover, it noted that some of the detail called for in the draft guidelines arose from the specialized needs of different users.

72. For those reasons and because of the urgent need in many developing countries for up-to-date international guidance on the subject, the Commission agreed that the Secretariat should quickly revise the draft guidelines for publication, but that they should be referred to as "provisional" guidelines to indicate their tentative nature. It considered that in revising the document the following changes should be made: first, the section on sources of data should be expanded somewhat; secondly, some indication of the uses of the proposed tabulations should be provided; thirdly, an effort should be made, to the extent possible, to use definitions and concepts that were in harmony with the views of WTO and the recommendations on international migration statistics adopted under agenda item 6 (b) in such a way as to reduce the difficulties in practice; and fourthly, the detailed classifications contained in the draft guidelines should be made into appendices. The illustrative nature of the classifications should be made clearer and their detail somewhat reduced. Because of the wide variety of changes needed in the document prior to its publication, the Commission considered that the revised document should be circulated to its Chairman, the regional commissions and WTO for final comments, but that its publication need not await the twentieth session of the Commission.

73. A number of Commission members referred to the desirability of further work in the field of tourism statistics. Several members pointed to the value of studies of national practices in that area. Many members also stressed the importance of domestic tourism and the need for further international statistical work. They hoped that the Secretariat would have sufficient resources to give attention to the subject at some future date. Meanwhile, they expressed the hope that ECE and WTO would continue developmental work in that area.

#### Action taken by the Commission

74. The Commission:

(a) Requested the Secretary-General to revise the draft international guidelines presented in document E/CN.3/486 in the light of the comments by the national statistical authorities and international organizations summarized in document E/CN.3/487 and the views expressed by the Statistical Commission at its current session, and to circulate the revised document to the regional commissions, WTO and the Chairman of the Commission for final comment;

(b) Approved the draft, revised in accordance with the above process, as provisional guidelines on statistics of international tourism;

(c) Requested the Secretary-General to print and circulate the provisional guidelines, as so revised, as quickly as possible, for the use of Member States and others. 24/

D. Strategy for further work on a framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics

75. For its consideration of agenda item 6 (d), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/489) reviewing the work that had been done on the development and application of a framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics and suggesting directions for future work.

76. The Commission commended the report as providing a clear and comprehensive assessment of the state of the art in that field, covering work completed and the organization and anticipated results of work in progress or planned for the near future. The Commission strongly endorsed the flexible, practical approach to the framework for integration presented in the document and agreed that that approach should be applied in a continuous, urgent effort to systematize statistics in the various fields of social, demographic, and related economic statistics at both the national and international levels.

77. At the same time, the Commission expressed concern that the more pragmatic orientation in that work should not be interpreted as modifying the importance attached by countries or by the United Nations Statistical Office to the effort, which should remain as a high priority. It stressed the importance of working out concrete and realistic steps to be taken and techniques to be used in preparing and implementing a programme of integration involving both national and international activities, and encouraged the Statistical Office to undertake specific programmes during the next two years to keep the programme moving forward. In that connexion, the Commission was pleased to note that work was being initiated by the Statistical Office to prepare a revised edition of the Handbook of Household Surveys. 25/

78. The Commission discussed the two priorities for further work set out in the document. They were: first, continuing work on the harmonization of concepts, classifications and definitions in the various fields of social, demographic and related economic statistics, with particular emphasis on those with implications for data collection and analysis in two or more fields; and, secondly, a study of current empirical experiments on integration of social statistics in individual countries.

79. The Commission unanimously endorsed the two priority subjects and offered a number of suggestions for suitable topics to be considered in the preparation of further work in those areas, including work on concepts and classifications relating to socio-economic groups; urban and rural areas, geographical areas and size and type of localities; age; disabilities and handicaps; least advantaged population groups; and related economic concepts and classifications. The Commission was informed of work under way in ECE and ECLA to study country

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24/ Idem, para. 8 (b).

25/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 64.XVII.13.

practices and experience concerning classifications of socio-economic groups, and noted that reports of those studies would be made available in those regions in the near future. It also noted that a number of the concepts and classifications on which work was needed would be discussed in the regional meetings to be held on recommendations for the 1980 round of population and housing censuses. The Commission was informed that WHO had prepared a classification of impairments and handicaps for trial purposes to supplement the new revision of the International Classification of Diseases 26/ and that the recent European meeting on health statistics had agreed that a simplified version of the classification should be developed for use in household surveys.

80. The Commission agreed that the work on harmonization of concepts, classifications and definitions should be carried out, inter alia, with a view to achieving classification systems that would be useful for the identification and definition of client groups that were particularly important in the context of national policy-making, and noted with approval that a paper on the subject was being prepared by the United Kingdom for review by the Conference of European Statisticians. It urged other interested countries to collaborate in that study.

81. The Commission agreed that document E/CN.3/489 should be issued to serve as a reference source and provide orientation for national and international work on integration and on a framework for integration. The final version should include further elaboration of concepts of reporting and reference units, concepts of employment and underemployment, and the importance of social accounts seen in terms of developing economic statistics of the social services, particularly health and education, consistent with the concepts, classifications and definitions of the national accounts and balances. The Commission also agreed there should be a more detailed discussion of concepts and statistics of time and time use, and of their role in an integrated approach to social and demographic statistics. In addition, section IV, on implementation of the framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics, should be considered as preliminary only, and could be modified in the light of the Commission's new programme of work in that area. It was stressed that that section should have a better structure so as to emphasize the main elements of the suggested programme.

82. The Commission discussed with considerable interest the proposal that a paper should be prepared on problems of achieving integration in the collection and organization of social statistics. Great importance and urgency were attached to the proposal. The Commission agreed that the paper should examine in detail techniques for linking data from various sources such as population censuses, household surveys, and administrative records and data across different fields, for example, education and employment. The respective merits of those sources should be assessed, together with their costs, technical problems and political aspects, so as to lead to guidance for countries on how best to achieve integration of social statistics. Practical experience in some countries could be surveyed as part of the preparation for such a paper.

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26/ Manual of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death (Geneva, World Health Organization, 1967).

Action taken by the Commission

83. The Commission agreed that:

(a) The report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/489) on a strategy for further work on a framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics should be amended in the light of the Commission's comments and published as soon as possible to serve as a basic reference and provide orientation for national and international work on integration and on a framework for integration;

(b) A document on practical methods of integration of social statistics should be prepared. It should be considered, resources permitting, by an expert group and, perhaps with the help of a consultant, should include a section on links between national and subnational statistics; 27/

(c) The document should be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session together with the recommendations of the expert group; countries with practical experience in techniques of integration and methods of linkage should be invited to contribute to the preparation of the document;

(d) A progress report should be prepared on national and international work in specialized fields of social and demographic statistics on harmonization of social, demographic and related economic concepts, classifications and definitions within a framework for integration, including those relating to time and time use, and submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.

E. Framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries

84. For its consideration of agenda item 6 (e), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General containing a draft framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries (E/CN.3/490). The Commission noted that an earlier draft of the document had been discussed by an expert group on social and demographic statistics for developing countries and circulated to a number of national statistical authorities, the regional commissions, specialized agencies and other interested international bodies. The current document took account of the report of the expert group and of other comments received.

85. The Commission warmly welcomed document E/CN.3/490 as one example of the greater emphasis in the work of the Statistical Office on the development of statistical concepts and methods suitable for use in developing countries. The Commission agreed that improvement and integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries were urgently required. Concerted efforts were needed if the necessary methods and concepts were to be developed and disseminated, and the necessary organizations for collecting, processing and disseminating those statistics were to be established and maintained.

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27/ For the financial implications, see annex III below, paras. 4 and 5.

86. It was agreed that the report presented one valuable element in that process, a conceptual framework setting forth the scope and desirable priority areas of an integrated framework, as well as illustrative series, classifications and social indicators which developing countries could use as a point of reference in analysing and building up their statistical programmes in an integrated fashion. At the same time the Commission stressed that that represented only a first step, however significant, and that much more conceptual and empirical work was needed before social and demographic statistics in developing countries could approach the standards of timeliness, frequency and detail of conceptual precision demanded for integrated social and economic policy planning, administration and evaluation. In particular, the Commission noted the problems encountered by many developing countries in compiling and interpreting statistics of employment and unemployment - given the low percentage of their populations engaged in regular paid employment - and problems of timeliness and sufficient detail to meet urgent policy needs. The Commission urged that the results of experiments to develop new concepts in the various fields of social statistics suitable for use in developing countries should be widely disseminated and discussed on an urgent basis. It also suggested that references to concepts and statistics of time and time use within the context of the priority fields of statistics identified might be clarified in the final version of the document.

87. The Commission discussed the use in many countries of household surveys to collect a range of statistics on living conditions, accessibility to social services and other aspects of levels of living, and noted the potential of that approach for development of an integrated data programme. It also stressed the importance of being able to link survey data with census and other statistics.

88. In considering the illustrative series, classifications and social indicators shown in the report, the Commission agreed that the level of detail and frequency shown should be, as much as possible, reduced, in line with the practical possibilities of statistical collection and compilation in developing countries. A view was expressed that a clear distinction should be made between basic series and indicators as in Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics. 28/ The Commission agreed the report should be submitted to the regional commissions for additional comment before its completion and publication.

#### Action taken by the Commission

89. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the scope and organization of the proposed framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries;

(b) Agreed that the report should be submitted to the regional commissions for comment, and then revised in the light of the comments of the Commission and of the regional commissions and published;

(c) Urged countries to undertake empirical testing and experimentation with the various concepts and approaches presented in the framework for integration, in co-operation with the United Nations Statistical Office and the regional commissions.

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28/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.74.XVII.8.

F. Promoting the improvement of social statistics in developing countries

90. For its consideration of agenda item 6 (f), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on promoting the improvement of social statistics in developing countries (E/CN.3/482), addressed primarily to the problems of organization, collection and dissemination of social statistics in the conditions pertaining in developing countries and in the context of an integrated programme. The Commission noted that an earlier draft of the report had been discussed by an expert group on social statistics for developing countries and by regional statistical meetings in Africa and Latin America.

91. The Commission warmly welcomed the report and endorsed its emphasis on the importance of a joint approach to the subject involving both producers and users of statistics. It also endorsed the need to undertake programmes to improve social statistics in developing countries in a co-ordinated manner among the various sectoral agencies involved. That was particularly important when undertaking work combining data from administrative and survey sources, or linking national data with more detailed local information.

92. The Commission underlined the importance of ensuring that proposed improvement programmes were of a practical nature and reasonably limited in scope in the first instance so that useful results could be achieved within a short period. Particular attention should be paid to the problem of establishing appropriate co-ordination mechanisms among the various producers of statistics, and with the users concerned.

93. Co-ordination between producers and users was particularly important in establishing the priorities of the programme of work and in undertaking concerted programmes in selected development areas or with seriously affected population groups of priority concern. Co-ordination among the different producers was especially relevant in establishing agreed concepts, classifications, definitions<sup>c</sup> and tabulations as well as codes for processing and information retrieval.

94. The Commission noted that the matter of costs of surveys and censuses was of major concern to developing countries and requested that further information on the costs of statistical operations be compiled and disseminated. The Commission also recognized the need to design simple recording and analytical measures, taking into account the constraints of limited national resources both financially and in terms of skilled manpower. In that context, it was felt that training was a critical element, and the Commission welcomed the attention that had been paid to training in the report.

95. The Commission placed particular emphasis on the importance of speedy dissemination of data and pointed out the danger of generating more data from new programmes than could be processed within a reasonable time period or could be effectively transmitted to the user concerned.

96. The Commission noted with great interest the reports from several countries on ongoing and planned household surveys, and the related document before the Commission on the African household survey capability programme (E/CN.3/473). It agreed that such surveys, if carefully planned and executed, could constitute a major breakthrough in improving social and demographic statistics in developing

countries. It also agreed that it would be desirable to have a continuing capability for conducting surveys, varying the subject-matter and population coverage from round to round to meet the priorities of users, based on a national sample frame not limited to the more accessible geographical areas like urban centres.

97. The Commission was informed of a number of social statistics programmes in developing countries aimed at achieving greater integration of producers and users and among different fields, both at the country and the international level, including statistical support programmes assisted by UNICEF in a number of developing countries; the programmes varied according to the policy needs and statistical capacities of the individual countries. It noted with particular interest the use of those programmes for policy guidance as, for example, in providing early warning data on potential famine situations.

#### Action taken by the Commission

98. The Commission:

(a) Commended the Secretariat on the high priority that it was giving to the problems and needs of developing countries as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/482) and other reports that were before the Commission;

(b) Strongly supported the primary emphasis in the report on the problems of organization and implementation that arise in a co-ordinated programme to improve basic social statistics in developing countries, paying particular attention to those aspects of welfare and living conditions to which each country assigns priority;

(c) Welcomed the work that had been undertaken by developing countries in initiating those programmes and welcomed the support provided by UNICEF in their promotion;

(d) Requested that:

(i) The report should be widely distributed, taking into account any further comments from the regional commissions;

(ii) The report should be distributed together with the report entitled "A draft framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics for developing countries" (E/CN.3/490);

(iii) The Secretariat, in co-operation with the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, should ensure that appropriate manuals and reference materials designed to assist those programmes were prepared.

#### G. Social indicators

99. For its consideration of agenda item 6 (g), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General containing draft guidelines and illustrative series for social indicators (E/CN.3/488). The Commission noted that an earlier draft of



the report had been widely circulated for comment to national statistical authorities, the regional commissions, specialized agencies and other interested international bodies, as requested at its eighteenth session. The report before the Commission took account of the comments received, and of the discussion of extracts from the report used in the preparation of documentation for the expert group on social and demographic statistics for developing countries, and for the expert group on welfare-oriented measures to complement the national accounts and balances.

100. The Commission generally commended the flexible, pragmatic approach to the development and selection of social indicators presented in the document and agreed that it provided a useful point of reference and orientation for countries and international bodies interested in preparing social indicators. It noted that the illustrative series, classifications and social indicators shown were not to be considered as recommendations on series and indicators to be compiled at national and international levels, and, in fact, that there would be little purpose at the current stage in trying to achieve such recommendations. The series described in the report were intended to serve as a useful inventory which interested producers and users of statistics might consult in the process of identifying and defining indicators useful for any of a number of different purposes.

101. The Commission considered various purposes which social indicators might serve in planning, policy-making, research, general monitoring of social conditions and changes, levels of living and living conditions, etc., and agreed that it was neither feasible nor desirable in international guidelines to designate any one of those alone as pre-eminently important. The purposes for which indicators might be compiled, in any given case, and their actual specification and selection, should be left to national and international bodies and researchers to decide in terms of their particular interests and possibilities of data compilation.

102. The Commission stressed the importance of continued international co-operation and co-ordination of work on social indicators, and particularly urged that overlapping or conflicting demands on countries for the compilation of indicators must be avoided. It reiterated the importance of ensuring that the illustrative series, classifications and indicators were not misconstrued as international recommendations on indicators which should be compiled. To avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, it was agreed that a statement to this effect should appear on the cover of the final document and that the title should be "Social indicators: preliminary guidelines and illustrative series".

103. It also agreed that the international bodies concerned should be asked to update the sections of the report dealing with their own activities.

104. The Commission also noted some inconsistencies in the treatment of social indicators for developing countries in document E/CN.3/488 and in the document on a framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics for developing countries (E/CN.3/490), and agreed that those differences should be reconciled in the final versions of the two documents.

Action taken by the Commission

105. The Commission decided that:

(a) The report (E/CN.3/488) should be amended to take account of the comments of the Commission, and published, so that it would receive the widest possible circulation;

(b) The illustrative series, classification and indicators shown in the document represented a substantial updating of that material since the publication of Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics, 29/ on the basis of wide consultation, and the revised report should therefore be considered as superseding the material presented in the latter publication;

(c) The Secretariat should continue to keep national and international work on social indicators under review and submit a summary report on recent developments in the field to the Commission at its twentieth session.

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29/ Idem.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

106. In considering agenda item 7, the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on co-ordination of environment statistics (E/CN.3/491 and Add.1), a report of the Secretary-General on draft guidelines for statistics on materials/energy balances (E/CN.3/492), and chapter IV of a report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility of welfare-oriented measures to complement the national accounts and balances (E/CN.3/477). The Commission noted that at its eighteenth session a programme of work in that area had been approved, 30/ which was to start with an inventory of the requirements for statistics of the environment and a survey of their availability, and proceed, as resources permitted, with work on guidelines and manuals, the reorientation of existing data, and finally the international collection and compilation of new data.

107. The Commission was informed of the discussions with UNEP concerning the funding of a programme of environment statistics. The proposed programme as presented to UNEP was in accordance with the suggestions made by the Statistical Commission at its eighteenth session. That approach, as a first step, emphasized inventories of requirements and availability of environment statistics, together with the initiation of work on definitions and concepts which were required to organize a number of pilot studies in selected countries.

108. The Commission was informed of the activities of the United Nations system in environment statistics, with an updating of those activities described in documents E/CN.3/491 and E/CN.3/491/Add.1. The Commission noted that the activities described in those two documents covered work related to statistics both on the physical environment and on its human and social aspects. The Commission considered that further work on environmental statistics should continue to encompass both types of activities. Work carried out by the Secretariat in connexion with Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver from 31 May to 11 June 1976, was cited as a useful example of a statistical activity that related to the human and social aspects of the environment.

109. The Commission was also informed that it had been agreed with UNEP and the specialized agencies concerned that UNEP would be invited to participate in the next session of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities with a view to having an extended discussion on the co-ordination of statistics and related programmes concerning the environment.

110. The Commission strongly underlined the high priority that it wished to give to the subject and expressed its disappointment that the negotiations with UNEP had not yet resulted in a decision to fund a basic programme on environment statistics. It pointed out that that was becoming an increasingly important area of activity and that countries were hoping for leadership from the Secretariat.

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30/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 and corrigendum, para. 92.

111. The Commission stressed the importance of co-ordination in that field, as it cut across all subject areas and involved a large number of non-statistical producers and users not usually involved in the statistical process. It pointed out that the problem of co-ordination was not limited to the international organizations but had to be carefully monitored at the national level.

112. The Commission considered that the report on statistics of materials/energy balances (E/CN.3/492) was well developed and interesting, and that it was a good approach paper for the long term. For the near future, however, the Commission stressed the need for the step-by-step approach outlined in the programme approved at its eighteenth session, concentrating initially on the inventory of needs and availability, and the development of concepts, classifications, and tabulations. That was the basis of the programme outlined in the report of the eighteenth session and which, as noted earlier in the present report, had been presented to UNEP. The Commission felt that the sooner the programme was launched the better.

113. With respect to the inventory, the Commission was informed that ECE had recently developed a draft questionnaire on needs and availabilities of environmental data, and that the Secretariat intended to adapt that for general use in all regions, with particular attention to the circumstances of developing countries. It would be a relatively modest effort. If increased funding became available the effort would be considerably expanded. The representative from the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) informed the Commission of the work on environment statistics being undertaken in the CMEA countries where, on the basis of already existing uniform statistical indicators, an indicator system had been constructed and adopted by the CMEA Standing Commission on Statistics. Further work was aimed at introducing that indicator system into the statistical practice of the CMEA countries on the one hand and at further improving the system itself on the other.

114. With respect to pilot studies, the representative of Canada informed the Commission that there was much interest in his country among all the responsible agencies in working closely with the Secretariat in that area, and that considerable work had already been done on delineating the problems to be addressed, structuring the system, and developing partial models. The appearance of document E/CN.3/492 was therefore very timely. The Commission was informed that if funding became available pilot studies would be undertaken in additional countries, including developing countries.

#### Action taken by the Commission

115. The Commission:

(a) Expressed its regret that the necessary funding of the type of programme on environment statistics already agreed to by the Commission at its eighteenth session, and involving a package of interrelated activities, had not yet been approved, and urged UNEP to consider favourably the funding as a matter of urgency; the Commission requested that its views on the topic be transmitted to UNEP immediately;

(b) Welcomed the decision to hold a meeting on co-ordination of environment statistics on the occasion of the next session of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities;

(c) Requested that a further progress report on co-ordination in that area be prepared for the Commission at its twentieth session, and that the Secretariat and the specialized agencies should be invited to indicate problems as well as progress;

(d) Noted with satisfaction that some work was already under way, in the preparation of a questionnaire on data needs and availability and in the initiation of a pilot study, and requested that a progress report on those activities also be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.

## V. INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATIONS

### A. International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services (ICGS)

116. For its consideration of agenda item 8 (a), the Commission had before it the final draft version of ICGS (E/CN.3/493 (INTRODUCTION and PARTS I-IV)). The Commission recalled that work on ICGS had begun pursuant to its resolution 4 (XV), which requested the Secretary-General "to draft, in consultation with national statistical offices, the framework of a commodity classification scheme which is linked ... with the revised ISIC"; and that, in addition to consultation with national statistical offices, the work of constructing the classification benefited from consultations with organizations within and outside the United Nations system and at meetings of regional statisticians.

117. At its eighteenth session the Commission had outlined certain modifications it wished to have made, 31/ and noted that those changes had now been incorporated. The Commission welcomed the fact that, in particular, ICGS was now aligned as far as possible with SITC, Rev.2, 32/ and agreed that the special notation employed was a useful means of increasing the co-ordination between ICGS and SITC, Rev.2.

118. The Commission noted that some further work, chiefly of a non-substantive nature, remained to be done. For example, it desired to have included, as an appendix, a list of SITC, Rev.2, codes where those had been replaced by an asterisk in ICGS. It was also suggested that the appendix could usefully be expanded by one or two columns so as to indicate not only which goods were omitted from a given ICGS subclass, but where such goods were to be found in the classification.

119. The Commission agreed that the document was much improved over the earlier version, 33/ and that it would be very useful. A wide-ranging discussion ensued, during which a number of delegates, especially those of developing countries, expressed the view that ICGS was extremely useful as a model for the construction of national goods and services classifications, and should be published. However, many delegates felt that the classification should be considered an experimental working document, and although it should be widely distributed, in the view of those delegates it was not considered appropriate to recommend it currently as an international standard. Another view was expressed that the classification might need to be reviewed for developing countries and that that might be clarified in the introduction to the document. The view was also expressed that the classification of non-transportable goods and services was a field in which there was little experience, and the Secretariat was requested to consider all the

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31/ Ibid., paras. 120-125.

32/ Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 2 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XVII.6).

33/ E/CN.3/457.

possible avenues of approach to that problem in connexion with its work on the long-term programme considered under agenda item 8 (b).

120. The Commission was informed of the work being undertaken by CMEA and EEC in the development of classifications of goods and services. The need for co-ordination in that work in the long-term programme was stressed.

#### Action taken by the Commission

121. The Commission requested the Secretary-General:

(a) To issue ICGS and circulate it widely, after taking account of the views expressed by the Commission, which would require the incorporation of certain relatively minor changes to be made in consultation with interested national statistical offices and organizations within the United Nations system;

(b) To attach to ICGS an appendix showing the correlation between SITC, Rev.2, codes and ICGS codes;

(c) To attach to ICGS an appendix giving SITC, Rev.2, codes where those had been replaced by an asterisk in the classification;

(d) To publish indexes to ICGS;

(e) To institute work on the "common groupings" and report at the twentieth session on the progress achieved.

#### B. Expert Group on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications

122. The Commission based its discussion of agenda item 8 (b) on a document prepared by the Secretariat (E/CN.3/494), containing a summary of comments from national statistical offices and organizations within and outside the United Nations system on the report of the Expert Group on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications. The document also contained an analysis of the comments and a reformulation of the experts' recommendations.

123. The Commission emphasized the importance of work in the field of activity and goods and services classifications and other related classifications, and expressed its support for and approval of the programme outlined in document E/CN.3/494. It recognized the advantage of a structured programme with a clearly defined long-term goal, namely a combined trade/production goods classification and associated classifications for non-transportable goods and for services. The Commission recognized the need to adapt the underlying structures upon which the proposed harmonized classification system would be based.

124. The Commission agreed that ISIC <sup>34/</sup> would have to be revised, and requested that a progress report outlining the broad principles of the revision be submitted

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<sup>34/</sup> International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.68.XVII.8).

to the Commission at its twentieth session. It recognized the central role that the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) would play in that work, as it would constitute for transportable goods the building blocks of the combined trade/production goods classification, and urged the Secretariat to take as active a role in developing HS as resources permitted. It welcomed the statement of the representative of the Customs Co-operation Council that the Council agreed in principle to introduce the industrial origin criterion in the construction of HS.

125. It urged the Secretariat to maintain close liaison with regional and other organizations within and outside the United Nations system so as to harmonize activity and other classifications of those organizations with those of the United Nations. Several members stressed the importance of a step-by-step development of the whole system of co-ordinated classification systems in the coming decade. It was also noted that such a step-by-step process would not necessarily mean, as proposed in document E/CN.3/494, that the work on a given classification would start only when the work on the preceding classification was nearly finished. On the contrary, the progress of work should proceed in a parallel, combined manner to the extent possible.

126. It noted with appreciation that EEC had agreed to co-ordinate the work of revising its activity classification with the work of the United Nations Statistical Office in revising ISIC. Finally, it urged the Secretariat to make every effort to expedite the work, although it recognized that there were both internal and external constraints.

127. As the work was of a continuing and long-term nature, the view was expressed that it would benefit from the establishment of a continuing informal consultative panel from whom advice and guidance could be obtained and to whom work in progress could be submitted from time to time.

#### Action taken by the Commission

128. The Commission:

(a) Strongly emphasized the need to intensify Statistical Office participation in the work of constructing HS so as to ensure that the resulting building blocks would be suitable for the purposes of the programme;

(b) Recommended the establishment of an informal consultative panel that would be available for advice and guidance over the time span covered by the programme of work;

(c) Approved the general long-term programme set forth in document E/CN.3/494;

(d) Requested that a progress report giving in outline the major revisions expected to be made in ISIC (especially as required to achieve the building-block concept of the harmonized system) be submitted to the Commission at its twentieth session.



## VI. STATISTICAL ORGANIZATION

129. The Commission considered agenda item 9 on the basis of a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/495), containing a review of major issues in the organization of national statistical services. The document was based on materials prepared for the United Nations Interregional Seminar on Statistical Organization, held at Ottawa in 1973, and other sources. The Commission noted that the document was intended to provide a setting for discussion of the subject at the current session. The Commission was pleased to note that the document would be supplemented by a new issue of the Handbook of Statistical Organization 35/ which was in preparation and which was expected to be completed by the end of 1977.

130. The document began with a review of internal organizational structures of a statistical agency and degree of centralization and then focused on the major challenges that top management of a national statistical agency must face to establish external and internal capabilities, to carry out planning and programme co-ordination functions, and to set priorities.

131. The Commission was unanimous in its appreciation of the coverage, balance, content and clarity of the document and warmly commended the Secretariat for the preparation of the report. It was felt that the document was very timely and that it constituted the best and most definitive treatment of the subject currently available.

132. In the course of the discussion numerous points were raised, centering on three major issues: (a) the importance of a more outward-looking orientation by statistical authorities in addressing and resolving difficult problems of external relations with users, respondents and the general public; (b) the difficulties of achieving an effective and efficient balance between centralized and decentralized approaches to statistical organization; and (c) the particular problems encountered in many developing countries in establishing and maintaining continuity in statistical operations and management.

133. On the first issue, the importance of an outward-looking orientation, the Commission considered increasing demands for statistics from many quarters outside government and at various levels of government, from international to local levels. Those demands, combined with much greater sophistication and interest in the use and interpretation of the statistics, required substantial new attention to external relations on the part of statistical authorities. Problems to be dealt with included excessive burdens on both persons and institutions to supply data, protecting the integrity, objectivity and neutrality of statistical activities and ensuring confidentiality and privacy in all phases of statistical work. The Commission noted a number of steps national authorities had taken to meet those issues and agreed with the general approach suggested in the document, one of giving priority to establishing effective possibilities for creating and maintaining external co-operation and understanding. In particular, it was suggested that a mechanism

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35/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 54.XVII.7.

for continuous assessment with government and non-government users and respondents of questions relating to respondent burden and safeguarding of privacy was useful.

134. Considering the issue from the point of view of the developing countries, the Commission agreed that despite the widely acknowledged essential role played by statistics in planning, policy-making and administration, there was still a lack of awareness of the importance of statistics in government work in a number of those countries. It stressed the importance of finding ways of explaining to users the long time periods required for developing reliable information and the fact that reliable data could not be developed without a substantial statistical infrastructure. A solid infrastructure took time, resources, organization and continuity in management and operations. In concluding its discussion of this issue, the Commission agreed that both developed and developing countries needed strategies to ensure effective external relations, and that that should be a subject for continuing study by the Commission.

135. In regard to the degree of centralization, while the Commission recognized that no rigid rule could be proposed because of differences in the circumstances and traditions of various countries, there was broad agreement that for many developing and newly independent countries a high degree of centralization was desirable for rational application and optimum utilization of the scarce manpower allocated to statistics. It also emphasized that, whatever the degree of centralization, a strong co-ordinating body was vital to ensure a maximum of integration in the statistical process and in its outputs.

136. The Commission noted that changing requirements and technologies required, above all, a flexible strategy combining centralization and decentralization in varying degrees. For example, greater sophistication in modern methods and procedures of data collection gave certain advantages to functional centralization, in many cases to ensure quality control and economies of scale in applying new technologies. On the other hand, where greater emphasis was being given to use of administrative records, the need for procedural efficiency and quality control favoured a more decentralized approach. In the handling of subject-matter specialities, greater emphasis on multidisciplinary analysis was usually easier to implement on a relatively centralized basis, while specialized analysis seemed to indicate a more decentralized approach, one closer to users in ministries. The Commission agreed that greater emphasis on analyses of statistics after their initial compilation and tabulation was of great advantage and was aided by functional centralization, which freed subject-matter resources for that purpose.

137. The Commission was particularly concerned with problems of co-ordination and organization of data collection and data use at various geographical levels of government. It noted with great interest instances where successful co-operation had been achieved in collecting and compiling data through a hierarchy of local and national officials, and in meeting the special needs of local and regional users of statistics through special offices catering to their needs. The Commission agreed concerted efforts were needed, with implications for the entire range of statistical activities, to adequately meet local and regional needs and demands for timely, detailed statistics.

138. The Commission considered that the document would be especially useful to developing countries, where timely and relevant statistics were particularly needed to support the programmes arising out of the Declaration on the Establishment

of a New International Economic Order, the World Food Conference, the World Employment Conference and other international and regional conferences on economic and social policy. It noted that many developing countries have experienced severe losses of professional staff in their central statistical organizations, thus reducing their contributions to planning and policy formulation processes. Those losses and the generally severe shortages of trained statistical personnel in those countries reflected in large part the disadvantaged position of the statistical services with respect to pay scales and related working conditions.

139. The Commission noted that its work and that of the United Nations Statistical Office, as reflected in the agenda and documentation of the current session, had been increasingly oriented towards meeting as closely as possible the conditions and requirements of the developing countries, but agreed that in the absence of strong functional statistical services within those countries their efforts might not bear fruit. The Commission stressed that the production of adequate statistics needed by Governments for planning and evaluation of economic and social policy required a great deal of time, continuity and adequate resources.

140. The Commission also discussed with interest those sections of the document dealing with statistical planning and priorities. It agreed that a general planning orientation was essential to the efficient management and co-ordination of diverse statistical programmes. It noted with interest the various reports by countries concerning their approaches to planning their statistical programmes, including combinations of long-term statistical planning, government-wide statistical budgeting, programme budgeting, and cost analysis programmes. It stressed the continuous effort that was needed to ensure that statistical budgeting was viewed in the context of providing essential programme support activities geared to the Government's various missions, and not as a series of autonomous activities unrelated to other Government programmes such as those in agriculture, trade, health, education, and economic planning and development.

141. In relation to further work, the Commission considered a number of possible subjects: the relationship of the central agency to provincial or State statistical offices and the possibilities for achieving more effective statistical co-operation among them; an assessment of arrangements for consultation with the non-governmental community in various countries to identify user needs and review major issues such as confidentiality, response burden, etc.; the implications for national statistical services of participation in the work of international agencies, and the benefits to countries of their participation in international statistical activities; ways and means of ensuring data protection; codes for ensuring the integrity and objectivity of statistical services; the pros and cons of national statistical advisory councils; ways and means to set statistical priorities; the promotion of statistical training; the special organizational problems of developing countries; and others. The Commission agreed that a selection of priority topics would need to be made within the constraint of resources available to carry out the programme of work.

#### Action taken by the Commission

142. The Commission:

(a) Agreed that document E/CN.3/495 should be printed and widely distributed not only to statistical authorities but also to those country authorities responsible

for the basic decisions affecting the future of statistical programmes; in connexion with the latter, it was agreed that a summary of the document should accompany it; 36/

(b) Commended the document to national authorities as a basis for reviewing problems of statistical organization in their countries;

(c) Agreed that top priority in further work should be given to studying ways of overcoming problems of statistical co-ordination and to approaches to strengthening links between national and regional or local authorities involved in statistical collection and use;

(d) Agreed that the topic "Statistical organization" should be included in the agenda of the Commission at its next session, with special emphasis on ways and means of deciding on priorities in statistical programmes;

(e) Agreed that the Secretary-General should prepare a number of booklets on topics of statistical organization as reviewed in the document and in the Commission's discussion, and that that activity should be included in the work programme of the Statistical Office;

(f) Agreed that the Secretary-General should draw the attention of Member States to the serious disadvantages resulting from inadequate statistical investment in some countries, particularly developing countries, and the resulting inability to produce the timely, relevant statistics required by Governments.

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36/ For the financial implications, see annex III below, para. 8 (d).

VII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF STATISTICS  
IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

143. The Commission decided to discuss agenda item 4 under three subheadings: (a) international technical assistance in statistics, 1977-1981; (b) basic problems and issues; and (c) African household survey capability programme. Several members expressed the view that the discussion of the item would have benefited if all members from developing countries could have participated.

A. International technical assistance in statistics, 1977-1981

144. The Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "International technical assistance in statistics, 1977-1981" (E/CN.3/474), a joint report of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and selected non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system, containing a scheme of technical assistance to developing countries for the five-year period 1977-1981. Assistance activities financed from all sources available for such purposes in the United Nations system, i.e., from regular budget programmes, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, funds-in-trust, etc., were included.

145. The Commission expressed its appreciation of the work of the Secretariat and the specialized agencies in producing the comprehensive review of technical assistance in statistics, and requested that for its twentieth session a similar report should be prepared to deal with the period 1979-1983.

146. The Commission noted that recent financial events had overtaken the report and a number of suggestions were made to ensure that a more current document would be made available at its twentieth session. The Commission felt that the resources for technical assistance shown in the report were over-optimistic in view of the financial difficulties of UNDP. The over-all decline in real resources presented a serious problem for developing countries and called for careful management and setting of priorities with a view to ensuring the most effective utilization of those resources. At the same time the Commission felt that efforts should be renewed to obtain an increase in funds for technical assistance in statistics.

147. While welcoming the substantial increase in funds from UNFPA for demographic and related statistics, the Commission noted that resources for other areas of statistics had fallen, and suggested that the scope of UNFPA assistance might be extended to include other important areas of social statistics. It noted that there had been an increase in the funds for advisory services with a substantial decrease in the share allocated to training. While expressing its appreciation of the value of advisory services, particularly regional advisory services, it was concerned at the decrease in the allocation to training, especially at the regional level, and recommended that the question of priorities should be carefully re-examined.

148. The Commission was informed that developing countries had been invited by the Government of Czechoslovakia to participate in the courses of the Computer Research Centre in Bratislava. It was stressed that the opportunity provided by the courses might be used to discuss the possibility of undertaking a comparative study of SNA and MPS with special regard to the needs of developing countries. The

Commission was also informed of training programmes being undertaken by a number of States members of the Commission including Japan, Hungary, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and also by EEC. The Commission emphasized the importance of training in statistics and expressed its appreciation of the various efforts that were being made, and, in particular, the assistance being provided by two of its States members, Japan and Iraq, to the regional training institutes in Tokyo and Baghdad respectively. The Commission was informed of the growing trend for fellows participating in the international training programmes of the United States Government to be financed by the international organizations, and suggested that those organizations should discuss with the United States training authorities questions of mutual interest.

149. The Commission stressed the importance of co-ordination between the international and bilateral programmes of technical assistance in order to harmonize activities and avoid duplication, especially in view of the decline in total available resources. It recommended that the Secretariat should provide information on the nature and magnitude of bilateral technical assistance. The Commission was informed that the Secretariat was taking steps to include that information in its next report and was already including bilateral experts in the semi-annual list of statistical experts on field assignments.

150. The Commission recognized the need for developing countries to undertake continuous monitoring of their respective developmental efforts and felt that such an evaluation could be undertaken only if the appropriate statistical information were available for policy consideration with a minimum of delay. It noted that developing countries had expressed their desire for support in establishing the necessary co-ordinated statistical infrastructure. It felt that such assistance currently being made available to developing countries in that field was often of a piecemeal nature, making only a limited contribution to the establishment of that infrastructure. It felt that areas in which integrated support should be provided included the creation of an ongoing field survey capability, the evolution of integrated data systems, the establishment of national samples, the promotion of an electronic data-processing capacity and the establishment of institutionalized arrangements for channelling such information into policy-making procedures. The Commission stressed the importance of co-ordination among the different agencies in the planning and delivery of assistance, recognizing the need of the developing countries for support in the establishment of co-ordinated statistical infrastructure, thereby ensuring the effective use of scarce resources and fostering greater co-ordination at the national level. The Commission also indicated the desirability for developing countries to be forthcoming with programmes of work for setting up such infrastructure requiring international support.

151. The Commission was informed that, upon the request of its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination and the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities, the Deputy Administrator of UNDP had brought to the attention of the UNDP resident representatives the need to co-ordinate technical assistance statistics within a country and the value of setting up an interdepartmental committee to review all statistical programmes, including technical assistance. The review was not to be confined to projects in statistics but was to include large projects with statistical components. It was suggested that the national statistical office should play a central role in the co-ordinating arrangement. The Commission welcomed the action taken by UNDP in promoting the co-ordination of technical assistance in statistics, but noted with regret that UNDP was not represented during the discussion of the item.

## B. Basic problems and issues

152. The Commission then considered some basic problems and issues in respect of technical assistance for the improvement of statistics in the developing countries on the basis of two documents (E/CN.3/472 and Add.1), prepared by Malaysia and Kenya respectively. The Commission expressed its warm appreciation of the two papers.

153. In its discussion, the Commission emphasized the importance of the quality of the assistance rendered. It underlined the need to develop suitable criteria for analysing the efficiency and effectiveness of the various forms of assistance provided. It was also suggested that other regions should consider carrying out reviews of statistical training requirements along the lines of the review being undertaken in Africa. The Commission was informed of a proposal, submitted to UNDP for funding, for an interregional workshop between producers and users of statistics on the effectiveness of technical assistance in statistics.

154. The Commission expressed concern over the administrative complexity of arrangements for recruiting experts. Delays in recruitment were particularly noted, over and above the delays resulting from decisions that had to be taken by the candidates and the Governments. The Commission asked the Secretariat to redouble its efforts for speedy recruitment.

155. The Commission welcomed the trend towards advisers assisting more than one country, considering that it was an economical and efficient use of very scarce resources, and felt that the greater use of those advisers should be encouraged. It felt that in those countries where work programmes had already been initiated, the provision of short-term high-level consultants with clearly delineated technical functions should also be encouraged. It also felt that the exchange of experts among developing countries, particularly within a region, should be promoted, as well as the use of associate experts, i.e., junior personnel provided free of cost by certain Governments, particularly to replace national statisticians temporarily absent for further training. The Commission welcomed the idea of statistical teams covering a number of fields and working in a country in a co-ordinated manner, considering that was one way of ensuring an integrated approach to the improvement of national statistics, and an economical way of using some specialist advisers and consultants in areas such as electronic data processing or sampling. The Commission noted that that was in line with its desire to promote the creation of co-ordinated statistical infrastructure.

156. The Commission agreed that the statistically least developed among the developing countries required considerable further assistance in the organization and expansion of their statistical services. In those countries, the individual country expert would continue to play a significant role and might be a multipurpose adviser who could cover a number of subject fields.

157. The Commission underlined the importance of advisers working closely with counterparts so as to transfer effectively to the national staff and organization the technical and administrative ideas underlying their work. It was understood that, in turn, the country would need to provide suitable counterparts and make adequate administrative provision for the utilization of the guidance offered.

158. The Commission strongly emphasized the importance of the guidance provided by standards and manuals and through the use of technical meetings. That was of great help both to countries and to the advisers and the training institutes. It was understood that international and regional manuals would have to be adapted by countries to their own special circumstances, and further work should be undertaken by the Secretariat in producing simplified manuals for the use of developing countries and offering guidance as to their adaptation and implementation. The Commission was informed that the lack of available funds had limited the convening of regional meetings. The Commission felt that those meetings were instrumental in the proper development and harmonization of statistics and urged that they be adequately funded.

159. Of particular importance, in view of the scarcity of trained personnel, was the need to undertake the training of trainers so that the impact of the training programmes would be most widely felt through a multiplier effect. Regional programmes needed to be supplemented by subregional and national training programmes, often carried out by the regional institutes, together with in-service training programmes carried out by the national statistical offices. The Commission emphasized the importance of specialized training programmes in newer technical areas like electronic data processing and household surveys, and noted that there were still considerable regional imbalances in the provision of such training.

160. The Commission discussed the problems encountered in regional training programmes including language proficiency, the heterogeneity of students, and the relevance of the courses, and was informed of the steps being taken to overcome those difficulties. A particularly important problem concerned the relocation of the student upon his return. Although in most cases the student returned to make a positive contribution to the statistical work in his country, there were cases where the training was not being properly utilized or the student was lost to the country's statistical resources. The question of bonding students was discussed and the Commission noted both the advantages and disadvantages in that procedure.

#### Action taken by the Commission

161. The Commission recommended a draft resolution entitled "Financing of training of statisticians, especially through the regional funds of the United Nations Development Programme" for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. (For the text, see para. 1 above, draft resolution I.)

#### C. African household survey capability programme

162. The Commission based its discussion on a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/473), describing a technical assistance programme developed by ECA as a follow-up to the African Census Programme, as requested by the Conference of African Statisticians.

163. The Commission agreed that it was vitally important for African countries to develop permanent field survey organizations to produce integrated data on employment, other productive activity, income, levels of living, and related social and demographic statistics on a continuing basis. The Commission noted that the programme was country-oriented in that it aimed at improving the capacity of countries to produce statistics for their own needs, but that a regional supporting component was necessary for its successful implementation.



164. It was pleased to learn that survey operations had already started in a number of African countries, with limited assistance from existing staff of ECA, and that ECA had given high priority to the establishment of a small regional team of survey advisers fully dedicated to the programme. Although the Commission was in broad agreement with the view that the bulk of advisory assistance could most effectively and efficiently be organized on a regional basis, it recognized that for some countries, particularly the least developed, country experts might be required.

165. The Commission considered that the technical and practical aspects of the programme described in document E/CN.3/473 were sound. Several members noted that such a national survey capability could provide interrelated data for special population groups, for example, data on the rural poor or on the disabled. The usefulness of such a survey activity in providing data to evaluate development programmes was also mentioned. Because of the diversity of survey applications, the Commission stressed the importance of flexibility in programme arrangements and the need for participating countries to establish their own priorities for data collecting. The Commission considered that the proposal was particularly well timed, as it followed up on the initiative of the African Census Programme.

166. The Commission welcomed the African initiative and expressed the view that similar programmes with respect to survey operations should be developed to meet the needs of other developing regions.

167. The representative of the ILO informed the Commission of the results of the World Conference on Employment in June 1976. The basic-needs strategy of the Conference had stressed problems of poverty and under-employment, and the Commission was pleased to learn that in the Declaration of Principles and Programme of Action that the Conference had adopted, 37/ the organization of household surveys to obtain data on those and other subjects had been proposed. The Commission was also pleased to learn that the ILO hoped to appoint three regional statistical advisers for that purpose in 1977 and that their work would be closely co-ordinated with other survey development efforts.

168. Several other specialized agencies expressed their support for the programme. The Commission was pleased to learn they would be able to supply the necessary technical guidance with respect to their own subject fields; the existence of national survey capabilities would make it possible to base their own operations on more adequate data. In that connexion, the Commission stressed the importance of co-ordination to ensure that resources were not wasted. It expressed the view that, within countries, the national statistical offices should provide that co-ordination and that, at the international level, the statistical services of the United Nations and its regional commissions should perform the same function within the context of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities.

169. The Commission recognized that the programme, because of its multisubject nature, would need to seek financing from a number of international and bilateral sources, which meant that special attention had to be given to that aspect of co-ordination also. Indeed, the view was expressed that that was perhaps the second-best funding arrangement. The first choice would have been a single donor. To meet the requirement for co-ordination, it was suggested that donor agencies might wish to consider the formation of a steering committee. Similarly, there

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37/ See E/5857.

might be advantages in establishing a continuing working group comprising the heads of statistical offices in recipient countries to review technical aspects of the programme and ensure proper utilization of the central regional advisory components and other assistance to be provided.

170. The Commission considered that it was important that adequate resources for the activity be mobilized as quickly as possible. It considered that a consultative meeting of prospective donors might be convened and it was pleased to learn that several prospective donor countries had expressed support for such a meeting.

171. The special needs of the ESCAP region with respect to household survey development were also brought to the attention of the Commission.

172. In addition, it was pointed out that adequate attention had to be given to pilot studies, data processing, and publicity, which had received little mention in the document under consideration, as well as to the complementarity between surveys, censuses and administrative records. A suggestion was made that the four-year repetitive cycle of surveys should be supplemented by annual surveys of an appropriate scale to provide current social indicators.

#### Action taken by the Commission

173. The Commission:

(a) Agreed with the soundness and value of the proposals for developing national household survey capabilities contained in document E/CN.3/473;

(b) Pointed to the relevance of those proposals for other developing regions;

(c) Urged a renewed effort to mobilize the necessary financing.

174. The Commission also recommended a draft resolution entitled "National Household Survey Capability Programme" for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. (For the text, see para. 1 above, draft resolution II.).

VIII. CO-ORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL  
STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES

A. Working Group on International Statistical  
Programmes and Co-ordination

175. Pursuant to Commission resolution 1 (XVI) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1306 (XLIV), the Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination held its sixth session at Geneva on 30 June and 1 July 1975. The report of the Working Group (E/CN.3/470) was before the Commission for its consideration of agenda item 3 (a).

176. Members of the Commission expressed their appreciation of the work of the Working Group, which was of considerable assistance to the Commission in discharging its functions. The Commission noted with satisfaction that, in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission at its eighteenth session, 38/ the sixth session of the Working Group was attended not only by members of the Commission's Bureau, but also by members who ensured the continuous representation of the developing countries.

177. The Commission decided to consider the substantive portion of the Working Group's report under the relevant items of the agenda.

178. The Commission agreed that until the twentieth session of the Commission the composition of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination should be as follows:

- V. R. Rao (India), Chairman
- S. H. Al-Jalil (Iraq)
- J. W. Duncan (United States of America)
- I. Kerstenetzky (Brazil)
- M. A. Korolev (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
- Sir Claus Moser (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
- I. Ohlsson (Sweden)
- P. Singh (Kenya)

179. The Commission also agreed that Mr. Rao, Mr. Kerstenetzky and Mr. Singh, the representatives of developing countries, should be replaced by Mr. R. Chander (Malaysia), Ms. L. Boeri de Cervetto (Argentina) and Mr. A. Kamoun (Tunisia), respectively should any of the former three be unable to participate in a particular session of the Working Group. No alternate was designated for Mr. Al-Jalil since the Commission would not have any other members from that region in 1977.

180. The Commission recommended that the seventh session of the Working Group should be held at Geneva on 23 and 24 June 1977 (see para. 2 above, recommendation B).

38/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 and corrigendum, para. 172.

B. International statistical programmes, 1977-1981

181. In accordance with the request of the Commission at its seventeenth session, a report of the Secretary-General on international statistical programmes for the period 1977-1981 (E/CN.3/471 and Add.1) and an informal note on major statistical policy objectives were before the Commission for its consideration of agenda item 3 (b). The reports were presented to the Commission as joint reports of the United Nations Statistical Office and the statistical divisions of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, in order to assist in the deliberations concerning the co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes.

182. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the Statistical Office, the statistical divisions of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and other organizations for their considerable efforts in preparing a useful report. The members agreed that the document was in all respects what the Working Group had specifically requested. The Commission welcomed the fact that the document contained information on costs and resources devoted to international statistical programmes although it now recognized that, in a number of instances, those data were indicative rather than exact.

183. The Commission noted that the report listed the major statistical projects planned by the organizations for 1977-1981 according to the six main statistical policy objectives which had been approved by the Commission at its eighteenth session. 39/

184. The Commission reviewed the selected high-priority projects shown in the programmes for the various organizations.

185. The Commission stressed the importance for the developing countries of including in their development plans long-term - e.g. four-year to five-year - as well as, ideally, annual plans for the improvement of national statistical services and data, and of including in the plans statements of likely future needs for technical assistance in statistics.

186. The Commission suggested that developing countries might wish to utilize certain aspects of "international statistical programmes" as an aid in the preparation of their national development plans for statistics.

187. The Commission invited the specialized agencies and other international bodies concerned to take account of the points made, where appropriate, in their future programmes.

188. A lively discussion took place concerning how best to make use of material contained in the documents. The view was expressed that future reports should include a section which would permit an over-all assessment of the various projects and programmes and a judgement of the extent to which co-ordination and integration had been effective.

189. The Commission noted that the report of the Secretary-General included for the first time the programmes of UNIDO, the World Bank and the Statistical Office of

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39/ Ibid., para. 8.

the European Communities, and expressed the hope that future reports of the Secretary-General on international statistical programmes would also include the programmes of other international organizations, as well as OECD.

190. The Commission considered the question of major statistical policy objectives, the subject of the informal paper submitted to the Commission, and concluded that detailed consideration of the matter was necessary at the next meeting of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination. The view was expressed that the policy objectives should be formulated in specific terms.

Action taken by the Commission

191. The Commission:

(a) Requested the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination to consider ways and means of making the report more useful;

(b) Requested the Working Group to reconsider the major statistical policy objectives.

IX. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES: IMPLEMENTATION AND PROSPECTS

A. Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies

192. For its consideration of agenda item 10 (a), the Commission had before it a report by the Secretary-General entitled "Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies" (E/CN.3/496 and Corr.1 and Add.1) containing a progress report on the statistical activities of the regional commissions and of IASI since the eighteenth session of the Statistical Commission. Statements were made by representatives of ECE, ECA and ESCAP.

193. Among the points raised during the discussion were the following:

(a) Since the completion of the progress report on its statistical activities, ECE had convened nine meetings in various fields of statistics, in some cases jointly with other agencies;

(b) The general programme of ECE had been revised in the light of the conclusions and agreements reached at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Final Act of which was signed at Helsinki on 1 August 1975. The Conference of European Statisticians had been called upon to contribute to new tasks and some reorientation of its activities would result. It was nevertheless hoped that the Conference would be able to contribute to the work of the Statistical Commission as much in the future as it had in the past;

(c) Additional information was provided on the work of ECE and of the Statistical Office on national accounts and balances, including links between SNA and MPS;

(d) The statistical activities of ECA continued to be oriented towards two basic objectives, assistance to countries in the development of their statistics and improvement of regional statistics. Very good progress continued to be made in the African Census Programme, and the project to establish household survey capabilities in the African countries was emerging as a major new focus of work. In addition it was noted that many countries were already seeking assistance for the 1980 round of population and housing censuses;

(e) A new publication of inter-African trade statistics would be issued by ECA in 1977. Good progress was also being made in improving the data-processing capabilities of the ECA statistical activities;

(f) The efforts to achieve greater integration between the statistical activities of the United Nations and IASI in the Latin American region were commended by the Commission and the efforts now under way to develop closer co-ordination were encouraged.

194. In summary, the Commission welcomed the information provided in the documents on regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies, and also welcomed the progress achieved in those activities.

B. Statistical work of the specialized agencies and GATT

195. For its consideration of agenda item 10 (b), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/497) containing a progress report on the statistical activities of the specialized agencies since the eighteenth session of the Commission, covering work in the ILO, FAO, UNESCO, ICAO, WHO, IMF, UPU and GATT. Statements were made by representatives of the ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO and IMF.

196. Among the points raised during the discussion were the following:

(a) It was noted that the revised edition of the ILO compendium of international standards for labour statistics issued in December 1975 included all relevant international recommendations of the ILO conferences which are still in force;

(b) The ILO work on labour force projections referred to in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.3/497) was nearly completed and would be published early in 1977;

(c) The FAO Programme for the 1980 World Census of Agriculture had been completed and would be issued shortly in all official languages. The Fourth World Food Survey would be published in 1977 instead of 1976, as indicated in the report (ibid., para. 12). The great contribution household surveys would make to that work and to the Global Nutritional Surveillance System to be established by FAO (ibid., para. 16) was noted and further information on that programme and on the plans for the 1980 World Census of Agriculture was provided;

(d) The eighth session of the FAO Statistics Advisory Committee of Experts would take place in 1977, and the Committee would be informed of the discussions and conclusions of the Statistical Commission at its nineteenth session;

(e) Further information was given on the very close collaboration of the United Nations with the specialized agencies in the preparation of demographic projections;

(f) The Commission noted that the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook for 1975 was entirely reproduced from computer outputs and that work to make the Yearbook a trilingual publication was nearly complete. The nineteenth UNESCO General Conference had adopted a recommendation on the normalization of the statistics on radio and television;

(g) The Commission was informed that the Ninth Revision of the International Classification of Diseases and its supplementary classifications were approved by the Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly, May 1976, and that the Ninth Revision would come into effect as from 1 January 1979;

(h) The Commission noted with approval that all of the statistics published by IMF and the production and trade statistics published by FAO were available on computer tapes to countries and other agencies.

197. The Commission agreed that the information provided in the progress reports submitted by the specialized agencies was extremely useful and showed substantial progress had been made over the past two years in their statistical activities.

### C. Statistical Office of the United Nations

198. For its consideration of agenda item 10 (c), the Commission had before it a progress report on the work of the Statistical Office (E/CN.3/498), a report of the Secretary-General entitled "Programme objectives, medium-term plan, 1978-1981, and work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations" (E/CN.3/499) and an informal note on the latter subject, reproduced, as amended in the light of the Commission's discussions, as annex II of the present report.

199. The Commission noted with satisfaction the support of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination for the conception and orientation of the statistics programme and its praise for the high quality of the programme as stated in the report of the Committee. 40/

200. The Commission unanimously commended the quality, scope and format of document E/CN.3/498 and of the document reproduced as annex II to the present report. It considered that the latter document contained a concise and useful summary of programme activities and objectives. Altogether, the material before the Commission provided a valuable detailed review and analysis of the work programme, activities and objectives of the Statistical Office.

201. Among the points raised during the discussion were the following:

(a) The programme objectives and work programme of the Statistical Office for 1977-1978 (see annex II), had been updated from those prepared at the eighteenth session of the Commission covering 1976-1977. The propelling guidance in preparation of the programme was provided by the conclusions of the Commission at its eighteenth session, approved by the Economic and Social Council, and the conclusions and resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and other recent international conferences;

(b) The publication in 1975 of the Directory of International Statistics 41/ was commended, and the Commission noted and encouraged further work to expand and improve it and keep it up to date;

(c) The regular publication of the International Statistical Reporter would be welcome, but it was recognized that resources were not currently available to undertake it;

(d) Very strong support was expressed for a continuation and expansion of the International Comparison Project (ICP) and its conversion in due course into a regular collection and estimation activity. The results to date were considered most useful by the participating countries and others. The Commission noted with interest the ICP work in South-east Asia;

(e) The relationship between activities 2.3 (ii) and 3.1 (ii) (see annex II) was clarified. It was noted that preparation of a manual on national accounts in

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40/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 38, paras. 296 and 297.

41/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XVII.11.



constant prices was now well-advanced (2.3 (ii)) while 3.1 (ii) referred to longer-term work on research on difficult aspects of that problem that were not covered in the manual;

(f) The programme of work on the Classification of Outlays of Industries by Purpose, which is intended to facilitate cost structure analysis, was noted (activity 2.4 (ii));

(g) The scope and importance of activity 5.2 on a data base system in the Statistical Office reflected the Commission's conclusions at its eighteenth session, when it agreed that:

"... the Statistical Office should proceed as quickly as possible with its plan to redesign data files and computer programmes. It stressed that an integrated system which would facilitate the quick and easy retrieval of data in various unanticipated forms would be a very important improvement in international statistics.

"The Commission expressed the wish that the Secretariat should take the necessary steps, as quickly as possible, to make the necessary changes in the hardware and software capabilities of the New York Computing Centre, in the light of appropriate cost-benefit studies."; 42/

(h) It was explained that the work of the Statistical Office to assess the reliability of data collected for its publications was essential, but was modest in scope because of lack of resources;

(i) The Commission was informed of the close collaboration between FAO and the Statistical Office on methods of deflation in the national accounts concerning agricultural statistics;

(j) The representative of UNCTAD expressed satisfaction with the collaboration between UNCTAD and the Statistical Office in the preparation of trade indexes and statistics and expressed strong support for extending shipping statistics;

(k) It was agreed that the long-term objectives of work on data on the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation (E/CN.3/498, para. 54) should be described in more practical terms, particularly as to the possibilities of international comparison of those data. It was noted that the topic would be considered by the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities at its next session. The Commission noted that the publication of guidelines on statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation had been delayed but would be completed in 1977;

(1) The importance and usefulness of the project on social statistics with particular reference to children and youth (*ibid.*, para. 110) were noted and further information on the project was provided.

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42/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 2 and corrigendum, paras. 30 and 31.

Action taken by the Commission

202. The Commission:

(a) Approved the programme objectives and work programme of the Statistical Office in conformity with those set out in annex II;

(b) Agreed to submit for adoption by the Economic and Social Council a draft decision approving the objectives and work programme recommended by the Commission. (For the text, see para. 1 above.)

## X. OTHER BUSINESS

### A. Date and place of the twentieth session of the Commission

203. In considering agenda item 11, the Commission recalled that at its eighteenth session, on accepting the kind invitation of the Government of India to act as host to the nineteenth session, it had decided that subsequent sessions "should again be held at Geneva or in New York and, in particular, that a session should be held as soon as possible in New York". <sup>43/</sup> The Commission observed that in view of the fact that most of the work which the Commission was called upon to consider was developed through the Statistical Office of the United Nations, it was vitally important for members of the Commission to have an opportunity to discuss with the staff of that Office the problems faced in various countries. It was equally important for the staff to be associated more directly with the work of the Commission.

204. In considering those points, the Commission noted that it had not met at United Nations Headquarters since 1968. Consequently there was a consensus that the twentieth session should be held at New York.

205. The Commission decided to recommend strongly to the Economic and Social Council that the twentieth session be held at United Nations Headquarters early in 1979, on dates to be determined. The recommendation was made without prejudice to the possibility of holding the twenty-first session in the fourth quarter of 1980 (see para. 2 above, recommendation A).

### B. Programme budget implications of action taken by the Commission

206. A summary statement of the programme budget implications of action taken at the nineteenth session was submitted by the Secretariat (document E/CN.3/L.83, reproduced as annex III of the present report). It was pointed out that the figures given in the statement would be subject to review by the Budget Division of the Office of Financial Services before they were submitted to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

207. With regard to the expert group on energy statistics, the Commission felt that the group might need to consist of 15 experts rather than the 12 experts provided for in the estimates and requested the Secretariat to revise those estimates accordingly. It was the understanding of the Commission that those reports which the Commission had requested to be issued but which were not included in the summary statement were to be reproduced through the internal facilities of the United Nations.

208. Subject to those observations, the Commission took note of the summary statement.

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<sup>43/</sup> Ibid., para. 176.

C. Expression of gratitude to the Government of India

209. At the 34<sup>th</sup> meeting on 19 November 1976, the Rapporteur, introducing a proposal entitled "Expression of gratitude to the Government of India", stated that the holding of a session of the Commission in India had afforded its members an opportunity to meet with high officials of the Government of India, including the Prime Minister, to gain insights into the complexities of the problems confronting the country, and to better appreciate India's efforts toward economic and social development.

210. The Commission unanimously adopted the Rapporteur's proposal, the text of which read:

"Expression of gratitude to the Government of India

"The Statistical Commission,

"Having met away from either United Nations Headquarters or the United Nations Office at Geneva for the first time in the thirty years since its establishment,

"1. Expresses its deep gratitude to the Government of India for the long-standing invitation extended through the late Professor P. C. Mahalanobis and through Dr. V. R. Rao, both of India;

"2. Particularly expresses deep appreciation for the excellent facilities and hospitality provided and for making the nineteenth session an extremely rewarding experience for all the participants."

D. Draft decision

211. At the same meeting, the Commission unanimously approved a draft decision relating to the Commission's report on its nineteenth session, for adoption by the Economic and Social Council. (For the text, see para. 1 above.)

XI. CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA  
FOR THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

212. In compliance with the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1894 (LVII), the Commission discussed the draft provisional agenda for its twentieth session (E/CN.3/L.82) under agenda item 12. The Commission emphasized that the agenda would be more fully considered by its Working Group at its seventh session and that the Commission had authorized the Working Group to make such modifications in the provisional agenda and indicated documentation as might be required.

213. The Commission noted that the Economic and Social Council had stipulated that reports submitted to its functional commissions should not exceed 32 pages. The Commission felt that technical documents, such as those submitted to it, should not be subject to arbitrary rules on length. It considered that it was very difficult, two years before the twentieth session, to estimate the likely length of documents and that the figures given in the provisional agenda would need to be reviewed.

214. Subject to those observations, the Commission adopted the following draft provisional agenda:

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Economic statistics:
  - (a) Industrial statistics  
(Draft proposals for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)
  - (b) Energy statistics  
(A progress report on development of international energy statistics will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)
  - (c) Transport statistics  
(A progress report on shipping statistics will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)
  - (d) Harmonization of external trade statistics  
(A report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)
  - (e) International Comparison Project (ICP)  
(A progress report and an indication of future plans of the United Nations Statistical Office will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(f) Public sector statistics

(A progress report on a public sector statistics manual and a classification of the purposes of government will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages each)

(g) National accounts and balances

(A report on the links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the Material Products System (MPS), as well as a review of SNA, will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages each)

4. International statistical classifications:

(a) Long-term programme

(A progress report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(b) Revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC)

(An outline of the proposed revision will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(c) Classification of Outlays of Industries by Purpose

(A report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

5. Social and demographic statistics:

(a) 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme

(A report containing draft recommendations and a progress report on methodological work will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages each)

(b) Harmonization of concepts and classifications in specialized fields of social statistics

(A progress report on methodological work will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(c) Problems of achieving integration in the collection and organization of statistics

(A report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(d) Improvement and integration of social statistics in developing countries

(A progress report on applications will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

6. Environment statistics

(A progress report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

7. Statistical organization

(A report on approaches to planning and priority setting will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

8. Technical assistance:

(a) International technical assistance in statistics, 1979-1983

(A report by the Secretary-General, prepared in co-operation with the specialized agencies, will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(b) Training of statistical personnel

(A progress report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(c) Data processing

(A progress report on developmental and assistance activities will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(d) Household survey capability programme

(A progress report will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

9. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes:

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

(The report of the Working Group on its seventh session will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

(b) International statistical programmes, 1979-1983

(A report by the Secretary-General, prepared in co-operation with the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies, will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages)

10. Programme objectives:

(a) Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies

(b) Statistical work of the specialized agencies

(c) Statistical Office of the United Nations

(Three reports by the Secretary-General, prepared in co-operation with the relevant agencies, will be submitted to the Commission: approximately 32 pages each)

11. Other business

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

13. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

## XII. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

215. The Statistical Commission, at the invitation of the Government of India, held its nineteenth session at New Delhi from 8 to 19 November 1976. The Commission held 18 plenary meetings (327th to 344th meetings).

216. The Commission was welcomed by Mr. M. G. Pimputkar, Secretary of the Department of Statistics, Government of India, and was addressed by Mr. Sankar Ghose, Minister of State for Planning, Government of India.

217. The Director of the Statistical Office read out the text of a statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

218. In accordance with recent practice summary records were not provided.

219. At its 327th meeting, on 8 November 1976, the Commission observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Abraham Aidenoff, former Deputy Director of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, and extended its heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Aidenoff. It noted his very important contribution to the United Nations work on national accounting, industrial and other statistics, and the indelible mark he had made on the entire international statistical community through his writings, participation in conferences and seminars and extensive work in the developing countries.

### Membership and attendance

220. The session was attended by representatives of 20 of the 24 States members of the Commission (Gabon, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Uruguay did not send representatives), by observers from three States Members of the United Nations and by representatives of United Nations bodies, of specialized agencies and of other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (see annex I).

### Election of officers

221. At its 327th meeting, the Commission unanimously elected the following officers:

<u>Chairman:</u>	V. R. Rao (India)
<u>Vice-Chairmen:</u>	M. A. Korolev (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) I. Ohlsson (Sweden)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	J. W. Duncan (United States of America)



### Agenda

222. The Commission had before it the provisional agenda (E/CN.3/469) and an informal paper containing notes on items of the provisional agenda. The Commission adopted the agenda reproduced in annex IV to the present report.

223. In line with the request of the Economic and Social Council for more concise reports from its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies, the present report is confined to the main points made by the Commission.

ANNEXES

Annex I

ATTENDANCE

Members\*

ARGENTINA

Representative: Lelia Boeri de Cervetto  
Alternate: Eduardo Alberto Sadous

BRAZIL

Representative: Isaac Kerstenetzky

CANADA

Alternates: David A. Worton  
Béla Prigly

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Representative: Jan Kazimour

FRANCE

Alternate: André Vanoli

HUNGARY

Representative: József Bálint  
Alternate: Gyula Horváth  
Adviser: Veronika Frank

INDIA

Representative: V. R. Rao  
Alternates: M. V. S. Rao  
Uma Roy Choudhury  
Advisers: M. G. Sardana  
K. L. Bhargava  
V. N. Amble

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\* The following States members were not represented: Gabon, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Uruguay.

IRAQ

Representative: Sami Hamoudi Al-Jalil  
Alternates: Majid A. J. Al-Karkhi  
Ismail Al-Janabi  
Widad Hamoudi

IRELAND

Representative: Thomas P. Linehan

JAPAN

Representative: Kinichiro Saito  
Alternates: Kazuo Nishino  
Kanemitsu Tashiro  
Adviser: Kazuhiko Ichinomiya

KENYA

Representative: Parmeet Singh

NEW ZEALAND

Representative: Ernest A. Harris

SRI LANKA

Representative: Tissa Jayakoddy

SWEDEN

Representative: Ingvar Ohlsson  
Alternate: Lennart Fastbom

TUNISIA

Representative: Abdessalem Kamoun  
Adviser: Nouri Zorgati

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Representative: Nikolai Artemyev

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Representative: Mikhail Korolev  
Adviser: Victor Martinov

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Representative: Sir Claus Moser  
Alternate: L. S. Berman  
Advisers: J. N. C. Hancock  
K. V. Henderson

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Representative: Joseph W. Duncan  
Alternate: J. Timothy Sprehe

VENEZUELA

Representative: Andrés J. Boulton

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

Austria, Italy, Turkey

United Nations bodies

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific  
Economic Commission for Africa  
Economic Commission for Europe  
Economic Commission for Latin America  
United Nations Children's Fund  
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
United Nations Development Programme

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Asian Statistical Institute

Specialized agencies and GATT

International Labour Organisation  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
World Health Organization  
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
International Monetary Fund

\* \* \*

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

Other intergovernmental organizations

Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

Customs Co-operation Council

European Economic Community

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

World Tourism Organization

Non-governmental organizations

Category I

World Federation of Trade Unions

Category II

Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities)

Inter-American Statistical Institute

## Annex II

### PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR 1977-1978 a/

1. The statistical programme includes collecting, compiling, evaluating and disseminating international statistics. It also fulfils the important role of assisting the Statistical Commission in the promotion of the standardization of statistical methods, classifications and definitions used by national statistical agencies in order to facilitate international comparability of the data and in the co-ordination of international statistical activities. In addition, the programme provides direct advice to Member States and substantive backstopping of technical assistance field projects in developing countries. All these activities are continuing and require sustained, long-term efforts. New world developments and new thrusts are, however, reflected in some shifts of emphasis and increased efforts to meet the demands arising from them.
2. The over-all legislative basis for this programme is contained in Economic and Social Council resolutions 8 (I) and 8 (II) and, most recently, the Council's decision 97 (LVIII) to take note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its eighteenth session and the programme objectives contained therein.
3. The specific activities to be carried out during the biennium 1977-1978 are described below, grouped by objective.

#### Objective No. 1: International trade, industry, natural resources and energy

To provide more comprehensive, reliable and timely statistics on international trade, industry, natural resources, energy and related areas, with special emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

##### 1.1 Reports and recurrent publications on industrial statistics

- (i) To collect data by questionnaires, process and publish them in consultation with UNIDO in the Yearbook of Industrial Statistics (vol. I, General Industrial Statistics, and vol. II, Commodity Production Data) and the Yearbook of Construction Statistics;
- (ii) To prepare indexes of industrial production and employment, as well as other contributions to the Statistical Yearbook and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.

##### 1.2 Technical manuals on standards and methods for industrial statistics

- (i) To prepare and provide guidelines and standards for industrial, construction and distributive-trade statistics.

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a/ See paras. 198-202 above.

### 1.3 Publications and tabulations on international trade statistics

- (i) To collect and compile international trade statistics in co-operation with UNCTAD and the regional commissions; to compile price, unit value and quantum indexes, aggregates and trade matrixes;
- (ii) To prepare recurrent publications (Commodity Trade Statistics; Yearbook of International Trade Statistics; World Trade Annual and Supplement); tables for the Statistical Yearbook and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics; and ad hoc tabulations upon request.

### 1.4 Methods and classifications of international trade statistics

- (i) To develop further standard methods and classifications for international trade statistics in co-operation with the regional commissions, UNCTAD and the Customs Co-operation Council;
- (ii) To improve international trade statistics through reconciliation studies, based on reviews of the discrepancies of international trade statistics and other methods;
- (iii) To continue further work on linkages between the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC, Rev.2 b/) and other trade and related classifications.

### 1.5 Reports and recurrent publications on energy statistics

- (i) To collect, compile and disseminate, in co-operation with the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, the regional commissions, UNEP and the World Bank, more complete, accurate and timely energy statistics through World Energy Supplies (annual); Quarterly Bulletin of Energy Statistics (first issue, 1977); tables for the Statistical Yearbook and the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics; and ad hoc tabulations;
- (ii) To prepare, in co-operation with the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, the regional commissions, UNEP and the World Bank, international guidelines for the development of comprehensive and integrated energy statistics.

### 1.6 Matrixes of commodity flow by mode of transport and methods in transport statistics, in co-operation with the regional commissions and IMCO

- (i) To prepare a revision of the International Standard Definitions for Transport Statistics; c/
- (ii) To prepare a compendium of transport statistics.

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b/ United Nations publication, E.75.XVII.6.

c/ Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 8.

## 1.7 Concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies for measuring tourism

- (i) To formulate concepts and definitions on statistics of tourism with the participation of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning and the regional commissions, in co-operation with UNCTAD and the World Tourism Organization, co-ordinated with statistics of international migration; to prepare these guidelines for publication;
- (ii) To prepare a manual on the methodology of statistics of tourism.

## Objective No. 2: National accounts, income distribution and related statistics

To develop further and implement the system of national accounts and balances and related systems and classifications, and to provide more comprehensive and reliable statistics on national accounts and balances and related data such as the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation, with special emphasis on the needs of the developing countries.

### 2.1 Review and development of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and its linkages to the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS), with special attention to the needs of the developing countries

- (i) To review, with the participation of the regional commissions and the assistance of an ad hoc expert group, SNA and its implementation in order to identify and remedy problem areas, devoting special attention to the needs of the developing countries in terms of both meeting their data requirements and providing clear and understandable reference materials, including a handbook of national accounting;
- (ii) To clarify further the relationships between SNA and MPS, through technical studies to identify structural relationships and develop common subaggregates, and through country case studies; to develop methods of approximation for countries and time periods for which complete data are not available.

### 2.2 Within the over-all framework of the national accounts, continued development of systems and standards for sectoral data

- (i) For the public sector, to prepare for publication, in consultation with IMF, OECD and the regional commissions, a manual emphasizing the relationship between data needed for government operations and data needed for economic and social policy and planning, and including a detailed classification of the purposes of government; to prepare a technical report on distributional aspects of public sector statistics, including their relation to the distribution of household income, consumption and accumulation;
- (ii) For enterprises, to complete the study of national practices in compiling financial statistics of enterprises and prepare a technical report; to review national practices in compiling economic census data on enterprises; to prepare guidelines on enterprise statistics and convene an ad hoc expert group to discuss them;



- (iii) For the foreign sector, to review the relationship of data required for the national accounts and data required for balance of payments and international trade analysis.
- 2.3 Continued development of standards for related data, including flow of funds accounts, balance sheets and national wealth accounts, national accounts in constant prices, and links between economic accounts and other kinds of data, both economic and non-economic
- (i) To prepare and issue guidelines and manuals on flow of funds, balance sheets and reconciliation accounts, and stocks of tangible assets and other forms of national wealth, based where necessary on studies of country practices;
  - (ii) To prepare and issue guidelines and manuals on methods of deflation of national accounts and on the preparation of national accounts in constant prices;
  - (iii) To develop further the links to social and demographic data, through reviews of country practices, technical studies, and appropriate classifications.
- 2.4 Development, updating and harmonization of standard international classifications related to the national accounts and balances
- (i) To complete and issue the International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services (ICGS);
  - (ii) To complete and issue the Classification of Outlays of Industries by Purpose (COIP);
  - (iii) To revise the International Standard Industrial Classification;
  - (iv) To continue work on the harmonization of statistical classifications in the economic sphere in co-operation with organizations within and outside the United Nations system;
  - (v) To co-ordinate the classification work mentioned elsewhere, i.e., SITC, purposes of government, social and demographic data.
- 2.5 Collection, compilation and dissemination of national accounts statistics
- (i) To collect, compile and disseminate national accounting data through the Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics and through contributions to other statistical publications;
  - (ii) To prepare various calculations of national accounts series;
  - (iii) To contribute through the above to the development of a comprehensive and reliable information base on national accounts statistics.
- 2.6 Statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation
- (i) For the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation, to prepare a technical study of concepts, definitions, and classifications; to

update the review of country practices; to prepare for publication guidelines for developed and developing countries; to prepare a manual covering methods of estimation (including the use of household surveys), priorities and uses;

- (ii) To collect, compile and prepare for publication a report furnishing data and estimates on the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation.

### Objective No. 3: Price statistics and related areas

To develop further the methodology and collection of statistics on prices and related areas.

#### 3.1 Improvement of methodology for price collection, index compilation and deflation through studies of national practices and development of guidelines and manuals

- (i) To prepare and issue guidelines in close collaboration with other interested international agencies, on price and quantity statistics and manuals on producers' prices, retail prices and prices in international trade;
- (ii) To prepare a technical study of aspects of deflation of national accounts not previously covered, including wages and other income shares, economic depreciation and real wealth.

#### 3.2 Development and extension of the International Comparison Project (ICP) and the collection of cost-of-living data for international civil service use

- (i) To implement phase III of ICP and carry out work directed towards simplifying the methodology and extending the country coverage, with a view to establishing the regular collection, estimation and dissemination of the statistics;
- (ii) To utilize the experience gained in ICP to improve the quality of international civil service measurement of the cost of living;
- (iii) To prepare a technical report on price index sample design and price collection methodology, making use of the results of ICP and the cost-of-living work.

#### 3.3 Survey of the statistical aspects of countries' experience with indexation and preparation of a technical study.

#### 3.4 Development of a programme of international price statistics, in co-operation with the interested specialized agencies and the regional commissions.

### Objective No. 4: Social, demographic and environmental statistics

To develop further, systematize and disseminate statistics in the social, demographic and environmental areas with special emphasis on the needs of the developing countries.

- 4.1 Continued work on standardization and integration of social and demographic statistics, including distributional aspects, through surveys of country practices and case studies, preparation of guides and manuals
- (i) To collect and collate the definitions, concepts and classifications used in different areas of social and demographic statistics, and prepare a technical report on their harmonization;
  - (ii) To prepare and issue guidelines on social indicators, based in part on case studies of their use by countries;
  - (iii) To conduct a survey of studies of time use, including conceptual problems and applications;
  - (iv) To monitor and issue reports on country experience in the development and application of integrated social and demographic statistics;
  - (v) To prepare a technical report on methods of development and use of integrated demographic, social and economic data bases derived from censuses, surveys and administrative data.
- 4.2 Guidelines on the concepts, contents and methodologies of environment statistics, emphasizing their relation to national accounts
- (i) To prepare an inventory of the requirements for statistics of the environment and a survey of their availability;
  - (ii) To formulate guidelines on concepts, classifications, contents and methodologies for collecting environment statistics and to carry out country studies to test their feasibility;
  - (iii) To develop the international collection and compilation of these data;
  - (iv) To prepare an environmental statistics compendium.
- 4.3 Dissemination of demographic statistics
- (i) To collect, compile and disseminate demographic statistics through the Demographic Yearbook (and the special historical supplement to the 1978 Demographic Yearbook), the Population and Vital Statistics Report (quarterly), the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Yearbook; as well as to develop the capacity to respond more effectively to ad hoc or highly specialized requests.
- 4.4 Guidelines for national efforts in collection of demographic statistics
- (i) To complete and publish a revised version of the Handbook of Population Census Methods: d/
  - (ii) To complete and publish recommendations on migration statistics;

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d/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 58.XVII.6 (vols. I, II and III).

- (iii) To prepare and publish a revised version of the Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods; e/
- (iv) To prepare and publish recommendations, with the assistance of an ad hoc group of experts and in close co-ordination with the Population Division, the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning and the regional commissions, for the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme;
- (v) To organize with the assistance of UNFPA, a series of training workshops in population and housing census methods to be carried out in close collaboration with the Population Division, the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, the regional commissions and the regional statistical training institutes; and to organize an interregional workshop on methods for improving the collection of vital statistics through civil registration systems;
- (vi) To carry out related studies including the development of local area census statistics (census tract programme).

4.5 Methodological publications and statistical compendiums on social, housing and related statistics

- (i) To compile and publish the Compendium of Social Statistics, 1977;
- (ii) To initiate work on the Compendium of Housing Statistics, 1978;
- (iii) To revise and bring up to date, in collaboration with the specialized agencies and the regional commissions, the Handbook of Household Surveys; f/
- (iv) To encourage needed revisions in the basic concepts used for the collection and compilation of demographic and social statistics so as to free them from inappropriate sex-based stereotypes by organizing a seminar involving users and producers of statistics dealing with this issue, by monitoring research carried out by Member States and by developing and disseminating appropriate guidelines;
- (v) To initiate the development of a curriculum in social statistics for training middle-level government statisticians.

4.6 Statistics on children and youth within the evolving framework of social and demographic statistics in co-operation with UNICEF

- (i) To prepare and publish country guidelines and provide direct assistance to developing countries to improve their social statistics on children and youth.

Objective No. 5: Improved dissemination of statistics

To improve the variety, timeliness and quality of the statistical output of the United Nations, including general statistical compendiums and special tabulations.

e/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 55.XVII.1.

f/ United Nations publication, Sales No. 64.XVII.13.

### 5.1 Compendiums of economic and social statistics

- (i) To issue, in close co-operation with the regional commissions and with the assistance of inputs from the specialized agencies, the Statistical Yearbook, the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Pocketbook.

### 5.2 Development of a data base system for integrated storage of the Statistical Office's stock of data

- (i) To design and implement an integrated and flexible data processing system for storage and retrieval of statistical data, taking advantage of modern technology, and to establish a computer-based set of integrated coding systems for international statistical data processing;
- (ii) To use the new system to enhance the efficiency of publication of the recurrent statistical outputs including the Statistical Yearbook, the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and the Statistical Pocketbook as well as to substantially improve the capability for responding to special requests.

### 5.3 Review and co-ordination of statistical publications and assessment of the quality of the data

- (i) To review the Statistical Office publications in order to increase their usefulness and to study the quality and assess the reliability of the data published therein with a view to improving them;
- (ii) To co-ordinate the contents of the Statistical Office publications with those of the regional commissions and the specialized agencies.

## Objective No. 6: Co-ordination of international statistical programmes

To promote co-ordination of the international statistical system and to provide statistical services to other units within the Secretariat and to other United Nations bodies. The Statistical Office serves as a focal point for the international statistical system.

### 6.1 Co-ordination of the statistical programmes of the United Nations system

- (i) To provide substantive and technical servicing for the Statistical Commission and its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination;
- (ii) To provide substantive and technical servicing for the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities;
- (iii) To maintain close liaison with the statistical services of the regional commissions, specialized agencies, other intergovernmental and non-governmental statistical organizations and national statistical services;

- (iv) To publish regularly an interagency International Statistical Reporter in order to provide a source of information on important developments in international statistical activities;
- (v) To prepare and improve reports of integrated five-year plans of the regular and technical assistance activities of the international statistical system.

#### 6.2 Construction of catalogues of economic and social statistics

- (i) To maintain, update and expand the Directory of International Statistics. g/

#### 6.3 Preparation of guidelines on organization of co-ordinated and integrated national statistical services

- (i) To prepare and distribute a number of booklets on organizational matters such as arrangements for the identification and evaluation of user needs and the reduction of burden on respondents, safeguarding confidentiality etc.;
- (ii) To analyse organizational needs of developing countries;
- (iii) To carry out analytical country studies of the effectiveness of various national organizational structures.

#### 6.4 Statistical services provided to General Assembly organs and other bodies, on request

- (i) To provide the Committee on Contributions with data on national income, exchange rates, population and other data;
- (ii) To provide substantive services and statistical expertise to various units of the Secretariat and other United Nations bodies, on request.

#### Objective No. 7: Improvement of statistical capability of developing countries

To assist developing countries, through advisory and technical co-operation activities, to further develop their statistical capability and the statistics they need for monitoring and directing their economic and social development.

#### 7.1 Assistance to developing countries in improving their statistical organization and provision of backstopping for the statistical training centres sponsored by the United Nations

- (i) To assist in setting up continuing household survey capabilities and vital registration systems;
- (ii) To assist in developing statistics in the fields of energy, mineral resources, trade and national accounts;

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g/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.XVII.11.

- (iii) To assist in the implementation of population and housing censuses and in the preparations for the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme;

7.2 Assistance to developing countries in initiating and developing their capability to use computer technology for statistical and related data processing applications

- (i) To assist developing countries in planning and organizing their statistical and related data processing activities and in establishing and improving their computer facilities for recording, storing and processing data;
- (ii) To provide guidelines, manuals and methodology, including computer software, for applying computer and technology to statistical and related applications;
- (iii) To encourage and facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge of computer technology among developing countries and to assist in the training of staff.

7.3 Development of guidelines for designing, organizing and implementing household and related surveys

- (i) To obtain information, in co-operation with the regional commissions, through questionnaires concerning sample surveys and their analysis;
- (ii) To prepare another report on Sample Surveys of Current Interest and volume III of A Short Manual on Sampling, covering the operational aspects of sample surveys.

Annex III

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF  
PROPOSALS MADE DURING THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSIONS

1. In the course of the discussion of various agenda items, proposals were made which would involve expenditure from United Nations funds. At the time the proposals were considered, oral statements were made regarding the programme budget implications of those proposals. The figures given below for the estimated costs of printing and of convening expert groups are subject to review before they are submitted to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

Agenda item 6

Social and demographic statistics:

(b) Migration statistics

2. At the 329th meeting on 9 November 1976, a proposal was made to request the Secretary-General to convene an expert group to consider proposals on statistics of international migration and to authorize him to appoint a consultant to assist in the preparatory work for the group.

3. On the assumption that the group would consist of eight experts meeting for one week at United Nations Headquarters, that the group would not require interpretation facilities, that its documentation would be produced in one language only, and that its recommendations would form part of the documentation for a session of the Commission, the costs have been provisionally estimated as follows:

Travel of 8 experts	\$ 12,000
Subsistence for 5 days	2,000
Consultant fees, 4 work months	20,000
5 regional commission staff members Travel and subsistence (5 days)	8,750
Total	<u>\$ 42,750</u>

(d) Strategy for further work on a System of Social and Demographic Statistics

4. At the 331st meeting on 10 November, a proposal was made to request the Secretary-General to convene an expert group to consider a document on practical methods of integration of social statistics and to authorize him, if necessary, to appoint a consultant to assist in preparing a section on links between national and subnational statistics.



5. On the assumption that the group would consist of 10 experts, meeting for one week at United Nations Headquarters, that the group would not require interpretation facilities, that its documentation would be produced in one language only, and that its recommendations would form part of the documentation for a session of the Commission, the costs have been provisionally estimated as follows:

Travel of 10 experts	\$ 15,000
Subsistence for 5 days	2,500
Consultant fees, 3 work months	15,000
5 regional commission staff members Travel and subsistence (5 days)	8,750
Total	<u>\$ 41,250</u>

Agenda item 5

Economic statistics:

(b) Energy statistics

6. At the 333rd meeting on 11 November, a proposal was made to request the Secretary-General to convene an expert group on energy statistics. The Commission observed that the Secretary-General would need to appoint an expert consultant to assist in the preparatory work for the group.

7. On the assumption that the group would consist of 12 experts, meeting for two weeks at United Nations Headquarters, that the group would not require interpretation facilities, that its documentation would be produced in one language only, and that its recommendations would form part of the documentation for a session of the Commission, the costs have been provisionally estimated as follows:

Travel of 12 experts	\$ 18,000
Subsistence for 12 days	7,200
Consultant fees, 4 work months	20,000
5 regional commission staff members Travel and subsistence (12 days)	10,500
Total	<u>\$ 55,700</u>

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8. Requests were also made for the printing and wide distribution of the following papers:

(a) Recommendations on statistics of international migration (100 pages) (agenda item 6 (b));

(b) Provisional guidelines on statistics of international tourism (60 pages) (agenda item 6 (c));

(c) Guidelines on price and quantity statistics (80 pages) (agenda item 5 (a));

(d) "The organization of national statistical services: a review of major issues" (70 pages) (agenda item 9).

The cost of printing the above reports is provisionally estimated at \$71,300.

Annex IV

AGENDA OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes;
  - (a) Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination
  - (b) International statistical programmes, 1977-1981
4. Technical assistance for the improvement of statistics in the developing countries:
  - (a) Basic problems and issues
  - (b) International technical assistance in statistics, 1977-1981
5. Economic statistics:
  - (a) Price and quantity statistics
  - (b) Energy statistics
  - (c) System of national accounts and balances
  - (d) Public sector statistics
6. Social and demographic statistics:
  - (a) 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme
  - (b) Migration statistics
  - (c) Tourism statistics
  - (d) Strategy for further work on a System of Social and Demographic Statistics
  - (e) Framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries
  - (f) Promoting the improvement of social statistics in developing countries
  - (g) Social indicators
7. Environment statistics

8. International standard classifications:
  - (a) International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services (ICGS)
  - (b) Expert Group on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications
9. Statistical organization
10. Programme objectives: implementation and prospects:
  - (a) Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies
  - (b) Statistical work of the specialized agencies
  - (c) Statistical Office of the United Nations
11. Other business
12. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the twentieth session of the Commission
13. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

Annex V

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT ITS NINETEENTH SESSION

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/CN.3/469	2	Provisional agenda for the nineteenth session of the Commission
E/CN.3/470 and Corr.1	3 (a)	Report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination on its sixth session
E/CN.3/471 and Add.1	3 (b)	International statistical programmes, 1977-1981: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/472 and Add.1	4 (a)	Technical assistance for the improvement of statistics in the developing countries - Basic problems and issues: note by the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/473	4 (a)	African household survey capability programme: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/474	4 (b)	International technical assistance in statistics, 1977-1981: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/475	5 (a)	Draft guidelines on principles of a system of price and quantity statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/476	5 (b)	Towards a System of Integrated Energy Statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/477	5 (c)	The feasibility of welfare-oriented measures to complement the national accounts and balances: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/477/ Add.1	5 (c)	Summary of recommendations of the Expert Group on Welfare-oriented Supplements to the National Accounts and Balances and Other Levels of Living: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/478	5 (d)	Reconciliation of the United Nations "Draft manual on public sector statistics" and the International Monetary Fund draft "Manual on government finance statistics": report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/479	5 (d)	Draft detailing of the classification of the purposes of government: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/480	6 (a)	1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme: report of the Secretary-General

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/CN.3/481	6 (a)	Cartography in the work of a national statistical office: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/482	6 (f)	Promoting the improvement of social statistics in developing countries: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/483	6 (b)	Draft recommendations on statistics of international migration: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/484	6 (b)	Statistics of internal migration: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/485	6 (b)	The improvement of statistics on the outflow of trained personnel from developing to developed countries: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/486	6 (c)	Draft guidelines on statistics of international tourism: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/487	6 (c)	Summary of comments on "Draft guidelines on statistics of international tourism" (E/CN.3/486)
E/CN.3/488	6 (g)	Draft guidelines on social indicators: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/489	6 (d)	Strategy for further work on a System of Social and Demographic Statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/490	6 (e)	A draft framework for the integration of social and demographic statistics in developing countries: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/491 and Add.1	7	Co-ordination of environment statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/492	7	Draft guidelines for statistics on materials/energy balances: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/493 (INTRODUCTION and PARTS I-IV)	8 (a)	Draft text of the International Standard Classification of All Goods and Services: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/494	8 (b)	Summary of comments on the report of the Expert Group on Harmonization of Statistical Classifications
E/CN.3/495	9	The organization of national statistical services - A review of major issues: report of the Secretary-General

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/CN.3/496 and Corr.1 and Add.1	10 (a)	Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/497	10 (b)	Statistical work of the specialized agencies: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/498	10 (c)	Statistical Office of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/499	10 (c)	Programme objectives, medium-term plan, 1978-1981, and work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/L.80 and Add.1-17, Add.18 (parts I and II) and Add.19	13	Draft report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council
E/CN.3/L.81	4 (a)	India and United States of America - Training of statisticians, especially through the regional funds of the United Nations Development Programme: draft resolution
E/CN.3/L.82	12	Draft provisional agenda for the twentieth session of the Commission
E/CN.3/L.83	11	Summary statement of programme budget implications of proposals made during the course of the discussions: note by the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/L.84*	9	France and Kenya - Strengthening of national statistical services: draft resolution
E/CN.3/L.85	4 (a)	Argentina, Iraq, Kenya and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - National Household Survey Capability Programme: draft resolution

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\* The Commission did not consider this draft resolution, but agreed that the views expressed in it would be reflected in the report (see paras. 138 and 139 above).

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