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STATISTICAL COMMISSION
REPORT ON THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION
(12-21 January 1981)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

OFFICIAL RECORDS, 1981

SUPPLEMENT No. 2



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

A. Draft resolutions requiring adoption by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Statistical Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of draft resolutions I and II, following:

Draft resolution I

1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics 1/

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its twenty-first session with reference to its strong endorsement of the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics and of the emphasis it placed on the need for the Statistical Office, the regional commissions and other interested organizations to take an active role in promoting the participation of the developing countries in the Programme,

Recalling that the Statistical Commission endorsed the concept of the Programme at its twentieth session, 2/ at which it also requested the Secretary-General to encourage regional commissions to organize working groups to consider the recommendations for the Programme as a means of advancing their implementation at the country level,

Recalling further that the Second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, held at Lima from 12 to 26 March 1975, adopted the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation 3/ in which both developing and developed countries were called upon to take specific measures to create conditions conducive to the industrial growth of the developing countries in keeping with the spirit embodied in the new international economic order, and to provide periodic reports on the actions taken and progress achieved,

Noting that, in accordance with the Statistical Commission's endorsement, the Statistical Office is publishing and distributing to countries the final version of the recommendations for the Programme,

Noting that the limited success of past programmes in this field has been primarily attributed to the lack of technical assistance support services for the developing countries,

1/ See paras. 4-15 below.

2/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 13.

3/ See A/10112, chap. IV.

1. Reconfirms the value and importance of the principles of the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics as a means of accelerating the development of industrial statistics programmes in developing countries to provide reliable and timely information on their progress in industrialization;

2. Recommends that provision should be made for technical assistance to permit developing countries to participate in the Programme and urges the multilateral and bilateral agencies to provide resources, within the framework of their technical co-operation activities, to help developing countries implement their plans for the Programme;

3. Strongly urges that all countries should compile basic data on industry for 1983 or a year close to 1983, taking into account as far as possible the international recommendations on this subject, and recommends that developing countries should avail themselves of technical co-operation wherever necessary in order to complete the Programme successfully;

4. Requests the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with the regional commissions, the specialized agencies, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and other multilateral and bilateral agencies, to co-ordinate technical co-operation activities in support of the Programme;

5. Further requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the above-mentioned organizations, to submit a progress report to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

Draft resolution II

International energy statistics ^{4/}

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the importance of energy in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, adopted by the General Assembly on 5 December 1980, ^{5/}

Recalling paragraph 4 (f) of General Assembly resolution 33/148, of 20 December 1978, which stresses the importance of the promotion of adequate information flows regarding all aspects of new and renewable sources of energy, especially to the developing countries,

Taking note that perhaps the gravest challenge to the existing international order is energy and that there are no ready solutions, that time will be required for specific action proposals and that the gravity of the situation will not lessen of its own accord, ^{6/}

^{4/} See paras. 16-26 below.

^{5/} General Assembly resolution 35/56, annex, paras. 34, 35, 126 and 127.

^{6/} See "Report of the Task Force on Long-Term Development Objectives of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination" (A/AC.196/10), para. 33.

Recalling its resolution 2054 (LXII) of 5 May 1977 by which it recognized the crucial role played by training in the over-all development of statistical services of Member States which are developing countries and expressed concern that because of the lack of necessary financial and personnel resources, many developing countries, particularly the least developed, are unable on their own to set up and maintain an effective vehicle to train all levels of statisticians,

Recalling its resolution 1978/61 of 3 August 1978 in which it expressed cognizance of the importance of ensuring the availability of new and renewable sources of energy in order to meet requirements for continued economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries and aware of the importance of a statistical base as an integral part of planning,

Recalling further that the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session recognized that energy statistics remained an important field that continued to require further urgent consideration, co-operation and harmonization by all central statistical offices and relevant agencies, 7/

Bearing in mind that the Committee on Natural Resources has endorsed the suggestion for setting up clearing-houses of relevant energy-related information at the national, regional and international levels and for working out procedures for sharing the information from such clearing-houses, 8/

Aware of important gaps in energy statistics, such as the lack of comprehensive data on non-commercial fuels, information on prices, costs, value added and investment data of energy commodities,

1. Strongly urges the Governments of developing countries to participate in a programme of development of national statistics according to international guidelines and to request technical assistance if and when necessary to carry out that important undertaking;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to accord priority to the development of new statistical series in fields where insufficient information is now available and to improve the timeliness, level of detail and accuracy of the statistics currently collected and disseminated;

3. Requests the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with the regional commissions, specialized agencies, the United Nations Development Programme and other interested organs to strengthen and co-ordinate activities in support of energy statistics;

4. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit a progress report to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

7/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 17.

8/ Ibid., Supplement No. 9A (E/1979/69/Rev.1).

B. Draft decisions requiring adoption by the Economic and Social Council

2. The Statistical Commission recommends to the Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

A

At its ... plenary meeting, on 1981, the Council took note of the report of the Statistical Commission on its twenty-first session, approved the work programme contained in document E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.1, as orally revised, and took note of the draft medium-term plan of the Commission contained in E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.2.

B

The Council decided that the twenty-second session of the Commission would be held in the first quarter of 1983 in New York. 9/

C

The Council decided that the ninth session of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination of the Statistical Commission would be held from 29 September to 2 October 1981. 10/

3. Pursuant to paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979, the Commission submits to the Council for its review the provisional agenda for its twenty-second session, together with the documentation requested. (See chap. XII, para. 271.)

9/ See para. 263 below.

10/ See paras. 207 and 260 below.

II. INDUSTRIAL, ENERGY, TRANSPORT AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE STATISTICS

A. Industrial statistics

4. In considering agenda item 3 (a), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on the draft international recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics (E/CN.3/537), which was prepared in response to the request made at the twentieth session of the Commission. 11/
5. The recommendations were prepared by the Statistical Office and presented to the Commission as the final draft (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/71, parts I and II) of a future publication to be entitled Recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics. 12/ That final draft took into consideration the views expressed by the Commission at its twentieth session as well as those of the regional commissions, international organizations, national statistical offices and individual experts who received a preliminary version early in 1980.
6. The Commission was informed that the primary emphasis in the 1983 World Programme was on a minimum programme for developing countries to take account of their limited resources and experience and to serve as a basis for developing an industrial statistics system.
7. The Commission was further informed of the plans the Statistical Office had drawn up for regional training workshops to develop the capability of the developing countries, in order to permit them to participate in the World Programme.
8. In general, the Commission expressed the view that the recommendations contained in the final draft (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/71, parts I and II) were well thought out and comprehensive and considered that they would substantially contribute to a successful implementation of the 1983 World Programme. In particular, the inclusion of the minimum programme was commended and the flexibility of the recommendations was considered to be useful for all countries.
9. Some members raised questions concerning a few of the basic concepts. Among those, the appropriateness of the concept of producers' values for measuring gross output in industrial censuses was discussed. It was also noted that the remuneration and employment definitions were inadequate where employment agencies provided labour and received a single payment from employers which did not distinguish wages from other elements.
10. The statistical unit was also discussed, since, in practice, the establishment concept creates problems for many countries at the survey stage. It was noted by certain members that many of those problems could be dealt with in regional workshops. Other members noted that establishment statistics would be derived at the compilation stage from data obtained from the enterprise unit and that, in such cases, coverage of the statistics would be limited.

11/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 13.

12/ To be issued as Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 71, parts I and II.

11. The desirability of obtaining early publication of the international results was emphasized. Early publication would depend on the timely submission of national results, and on the Statistical Office.

12. The proposal for conducting regional training workshops was generally commended, and members were invited to make known at an early date their interest and contemplated contribution to such workshops. It was thought that the workshops would be useful for developing methodological guidelines of particular significance in each region.

Action taken by the Commission

13. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, as contained in the final draft (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/71, parts I and II) of Recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, subject to the comments and suggestions made during the discussion of this item;

(b) Adopted the final draft as the international recommendations for the 1983 World Programme;

(c) Requested the Secretary-General:

(i) To publish the revised document and distribute it to countries;

(ii) To encourage regional commissions to organize, in co-operation with interested national and international organizations, training workshops to discuss the proposals and their adaptation to the regional conditions.

14. At the 375th meeting, the representative of Ecuador introduced a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, entitled "1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics" (E/CN.3/L.92), on behalf of Ecuador, Ghana, Malaysia, Mexico and Spain. Subsequently, Egypt joined as co-sponsor. The Commission had before it a statement submitted by the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications (E/CN.3/L.94). During the discussion of the draft resolution the representative of Ecuador, on behalf of the sponsors, accepted amendments proposed by the representatives of Malaysia and the United States of America.

15. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised, without a vote. (For the text, see para. 1 above, draft resolution I.)

B. Energy statistics

16. For its consideration of agenda item 3 (b), the Commission had before it a progress report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/538), which was prepared in response to the request, made at the twentieth session of the Commission, to include energy statistics in the agenda for its twenty-first session.

17. The report outlined the development of tasks recommended by the Commission at its twentieth session for implementation - namely, energy balances, a special report on current practices and future needs in energy statistics, a handbook of conversion factors and technical co-operation in energy statistics. In addition, the report covered the threefold expansion of coverage of the new bilingual 1980 Yearbook of World Energy Statistics. 13/ Also, it discussed co-ordination and co-operation in the exchange of energy statistics among the concerned international organizations.

18. The Commission welcomed the progress report and endorsed and commended the work done by the Statistical Office. It noted that energy statistics remained an important field that continued to require further consideration, co-operation and harmonization by all central statistical offices, regional commissions and other international organizations. The links between energy statistics, national accounts and environment statistics also needed clarification.

19. Several members of the Commission felt that the planned programme was quite ambitious, especially for the developing countries, some of which would find the reporting burden onerous. This might be especially true of the consumption side of energy balances.

20. Attention was drawn to the importance and need for harmonization of energy concepts and definitions. Work in that regard had already progressed within the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The question of the best methods for international collection of energy statistics was raised - in particular, the role of regional commissions. The Secretariat indicated that data collected by ECE were used by the Statistical Office.

21. It was considered that emphasis should be accorded to the development of new statistical series where insufficient information was currently available - namely, investment data, price structures, value added and costs.

22. There was strong agreement on the importance of countries developing their energy statistics, and technical co-operation from the United Nations should be utilized for that purpose. Special emphasis was placed on the need to expand the development and collection of statistics on traditional, or "non-commercial", fuels, since such fuels were of special importance to developing countries. Accordingly, advisers on energy statistics should be fully aware of the varied statistical issues involved in non-commercial sources of energy.

23. The need for the development of an international classification for energy was emphasized. This has been included in the work programme of the Statistical Office.

Action taken by the Commission

24. The Commission:

(a) Urged developing countries to take advantage of technical co-operation under the United Nations system by requesting the services of advisers on energy statistics;

13/ To be issued as a United Nations publication.

(b) Hoped that national statistical offices would be in a position to provide more timely and complete responses to the Statistical Office energy questionnaire with a view to improving both the quantity and quality of international energy statistics. This would be subject to sensible limitation of the reporting burden on countries;

(c) Stressed the need to develop national and international statistics on non-commercial fuels and on prices, costs and other series expressed in value terms.

25. At the 375th meeting, the representative of Malaysia introduced a draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, entitled "International energy statistics" (E/CN.3/L.93), on behalf of Austria, Ghana, India, Japan and Malaysia. In this connexion, the Secretary of the Commission read out a statement concerning financial implications. During the discussion of the draft resolution the representative of Malaysia, on behalf of the sponsors, accepted an amendment proposed by the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

26. The Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised, without a vote. (For the text, see para. 1 above, draft resolution II.)

C. Transport statistics

27. For its consideration of agenda item 3 (c), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Progress report on shipping statistics" (E/CN.3/539), which briefly described the activities of the Statistical Office in the development of shipping statistics and progress made since the twentieth session of the Statistical Commission. The report noted that the project on the development of shipping statistics relied mainly on a trust fund whose establishment was made possible through a grant of \$680,000 from the Government of Norway for the period 1978-1981. The activities described were of two types. The first involved the compilation of a comprehensive network of the flow of goods on world sea lanes for the years 1969-1975, published in December 1980. ^{14/} A similar compilation for the years 1976-1978 should be completed by June 1981 and one for 1979-1980 should be ready by the second quarter of 1982.

28. The second type of activity was work on the promotion of the uniform system for the development of economic statistics of shipping, including visits to countries (China, Egypt and Kenya) to explore the possibility of introducing the system. There was an indication that China intended to adopt the uniform system and planned to serve as host to a seminar to be held in the latter part of 1981 on shipping statistics for the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

29. The representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) informed the Commission that, at its ninth session, held in September 1980, the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping strongly endorsed the work of the Statistical Office in producing statistics on the flow of goods on world sea lanes

^{14/} Results of the Maritime Transport Study for the Years 1969-1972 and Results of the Maritime Transport Study for the Years 1972-1975 (United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.80.XVII.13 and E.80.XVII.14, respectively).

and requested continued investigation of the possibilities of introducing a uniform system of shipping statistics on a world-wide basis.

30. The Commission praised the report for its clear description of progress made and commended the achievements of the Statistical Office, given the limited resources available for the project. It was particularly pleased to learn of resolution 42 (IX) of the UNCTAD Committee on Shipping.

31. The Commission noted with appreciation the work of ESCAP in this field and the co-operation of ESCAP and the Statistical Office in convening workshops in 1979 and 1980. It urged the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to continue its financial support for such work in the ESCAP region. The Commission also noted with satisfaction that, in the developed regions, Canada and New Zealand were making good progress in adopting the framework of the uniform system. The Commission appreciated the confirmation, by the representative of the United States of America, that the United States had been producing the full range of data called for by the uniform system except those on freight charges.

32. Regarding the compilation of data on the flow of goods on world sea lanes, the Commission noted with satisfaction that the data would be brought completely up to date, as originally scheduled, by the second quarter of 1982, thus completing the time series for 1966-1980. It encouraged the Statistical Office to analyse the results with reference to the movements of vessels recorded daily by Lloyd's of London Press.

33. The Commission was unanimous on the desirability of expanded activities to introduce the uniform system to all regions. This would involve workshops and seminars in various regions, the hiring of experts to assist in the implementation of the system in developing countries and the establishment of an adequate central unit to co-ordinate the project. The Commission felt that if the promotion were to be effective, additional financial resources over and above those provided by the Government of Norway would be needed. The Commission welcomed the plan of the Statistical Office to initiate a fund-raising campaign in 1981.

Action taken by the Commission

34. The Commission:

(a) Expressed its appreciation to the Government of Norway for its continued contributions to the Statistical Office for the project on the development of shipping statistics;

(b) Requested the Secretary-General:

(i) To direct the attention of all Member States, particularly developing countries, to the potential of the uniform system as a tool for developing shipping statistics for their economic planning and development;

(ii) To hold seminars and workshops for promoting the uniform system and to recruit technical advisers to help the developing countries in implementing the system;

- (iii) To make efforts to raise adequate extrabudgetary funds for the activities mentioned in (ii) above;
- (iv) To encourage the Secretariat to analyse the data on the flow of goods on world sea lanes compared to the movement of ships;
- (v) To submit a progress report to the Commission at its twenty-second session.

D. International trade statistics

35. For its consideration of agenda item 3 (d), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "International trade statistics: concepts and definitions" (E/CN.3/540), which summarizes the recommendations set forth in detail in ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/52/Rev.1, a draft of a future publication submitted to the Statistical Commission for comments.

36. There was general support for the revised concepts and definitions, and the majority of members of the Commission accepted them. They are consistent with present practice in many countries. However, some of the recommendations presented problems of implementation for certain countries. Three examples of these were: obtaining the gross weight from net weight through sampling might be a problem for some national administrations; it could be difficult to make the distinction at the time of entry between goods leased for more than one year and goods leased for less than one year; and, some transactions in which one or both national boundaries are not crossed could not be registered separately.

37. It was pointed out that there were inconsistencies between the treatment of merchandise trade in the document on the revised concepts and definitions in trade statistics (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/52/Rev.1) and in the System of National Accounts (SNA). It was felt however, that the best strategy was to proceed with the publication of the revised version of International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions ^{15/} and make any changes that might be necessary when reconciliation between trade statistics concepts and definitions, SNA and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Balance of Payments Manual has been achieved.

38. Specific problems of the less developed countries were recognized, especially the need to develop the statistical systems of their customs departments and the lack of particular details relating to trade. It was felt that these countries would benefit from technical co-operation in this field of statistics.

39. The representative of the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) expressed satisfaction with the fact that the concepts laid down in the CCC Kyoto Convention had been used to distinguish the special and the general trade systems as well as to define the country of origin. He urged countries to implement the recommendations made by the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session ^{16/} and to adopt the 1978 revision of the CCC Nomenclature (CCCN) and its one-to-one correlation with the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). He

^{15/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.XVII.16.

^{16/} See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 36.

pointed out that a third revision of SITC would have to be available when both the revision of CCCN and the Harmonized System (HS) came into force on 1 January 1985. He indicated that as far as possible a one-to-one correlation at the five-digit level of the HS should be achieved in the third revision of SITC, without prejudice to also correlating at the six-digit level when convenient.

40. The importance of computing international trade indices of volumes and prices was stressed. It was suggested that further work might be necessary for the dissemination of information on the new concepts.

Action taken by the Commission

41. The Commission:

(a) Took note of the fact that a third revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) would need to be considered by the Commission at its twenty-second session in order to be available for use effective 1 January 1985;

(b) Approved the revised concepts and definitions in the field of international trade statistics;

(c) Requested the Secretary-General to arrange publication of the revised version of International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions.

III. NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AND BALANCES

A. System of National Accounts (SNA)

42. For its consideration of agenda item 4 (a), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "Future directions for work on the System of National Accounts (SNA)" (E/CN.3/541), and a report of the Secretary-General discussing specifically the relation of SNA to the IMF Balance of Payments Manual (E/CN.3/542). The reports reflected the views expressed in a report submitted by the Expert Group convened in April 1980 to discuss future directions for work on SNA (E/CN.3/AC.9/5).

43. The Commission considered that the report on future directions for work on SNA was comprehensive and balanced, and general support was expressed for the conclusions of the Expert Group. The Commission recognized the important role of the national accounts as a framework and point of reference for large parts of the statistical system, including related social as well as economic data. That in turn entailed the need to ensure that SNA was an appropriate vehicle for the purpose. For example, the increasing interest in questions of distribution and in identifying the beneficiaries of development, on the one hand, and the problems arising from high rates of inflation, on the other, led to the need to update some aspects of SNA.

44. Work to achieve consistency among international recommendations in related social and economic fields was given high priority, and it was recognized that, where inconsistencies existed, accommodation should be sought through discussions among specialists in the fields concerned. In order to achieve the required standardization of concepts and classifications, increased emphasis on the co-ordination activities of the Statistical Office was urged.

45. With regard to the internal work programme of the Statistical Office, the Commission considered that, in the short term, priority should be given to questions of clarification and updating, with the object of arriving at specific proposals that could be considered by the Commission at its twenty-second session. It was recognized, however, that the short-term priority should not exclude work on longer-term considerations. Any statistical system that was used must evolve as conditions changed. An effort must be made to meet demands, not only from economists but from new groups of users. The process of developing guidelines in new fields was very lengthy and studies that had been initiated might be expected to reach fruition towards the end of the decade.

46. A number of members of the Commission expressed the view that all of the topics proposed by the Expert Group should be investigated. Special importance was attached: (a) to questions arising from inflation, including current cost accounting and fluctuating exchange rates; (b) to distributional questions and the development of the necessary data for investigating them, including social accounting matrices and micro-data sets; (c) to the role of imputations and questions of the production boundary, including non-market activity; and (d) to consistency among related standards and their application by countries. Interest was also expressed in a number of other topics, including the treatment of unincorporated enterprises, the problems of oil economies, pollution abatement costs

and benefits, the utilization of natural resources with special emphasis on energy resources and the relationship of energy activities with other economic activities and the measurement of human capital.

47. The Commission recognized that, especially in view of anticipated resource limitations, it was essential that further conceptual development should be a co-operative task, shared by international organizations, individual countries and groups of countries, and welcomed the offers of assistance made by a number of participants. In order to avoid conflicting and duplicative work, such co-operative arrangements should be formalized, and provision should be made for regular consultations among specialists on particular topics, and with ad hoc working groups when needed. It would be important to provide for input from developing countries in co-operative work of that nature.

48. The Commission considered that the Handbook of National Accounting series would meet an important need in amplifying and clarifying SNA documentation, and that it was an appropriate vehicle for disseminating both short-term updating and longer-term research studies.

49. With regard to the report dealing specifically with the external transactions of SNA (E/CN.3/542), the Commission considered that a manual on sources and methods was especially needed in that field and that the draft manual should be published after taking into account the comments of national statistical offices and other interested organizations.

50. Strong support was expressed for the objective of eliminating differences among related standards, including in that particular instance the international trade recommendations as well as SNA and the balance of payments. The Commission agreed that an ad hoc technical group, including specialists from all three areas, should be convened at an early date to consider the recommendations in the report and other related questions, again with the object of making specific proposals to the Commission at its twenty-second session. Publication of the manual on external transactions of SNA should await the conclusions of that group. It was considered, however, that publication of the recommendations on international trade should not be delayed for that purpose (see paras. 35-41 above).

51. The representative of IMF expressed the Fund's full support for the objective of reconciliation, and informed the Commission that the Fund had prepared a reconciliation of SNA and the Balance of Payments Manual, with the advice of the Statistical Office, which it expected to publish. In view of the short time that had elapsed since the last revision of the Balance of Payments Manual, however, no changes in that Manual were expected in the near future.

Action taken by the Commission

52. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the report of the Expert Group Meeting on Future Directions for Work on the United Nations System of National Accounts (E/CN.3/AC.9/5), with general approval of the priorities stated therein;

(b) Emphasized the role of SNA (as well as of the System of Balances of the

National Economy - MPS) as a framework for the statistical system and as a point of reference in establishing standards for related statistics, and urged therefore that increased emphasis be placed upon the co-ordination function of the Statistical Office, which should continue to take a leadership role in that activity;

(c) Considered that SNA, by reason of its comprehensiveness, should rank ahead of standards developed for particular fields of economic statistics; when such other standards are under review, the organizations responsible for them should endeavour to achieve consistency with SNA (or MPS) and, where differences remain, explain the reasons for them and provide a full reconciliation with SNA (or MPS);

(d) Urged that specific proposals be developed with regard to needed short-term clarification and updating of SNA, if possible for submission to the Commission at its twenty-second session, with the assistance of ad hoc expert groups on external transactions and possibly other topics;

(e) Recognized the need, within the limits of available resources, to initiate research studies with a longer time horizon, in order to meet demands for new kinds of information;

(f) Endorsed the use of the Handbook of National Accounting series as a vehicle for disseminating the results of future work on national accounts, including expanded and updated manuals on sources and methods and longer-term research studies and, in particular, requested the inclusion in the series of the draft manual on external transactions;

(g) Welcomed the proposed co-operation of international agencies, individual countries and groups of countries in the work of further conceptual development of SNA, and endorsed the need for formalization of such co-operative and consultative arrangements in order to avoid conflicting and duplicative work.

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

53. For its consideration of agenda item 4 (b), the Commission had before it a document entitled "Progress report on SNA/MPS comparisons" (E/CN.3/543).

54. The Commission was informed of the work undertaken by the United Nations Statistical Office in this field in order to introduce some improvements and elaborations into the conceptual framework of SNA/MPS comparisons, the basic principles of which are contained in Comparisons of the System of National Accounts and the System of Balances of the National Economy; Part One, Conceptual Relationships. 17/ The major efforts were concentrated on improving the consistency between various components of the framework, that is, between matrices and conversion tables, between different types of conversion tables and between interrelated adjustments within conversion tables. The results of these efforts are tentative and it was, therefore, emphasized that further work in this area was needed.

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

55. The Commission was also informed that the Statistical Office, in close co-operation with the national statistical offices of a number of countries, had prepared illustrative calculations, the major purpose of which was to test the conceptual framework and to ensure further input for the work of elaborating the methodology. The publication containing the results of these calculations is to be released shortly.

56. It was emphasized that this topic continues to be of great interest to the Commission, because the study of the links between SNA and MPS facilitates better international comparability of national income data and helps in understanding the differences between the economic systems themselves.

57. The Commission noted with satisfaction the progress made in the work on this subject along the directions outlined in the report. It was pleased to be informed of the progress achieved in the bilateral project on SNA/MPS links carried out by France and Hungary. The general understanding was that the results of the bilateral project should be taken into account in the future work on elaborating the conceptual framework of intersystem comparisons. This applies equally to work on the revision of SNA and MPS and to the elaboration of the System of Indicators of Non-Material Services (SINS) developed by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

58. It was emphasized that the final version of the conceptual framework should contain two versions of the conversion tables: one set would include practically all theoretically justified adjustments and another set would comprise only those adjustments which were large enough to be important.

59. The Commission broadly endorsed the direction for future work outlined in the progress report, with the understanding that the final version of the revised conceptual framework should be presented to the Commission at its twenty-third session. The Commission emphasized the desirability of continued co-operation on this subject between the Statistical Office and various international organizations, in particular, between the Office, ECE and CMEA on the one hand, and between international organizations and national statistical offices, on the other hand.

60. The Commission was pleased to be informed of the work carried out by CMEA on further development of MPS and, in particular, of the work on SINS, which can be adopted for international comparison purposes. The Commission noted the readiness of the CMEA secretariat to co-operate in the work on the conversion key between classifications by kind of economic activities adopted in SNA and MPS.

Action taken by the Commission

61. The Commission:

(a) Agreed that the work should continue on further elaboration of the conceptual framework of SNA/MPS comparisons;

(b) Agreed, in particular, that work should be expanded on the illustrative

calculations of gross domestic product for centrally planned economies and net material product for market economies, the major purpose of which is to test the conceptual framework and emphasized, in this connexion, the usefulness of calculations carried out by countries on a bilateral basis;

(c) Requested the Secretary-General to prepare a progress report on this topic for the Commission at its twenty-second session.

IV. INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROJECT (ICP)

62. For its consideration of agenda item 5, the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "International Comparison Project (ICP) developments" (E/CN.3/544). The report described the main difficulties of the 1975 survey (phase III) and the solutions applied presented what had so far been achieved in phase IV (reference year 1980) and outlined the future directions of the work.

63. The Commission was informed of the latest achievements in the conduct of phase IV and in the research for improving the methodology. It was also informed of the very difficult problems of human and financial resources which the Statistical Office of the United Nations was facing in its task of carrying out the programme in a satisfactory way.

64. The representatives of the World Bank, CMEA and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) informed the Commission of the work on comparisons carried out in their organizations. Several organizations and countries offered the Statistical Office of the United Nations their continued co-operation on various aspects of the project.

65. The Commission stressed once again the importance of ICP as a tool for better assessment of countries' relative economic development and for improving statistical comparisons of prices and economic aggregates among participating countries.

66. There was general agreement that ICP would provide a better method of comparison than exchange rates. However, a few members of the Commission expressed the view that ICP results should not be used for policy purposes at the world and some regional levels before there was agreement on acceptable international standards as regards methodological and other aspects.

67. The Commission stressed the need for a more clearly defined and understandable methodology. It was recognized that further refinement was especially required in the treatment of non-traded goods and services and in tackling related problems of data collection in the light of widely divergent levels of economic development of countries. In this connexion, the Commission generally acknowledged that all new statistical methodologies had undergone a period of evolution before being broadly accepted.

68. The Commission emphasized the need of a strong co-ordinating role for the Statistical Office of the United Nations in establishing an acceptable methodology to be used in the participating countries and in carrying out the current work.

69. The Commission felt that the question of how to continue ICP, and at what level, should be discussed at its twenty-second session, after a review of the work on phases III and IV. The Commission also recognized that timely results would encourage new donors and might also persuade other countries to participate.

70. The Commission recognized that accurate results were important, but a view was expressed that the standards imposed on ICP should be higher than those imposed on other methodologies in use for international comparisons. The view was also expressed that marginal increases in accuracy needed to be considered in terms of cost.

71. Most members of the Commission were interested in regional results, but there were questions as to whether regional results should be obtained exclusively from the corresponding regional data or should be a subset of the results of universal processing. Some members of the Commission expressed the view that it was important to balance the increase in the quality of unique regional results with the correlated decrease in the quality of global results. As applications broadened, moving from bilateral comparisons to comparisons of small regions and on to world-wide comparisons, each loss of homogeneity reinforced doubts about the applicability of concepts, especially when developed and developing countries were included in the comparisons.

72. Members of the Commission were concerned about the effect of publishing varying sets of results, although it recognized that, for different purposes, differing sets of results might be useful. The validity of each set of results should be defined at the international level and not by individual users.

73. The Commission expressed strong interest in the development of reduced-information methods, especially since they might involve countries which would not otherwise participate. The view was expressed that the results obtained from the use of reduced-information methods should be compared with those obtained from the full-scale survey, in order to check for consistency.

74. The Commission was of the opinion that the short-cut method proposed in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/544, paras. 53-58) should be improved upon and compared with other short-cut methods which had been applied elsewhere.

75. The Commission agreed that further consideration should be given to the methods of bringing up to date the results of the benchmark surveys, so that extrapolation of the result of one benchmark survey would be as consistent as possible with the result of the following survey.

76. The Commission felt that once agreement had been reached on methods and other questions, the ICP manual proposed by the Secretary-General should present ICP methodology and guidelines for its use. Uses which could be made of international price comparisons should also be mentioned in the manual, including specific examples of current uses. Statistical training in international price comparisons would be helpful.

Action taken by the Commission

77. The Commission:

(a) Generally endorsed the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/544) describing developments in ICP;

(b) Supported the efforts of the Statistical Office to raise more extrabudgetary resources to continue the ICP project and to extend it to more countries;

(c) Stressed the need for a strong co-ordinating role for the Statistical Office in establishing methodologies to be applied in all participating countries and in the conduct of the current work;

(d) Endorsed the establishment of an expert group, financed from extrabudgetary resources, with the terms of reference in paragraph 87 of the report of the Secretary-General and requested the expert group to examine the following topics:

(i) Level of acceptable accuracy in the results;

(ii) Review of alternative methodologies including reduced-information methods;

(iii) Role of regionalization;

(iv) Inventory of the research on and use of ICP;

(v) Policy uses of ICP;

(e) Urged that training, including manuals, be a component of ICP in participating countries which required it;

(f) Requested that a report on the long-term organization of ICP be submitted to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

V. INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATIONS

78. For its consideration of agenda item 6, the Commission had before it a progress report (E/CN.3/545) that described what had been done on the harmonization of international economic classifications since the twentieth session of the Commission, when it strongly endorsed continuation of work in that field.

79. The Commission was informed that, in carrying forward the programme, the Secretariat had three major goals in view: harmonization of classifications of the same type developed by different international organizations - for example, the activity classification of the United Nations (International Standard Industrial Classification - ISIC) and the activity classification of the European Communities (General Industrial Classification of Economic Activities in Use by the European Communities - NACE); harmonization of classifications of different types produced by the same organization - for example, classifications of goods by industrial origin and classifications of goods in international trade; and the harmonization of classifications of different types produced by different organizations.

80. The work was being done with the advice and guidance of a group of experts which, with material assistance from the Statistical Office of the European Communities, met for the second time in Luxembourg in June 1979. The group is known as the Joint United Nations Statistical Office/Statistical Office of the European Communities Working Group on World-level Classifications.

81. The main accomplishment at the second session of the Working Group was agreement on some 57 intermediate-level categories which could be introduced into the international activity classifications under study. Those categories are roughly equivalent to the three-digit major groups of the current (1968) version of ISIC. They represent a big step in the harmonization process, although they only cover activities producing transportable goods.

82. Studies of the relationships between the intermediate-level categories and classifications of goods are being carried out in order to establish the content of the categories and to strengthen the relationship between activities and goods and between production and trade classifications.

83. The results of this work will be submitted to the Working Group at its third session, which is scheduled to take place in Luxembourg in May 1981. The Commission was advised that at the third session (which would again receive material support from the Statistical Office of the European Communities), the experts would be asked to consider proposals by the Statistical Office of the United Nations for the revision and harmonization of those activities producing non-transportable goods.

84. At the third session, the experts would also be asked to consider the relationship between an intermediate level of a revised ISIC and an intermediate level of a third revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC). To get classifications of goods by industrial origin harmonized with classifications of goods in international trade requires the close co-ordination

of activity and trade classifications at an intermediate level. Close co-ordination can only be accomplished when both the activity and trade classifications are undergoing revision. Work on revising ISIC is in process. The need to revise SITC is imminent because of the virtual completion of the Harmonized System (HS) of the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC). The construction of HS has brought about important changes in the CCC Nomenclature (CCCN). The present close relationship between SITC and CCCN will have to be maintained. Accordingly, SITC will need to be revised (see paras. 39-41 above).

85. The Commission recognized that work on harmonization of economic classifications has always awaited the moment when both goods and activity classifications would be undergoing revision - that is, the moment when their structures would be sufficiently fluid to allow adjustments to be made in both classifications to achieve harmonization.

86. Although work on harmonization of activity classifications is fairly well advanced and a third revision of ISIC may be ready for submission to the Commission at its twenty-second session, the Commission agreed that it was not desirable - even if possible - for SITC to have to adjust to a finalized ISIC. The only reasonable way to accomplish harmonization would be to make adjustments in both classifications.

87. The Commission felt that work on harmonization of economic classifications was of great utility, and it strongly supported continuation of the effort. The Commission agreed with the approach that had been adopted and was appreciative of the aid received from the Statistical Office of the European Communities. The importance of HS was recognized, and the continued participation by the Statistical Office of the United Nations in the design of that instrument was stressed.

88. Among other aspects of the work discussed was the need to ensure co-ordination within the Statistical Office of the United Nations and between groups providing advice and guidance to that Office (for example, between the United Nations Statistical Office/Statistical Office of the European Communities Working Group and experts groups on trade classification). Work on harmonization would be facilitated if such groups had at least some members in common, including staff of the Statistical Office of the United Nations working on the different classifications.

89. The Commission was informed of the initiative undertaken by the CMEA secretariat to establish a conversion key between ISIC and the CMEA classification by kind of economic activity. The first draft of the conversion key was submitted to the United Nations Statistical Office. It was noted that further work would benefit from a co-operative effort by the United Nations Statistical Office and CMEA and that the method of work could be the same as that used to establish the conversion key between the external trade classifications of the two organizations.

90. Another issue concerned the relative importance of each of the three criteria controlling the work. Those criteria are: industrial organization and structure; harmonization of classifications of goods by industrial origin with classifications of goods in international trade; and harmonization of activity classifications developed by the Statistical Office of the United Nations, the Statistics Department of CMEA and the Statistical Office of the European Communities. The approach adopted by the United Nations Statistical Office/Statistical Office of the

European Communities' Working Group was pragmatic. It was noted that an activity classification had - above all - to reflect industrial organization and structure, but that a proliferation of different classifications of that type burdened national statistical offices; it was further noted that harmonization of goods classifications was essential for sound economic analysis and planning.

91. Another matter which arose was the need to take account in the classifications of the special conditions in developing countries, especially the need to distinguish, within an industry, establishments employing traditional methods from those employing modern methods. The Commission was advised that the matter was before the Working Group on World-Level Classifications and that the Statistical Office of the United Nations would continue to pursue it with experts and with national statistical offices, in an effort to obtain suggestions on how to provide for this need in the classifications.

92. Finally, the Commission was glad to learn that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is to examine the need for, and the problems of, revising its International Standard Classification of Occupations. The present version, which dates back to 1968, may be becoming obsolete. Since a revision would constitute an extremely large task, the ILO will use the services of a consultant in 1982 to advise it on the problem and to prepare a feasibility study if it appears that a revision is desirable. If so, the Governing Body of ILO will decide whether and when the necessary resources can be made available.

Action taken by the Commission

93. The Commission:

(a) Strongly endorsed continued participation by the Statistical Office of the United Nations in the construction of HS-CCC and urged CCC to consider favourably proposals from the United Nations Statistical Office/Statistical Office of the European Communities Working Group on World-level Classifications to take account of the industrial-origin criterion;

(b) Welcomed the support given by the Statistical Office of the European Communities and the time and effort given by the participating experts, including those from regional commissions, specialized agencies and other organizations;

(c) Urged the Statistical Office of the United Nations to keep all interested Member States fully informed on detailed proposals being developed by the Working Group on World-Level Classifications;

(d) Urged the Statistical Office of the United Nations to promote improved co-ordination by ensuring appropriate and - if possible - overlapping membership in groups engaged in classification tasks;

(e) Requested that a report be submitted to the Commission at its twenty-second session outlining the status of the revision of ISIC and the degree to which it will be possible to co-ordinate ISIC and SITC.

VI. SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

A. 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme

94. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (a), the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/546), which described the progress made in the Secretariat in connexion with the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme and gave supplementary information on the dates of national population and housing censuses covered in the 1975-1984 period.

95. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the work carried out by the Secretariat in connexion with the census programme. It welcomed the publication in English, French and Spanish and the forthcoming publication in Russian of the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses ^{18/} and noted the preparation for its publication in Arabic and Chinese. The Commission stressed the importance of the continuing study of census methodology, which includes work on census organization, planning, enumeration, processing, analysis, evaluation and dissemination of data. It endorsed the proposal to prepare a report on emerging issues in population and housing censuses and suggested a number of topics for it. These include issues associated with census editing and imputation, those involved in ensuring timely release of census results, including possible trade-offs between timeliness, cost and accuracy, the confidentiality of census results and public confidence in the census and the cost-effectiveness of adopting advanced technology in processing census data. The Commission also discussed the possible use of population registers and other types of administrative record systems to provide some or all of the data traditionally obtained in a population and housing census. It was noted that the replacement of direct data collection by such administrative systems would present new problems for international comparative analysis. International co-operation would be needed in order to avoid these problems.

96. Considerable interest in and support for the study of census staffing and cost requirements were expressed. The Commission noted that the majority of countries in the world had participated or expected to participate in the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme and almost all had experienced difficulty in obtaining necessary resources for their censuses. It emphasized the value of international comparative studies on this subject in informing different governmental agencies, particularly funding agencies, about various aspects of census costs and staffing. The Commission awaited with great interest the results of the study, which is about to be completed. There was general support for convening an interregional workshop in 1982 to discuss the results of the census costs and staffing study, although some members considered that regional workshops might be more cost-effective since many of the problems associated with the subject were specific to one region. It was noted that improving the quality of information on census costs was a long-term effort, which was also related to other types of data-collection activities including other censuses and sample surveys.

^{18/} United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.XVII.8.

97. The Commission expressed strong interest in the study on sex-based stereotypes and sex biases in national data systems. It noted the existence of this problem in every society and commented on the difficulty of carrying out studies on this topic at the international level. A number of members indicated the steps that have been undertaken in their own countries to improve the availability and quality of statistics needed for assessing the role and status of women. Many of these members ascertained that in that process, national offices co-ordinating the national plan of action for the United Nations Decade for Women had been helpful. The Commission considered that document ST/ESA/STAT/99 was a useful approach to the problem and reaffirmed the decision taken at its twentieth session supporting the convening of an expert group meeting on this subject, depending on the availability of funds.

Action taken by the Commission

98. The Commission:

(a) Welcomed the progress report on the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme (E/CN.3/546), which provided useful and timely information on this subject;

(b) Endorsed other activities and needs described in the progress report, including inter alia:

- (i) The preparation of a report on emerging issues in population and housing censuses, based on experience in the present census decade, as an aid to work on planning for the next census decade;
- (ii) The continuing study of census staffing and cost requirements and the convening of an interregional expert group on this subject in 1982;
- (iii) The requirement for continuing work in the improvement of statistics needed to assess and monitor special problems such as the role and status of women.

B. Civil registration and vital statistics

99. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (b), the Commission had before it a progress report by the Secretary-General on civil registration and vital statistics (E/CN.3/547), describing activities carried out at the country, regional and international levels in connexion with the World Programme for the Improvement of Vital Statistics, and a statement submitted by the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics (E/CN.3/NGO/8). The progress report was prepared in response to the request of the Commission at its twentieth session that an item on civil registration and vital statistics be placed on the agenda for the twenty-first session.

100. The Commission stressed that the topic was of great importance to all countries. In that connexion, it noted that civil registration had two important functions. First, it had social, legal and administrative value. That was the primary basis for establishing and maintaining a civil registration system. Secondly, civil

registration had a very important role in a country's statistical system. Along with population censuses and sample surveys, it was the foundation of national population statistics. In particular, civil registration records provided vital statistics for the population on a continuous basis, the periodic estimation of the population and statistical information on which economic and social development could be based.

101. The Commission held the view that the civil registration system was complementary to the population census and sample surveys, in other words, that none of those components could be viewed as a replacement for the others. It noted, for example, that although sample surveys might provide data for national and occasionally provincial estimates, they could not be used for generating local-area statistics.

102. Recognizing that considerable time might be required in order to achieve a substantially complete and reliable statistical reporting system based on the civil registration system, the Commission agreed that, in the absence of a comprehensive civil registration system, other short-term methods for obtaining vital statistics should be used; the long-term objective must, however, be the establishment of a civil registration system capable of serving both legal and statistical requirements.

103. The Commission stressed the importance of involving various units of government, such as ministries of health and judicial agencies, in national committees on vital statistics. It pointed out that such committees had an important role for all countries.

104. The Commission strongly endorsed the work programme of the Secretariat. It commended the pragmatic approach taken in the progress report on civil registration and vital statistics in dealing with the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics and agreed with the proposal to prepare a special version of Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System 19/ specifically directed towards policy makers at the government level, without whose support a comprehensive civil registration system could not be achieved. A number of members expressed concern that the revision of the Handbook for Vital Statistics Methods 20/ had not yet been issued. Since the Commission placed high priority on this aspect of the work programme, it was pleased to learn that adequate resources had been secured by the Secretariat for completion of the revised Handbook.

105. The Commission welcomed the interest and activities of many countries and regional and international organizations in promoting the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics. It expressed its appreciation to several members of their offers of assistance to developing countries for training and other forms of assistance in that important field.

106. The Commission was pleased to learn of the survey of major obstacles to achieving satisfactory registration of vital events and compilation of reliable vital statistics from these records, carried out by the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics and circulated to countries.

19/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.XVII.9.

20/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.55.XVII.1.

Action taken by the Commission

107. The Commission:

(a) Called for the early completion and publication of the revised Handbook of Vital Statistics Methods;

(b) Expressed agreement with the future plans and objectives described in the progress report by the Secretary-General on civil registration and vital statistics (E/CN.3/547), including, inter alia:

(i) Working towards the formation of national committees on vital and health statistics in all countries;

(ii) Developing and organizing, in collaboration with other international and national agencies, training programmes at various levels for the staff of national offices; those programmes were particularly needed in methods and techniques for keeping vital records, techniques of compiling vital statistics reports, the use of vital statistics reports, the use of vital statistics data and the implementation of international standards and recommendations;

(iii) Promoting, in collaboration with regional commissions and international and national agencies, regional meetings of government officials and civil registration and vital statistics officers in order to create among governmental policy makers and decision makers an awareness of the necessity and importance of a well-functioning civil registration and vital statistics system and also appraising the civil registration and vital statistics systems in each country;

(c) Agreed that a special version of Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, directed towards policy makers, should be prepared;

(d) Expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics.

C. Housing and related statistics

108. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (c), the Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General which dealt with the present status and plans for the improvement of housing and related statistics (E/CN.3/548).

109. The Commission noted with satisfaction the progress of work in that important area and the timeliness and usefulness of the report by the Secretariat. The extension of the scope of housing statistics to include all issues relating to human settlements was considered by the Commission to take full account of the developments following Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in 1976, and the expanded user needs for statistics in this field.

110. The Commission considered that the wider range of this work added to the methodological and conceptual issues involved. It stressed that data on certain housing topics, though very difficult to obtain in housing censuses, could be collected through sample surveys or from various administrative sources. A number

of Commission members indicated that these sources were often employed to gather information on topics in the housing and human settlements fields. For example, reliable statistics on squatter settlements and age of buildings were better collected in sample surveys than in housing censuses; the potential value of the National Household Survey Capability Programme was noted. A number of countries had established a system of housing and building registration, which would be an important source of housing and building statistics. National experiences in this connexion should be studied by the Secretariat and made available to other countries.

111. The Commission stressed the need for further work on harmonizing and standardizing definitions and concepts in housing and related statistics. This work will need to be carried out in close co-ordination with related work in other fields.

112. The Commission noted that some countries had already done methodological work in housing forecasting, and it encouraged the Secretariat to obtain the results of this work and make them available to other countries. A study on housing indicators in both developed and developing countries was also considered favourably by the Commission.

113. The Commission noted that consultations between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Statistical Office had already been initiated for the revision of the questionnaire and the preparation of a statistical compendium covering the years 1978-1980. This compendium would assist Member States in formulating their policies and programmes for human settlements. It was also required by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements as a substantial input to the "Global report on human settlements", which the Centre is required to prepare in compliance with General Assembly resolution 34/114 of 14 December 1979. The Commission also noted that related work was being carried out by some of the regional commissions and wished that the plans for the new compendium could be developed in consultation with them and other interested agencies.

114. The Commission noted that the dearth of housing and related data from many developing countries presented special obstacles to further work. Often, only census data were available. It was suggested that data requirements be reviewed to ensure that data for the compendium were both useful for policy purposes and sufficient to warrant their compilation at the international level.

115. The Commission supported the publication of the Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics. However, it was agreed that the Compendium should be issued at five-year intervals so as to coincide more closely with national planning and housing census cycles.

Action taken by the Commission

116. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the publication at five-year intervals of a Compendium of Human Settlements Statistics in place of the present Compendium of Housing Statistics; 21/

21/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E/F.80.XVII.4.

- (b) Supported the proposals for methodological studies on:
 - (i) National practices on sources, methods of collection, evaluation and use of current housing statistics;
 - (ii) Methodology of forecasting housing needs;
- (c) Endorsed the proposed multidisciplinary training programmes, with an emphasis on basic statistical skills;
- (d) Endorsed the organization of seminars to assess user requirements and to promote effective utilization of housing census statistics.

D. International migration statistics

117. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (d), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/549) setting forth a strategy for implementing the recommendations concerning migrant flow statistics and immigrant stock data. The report was prepared in response to the request of the Commission at its nineteenth session, 22/ upon adopting the recommendations that were subsequently published as Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. 23/

118. The Commission commended the report and expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for initiating comprehensive work aimed at improving comparability of international migration statistics. It agreed in general with the priorities for future work proposed in the report and made several suggestions concerning specific activities to be undertaken.

119. The Commission noted that compiling a common set of tabulations of migrant flow statistics would significantly contribute to the international exchange and uses of data. While agreeing with the proposed common set of tabulations, several members felt that it would be difficult to compile them in the near future, particularly those concerning emigrants. Bilateral studies are considered to be of value for expanding knowledge about migrant flows between countries and possibly for deriving more reliable data on migrant flows.

120. Statistics of short-term migration, although very useful for studies on human resources flows, as well as for migration policy purposes, pose special problems of identification, particularly with reference to the recommended criterion of economic status of short-term migrants. The Commission therefore urged further work on the definition and treatment of special groups with a view to developing a set of guidelines and eventual consolidation of statistics of all international arrivals and departures. The Commission welcomed the proposed meeting of a group of experts in 1981 to consider these and other technical issues concerning the collection of migrant flow statistics.

121. The Commission approved the international co-operative programme of collection and exchange of immigrant stock data obtained in the 1980 round of population

22/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 2 (E/5910), para. 60.

23/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.XVII.18.

censuses. The programme would, inter alia, meet the data requirements of many users. Several members of the Commission indicated their willingness to co-operate in the programme and requested that the questionnaire proposed for the collection and exchange of immigrant stock data be circulated as soon as possible. It also suggested that several methodological issues needed to be resolved if the hoped-for benefits from the co-operative programme were to be achieved. The Commission noted the interest of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population and requested it to mail copies of its brochure entitled "Utilization of population census data for compilation of international migration data" to all national statistical offices.

Action taken by the Commission

122. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the strategy presented by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/549) and attached high priority to the international co-operative programme on the collection, compilation and exchange of data;

(b) Requested that the expert group be convened in 1981 to consider, inter alia, technical issues concerning the treatment of special groups and other aspects of further improvement of international migration statistics;

(c) Recommended further work on operational problems concerning the collection of short-term migration data;

(d) Requested the Secretariat to prepare technical reports designed to assist countries in the collection and improvement of international migration statistics.

E. Classification of age

123. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (e), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "Draft guidelines on age-group classifications" (E/CN.3/550). The report contained a discussion of current national practices concerning age classifications in 12 subject areas, presented existing international guidelines on age classifications and developed a set of standardized and harmonized age classifications in 12 subject areas at three levels of detail.

124. The Commission was informed that the report had been discussed at a meeting on the co-ordination of demographic statistics within the Framework for a System of Social and Demographic Statistics (FSDS), held by the Conference of European Statisticians in November 1980, and was informed of the comments and suggestions made by the participants in that meeting.

125. The Commission expressed a number of specific concerns about certain age groups and age ranges and consistency with existing national and international age-group classifications.

126. Although there was general agreement that publication of the report of the Secretary-General was desirable, it was not at all certain that countries would be

able to adopt the classifications presented. The extent to which the Statistical Office of the United Nations and other international bodies would be able to adopt them should be stated in the publication.

Action taken by the Commission

127. The Commission agreed that, after a re-examination of the specific concerns expressed by several members and after making the necessary corrections and amendments, the report of the Secretary-General should be published as provisional guidelines.

F. Classifications of size and type of locality and urban/rural areas

128. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (f), the Commission had before it a report entitled "National practices in classifications of size and type of locality and urban/rural areas" (E/CN.3/551 and Corr.1). The report provided a description of current national practices concerning types of geographical units, definitions of urban and rural areas and classifications used. It also contained an overview of international guidelines and recommendations for classifications of geographical units, urban and rural areas and combinations thereof.

129. The discussion of the report focused almost exclusively on questions of the relative merit and priority of continued work in this area.

130. While there appeared to be general agreement concerning the usefulness of maintaining and expanding an overview of national practices, constructing international standard guidelines on concepts, definitions and classifications of geographical units and their urban/rural characteristics was, for the most part, considered to be unlikely to produce meaningful results.

131. Several members stressed the difficulties of expressing, in precise form, the urban/rural characteristics of localities. In fact, it was suggested that the Statistical Office might assist countries in developing methodologies for solving these problems at the national level. The Commission emphasized that the wide variation in social and economic conditions between countries rendered international standardization very difficult.

132. Several members questioned whether it was timely to distinguish between urban and rural areas. In many countries living conditions were, or were fast becoming, identical in both types of area, thus making distinctions artificial and unnecessary. However, this view does not yet reflect the reality experienced in many developing countries. They still feel a need for classifying localities by urban/rural status but acknowledge at the same time the difficulty of international standardization and harmonization of concepts, definitions and classifications.

133. The difficulties over this set of classifications conflicted with the need for internationally harmonized statistics of human settlements, which posed problems needing to be solved.

Action taken by the Commission

134. The Commission:

(a) Agreed that while there was some interest in this work (for example, among developing countries and in connexion with work on human settlements), further work should receive low over-all priority;

(b) Agreed that any further work should concentrate on monitoring and analysing differences in the national definitions of urban areas and should incorporate the most recent national information available to the Statistical Office.

G. Links among economic, social and demographic statistics

135. For its consideration of agenda item 7 (g), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "Role of macro-data and micro-data structures in the integration of demographic, social and economic statistics" (E/CN.3/552). That report responds to the request of the Statistical Commission at its twentieth session ^{24/} for a continuation of work on the integration of demographic, social and economic statistics, following the series of studies published recently on that topic. ^{25/} At the same time, it takes into account the need for co-ordinating work on FSDS with the concurrent work on the updating and extension of SNA, as reported in E/CN.3/541 (see paras. 42-48 above).

136. A number of members of the Commission found the report highly interesting and stimulating, considering that the topic was becoming more and more important and that the approach should be given highest priority. It was considered that emphasis should be given to the technical reports mentioned in the proposed work programme; particular interest was expressed in studies of statistical methodology, including statistical matching, the integration of survey and administrative data and the design of a population model. Several participants emphasized the importance of reconciling macro- and micro-data.

137. Other participants, however, expressed reservations and raised some questions. They considered the programme to be ambitious, vast and for the very long term, and felt that difficulties were underestimated. In practical terms, the difficulties lay in the intractability of the data and in the fact that, inevitably, different data systems would have to exist side by side. One participant did not think that the integration of social and economic data, or of macro- and micro-data, would be helpful to policy makers. Some considered the proposed approach to be beyond the capabilities of developing countries.

138. Given those reservations, the Commission felt that, before publishing a technical report on the topic, the questions and comments of members should be taken fully into account. The goal of integrating data bases, first articulated by the

^{24/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 117.

^{25/} Studies in Methods, Series F, Nos. 24, 25 and 27 (United Nations publications, Sales Nos. E.79.XVII.4, E.79.XVII.12 and E.79.XVII.14).

Commission a decade ago still remained, however, and it was important that work in the area should continue.

139. In terms of the work programme, the priorities expressed by the Commission at its twentieth session were considered still valid. ^{26/} These were: continuation of work on concepts, definitions and classifications; examination and further development of statistical methodology, including exact and statistical matching techniques; consideration of questions of confidentiality and privacy.

Action taken by the Commission

140. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the general strategy presented in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/552) and urged that work in the area continue;

(b) Reaffirmed the goal of integrating social, demographic and economic data bases as a long-term objective;

(c) Recommended that the Commission's views be taken into account before a technical report on the topic was published;

(d) Endorsed the work programme approved at the twentieth session, with generally the same priorities.

^{26/} Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 115.

VII. ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

141. For its consideration of agenda item 8, the Commission had before it a progress report on environment statistics (E/CN.3/553). The document had been prepared in response to the Commission's request, at its twentieth session, to include a progress report on this activity in the agenda of its twenty-first session. 27/

142. The report outlined the current work of the United Nations Statistical Office on developing guidelines on concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies, on the organization of a preliminary format for the collection of data, on regional workshops and national pilot studies and on the survey of international data and gaps. The report discussed some problems of co-ordination that are being encountered in the programme of environment statistics, and summarized the next steps proposed in the programme of work.

143. The Commission was informed of further developments in the environment statistics programme since the completion of the progress report; specifically on the preparation of a directory of country practices and plans, on the development of an over-all structure or framework for the organization of environment statistics and on the outcome of the regional workshops and pilot country studies. In considering the next steps in the programme of work on environment statistics, the Commission was informed that the programme is being carried out with the assistance and financial support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It was noted that the current Statistical Office/UNEP project will be concluded at the end of 1981. A second phase of the project is envisaged for the period 1982-1985, which would build upon the foundation established under the current programme. A project proposal has been discussed and submitted to UNEP for consideration and approval. As a result of the discussions with UNEP, which were conducted after the completion of the progress report, the activities proposed in paragraph 36 of the report have been redrafted as follows:

(a) Expanding the inventory of current national and international work on and plans for statistics on the environment contained in the directory of country practices, and keeping it up to date;

(b) Continuing work on an over-all framework for environment statistics and developing statistics on specific areas of environmental concern;

(c) Reviewing methodologies and recommendations through regional workshops and national pilot studies;

(d) Developing a series of training programmes and study tours for national statisticians in the field of environment statistics;

(e) Providing technical assistance for the development of national statistical programmes;

27/ Ibid., para. 143 (c).

(f) Collecting environment statistics from countries, and developing a computerized data base for their storage and retrieval, if feasible;

(g) Improving the global and regional availability of statistics.

144. The Commission noted with appreciation the progress which had been achieved in environment statistics since its twentieth session. It underlined the high priority of the subject, and strongly urged UNEP to continue its contribution to the programme.

145. The representative of UNEP expressed appreciation of the work done. He pointed out, however, that no commitment for further financial support of the programme could be made now. He informed the Commission about the recent meeting of the Earthwatch working group on the work programme of environment data. He emphasized the importance of co-ordinating ongoing statistical activities in socio-economic and environmental fields for integrated social, economic and environmental policies.

146. In considering the long-term programme of work on environment statistics, the Commission considered the activities proposed in the report, as redrafted (see para. 143 above). It gave high priority to items (a) and (b). Concerning item (a), it was noted that it would be more desirable to keep the directory up to date rather than to expand it. Concerning item (b), it was felt that the work on an over-all framework for environment statistics and development of statistics on specific areas of environmental concerns should be undertaken by developing guidelines for concepts, definitions and classifications, as well as for methods of data collection. The Commission felt that the other items of the proposed programme should be implemented, taking into consideration the availability of resources. Regarding the actual collection of data, the members of the Commission generally felt that this was still a premature task in a number of regions. In presenting the future programme of work, it would be advisable to list separately the three major activities or functions, namely: (a) methodology (frameworks, guidelines); (b) exchange of information (directory); and (c) implementation and training (workshops and pilot country studies).

147. In order to improve co-ordination in environment statistics, the report proposed establishing in each regional commission a post of statistician responsible for co-ordinating and compiling environment statistics for the countries of the region. The Commission felt this to be somewhat premature, in view of existing constraints of resources. However, it was strongly felt that the role of the United Nations Statistical Office, as co-ordinator of regional activities in environment statistics, should be further strengthened.

Action taken by the Commission

148. The Commission:

(a) Noted with satisfaction the progress that had been achieved since its twentieth session, especially on the development of an over-all structure or framework for the organization of environment statistics, and the completion of the survey of country practices and plans;

(b) Thanked UNEP for providing the necessary initial funding for the project, and strongly urged UNEP to continue its financial support in consideration of the high priority of the project;

- (c) Requested the Statistical Office of the United Nations to give high priority to the implementation of this programme on a continuous basis;
- (d) Requested the Secretary-General to publish the directory of country practices and plans;
- (e) Requested the Secretary-General to publish the survey on frameworks, approaches and statistical publications in environment statistics;
- (f) Requested the Secretariat to revise the draft conceptual framework for the development and organization of environment statistics;
- (g) Recommended that the role of the Statistical Office as a general co-ordinator should be further strengthened;
- (h) Requested that the programme of work of the Statistical Office focus on:
- (i) Keeping the directory of country practices up to date;
- (ii) Continuing work on an over-all framework for environment statistics and developing statistics on specific areas of environment concerns through guidelines on concepts, definitions, classifications and methods of data collection;
- (i) Requested that a progress report be submitted to the Commission at its twenty-second session.

VIII. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

A. Training of statistical personnel

149. For its consideration of agenda item 9 (a), the Commission had before it documents E/CN.3/554 and Add.1, which had been prepared in response to the Commission's request at its twentieth session that the Secretary-General should submit to the Commission at its twenty-first session a comprehensive review of major training activities undertaken in the world, to include not only regional and national training centres but also such training activities as seminars, workshops and short courses organized by specialized agencies and similar international bodies. 28/

150. A number of members of the Commission, from both developed and developing countries, described their programmes and plans for training statisticians from developing countries and expressed their support for, and offered assistance to, the training activities of the United Nations, the regional commissions and the specialized agencies. Several agencies and other international organizations also described their programmes and offered assistance.

151. The Commission was generally appreciative of the efforts of the Statistical Office at reviewing the major statistical training activities taking place in the world and expressed the view that the document in large measure met the Commission's request at its twentieth session. It regretted, however, that accounts of programmes carried out by several countries in training statisticians from developing countries were not included in the document. The Commission requested the Statistical Office to ensure that these accounts would be included in any future reports on training of statistical personnel from developing countries.

152. The Commission recalled that during its discussion of agenda item 7 (demographic and social statistics), the importance of training was stressed, particularly in connexion with population and housing censuses and the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics. A number of Commission members from developing countries expressed their appreciation for training activities that had been carried out under various multilateral and bilateral programmes in connexion with censuses and civil registration and, at the same time, emphasized the continuing need for training in these fields. Several members described their training activities and plans for training in these fields and offered future assistance.

153. The Commission also recalled that during its discussion of agenda item 9 (c) (National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP)), several members had emphasized the importance of training survey personnel and utilizing as fully as possible the facilities available in various training institutions by suitably adapting them to meet the special requirements of NHSCP. At the same time, participating countries should be helped to strengthen their in-service training programmes for junior-level staff engaged in survey activities.

28/ Ibid., para. 175.

154. The Commission touched on the desirability of regional training centres undertaking research projects. The view was expressed that academic research should be discouraged at regional training centres, whose primary responsibility should remain the training of statistical personnel either directly or through the training of trainers. But some amount of study, of the type which would help bridge the gap between theory and practice, would be useful; so would evolving better teaching techniques and assembling and disseminating teaching materials which were of relevance to work. In that last task the Statistical Office could have a role if its resources permitted.

155. The Commission felt that it would be highly desirable to draw up guidelines for the academic and training needs of statisticians at different levels, as well as for the location of training institutions. However, the Commission pointed out that considering the differences in basic educational standards, statistical experience etc. obtaining in different countries of the developing world, more than one set of guidelines might be necessary at least at the subregional level.

156. The Commission was of the view that there is a real need for closer co-operation between regional training centres and those national training centres catering exclusively to their own nationals. Some members of the Commission felt that the training of middle-level and lower-level statistical personnel should be the responsibility of national training centres and that the regional training centres could provide assistance to national centres by training the national trainers. A view was expressed, however, that in smaller countries where national training facilities were inadequate in quality and numbers of trainers and in other respects, regional training centres were required to fill the need for training of middle-level and lower-level personnel.

157. The Commission stressed the important need for closer and more relevant evaluation of training programmes. The Commission was informed of the endeavours of some regional training centres to evaluate their programmes by a number of methods. The Commission felt that though the information elicited had been a useful guide, it had not been adequate to determine the relevance of the training to the actual needs of students.

Action taken by the Commission

158. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed documents E/CN.3/554 and Add.1 on the review of training of statistical personnel as a useful account of major training activities in the world;

(b) Requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its twenty-second session a review of training activities, which should be comprehensive in country coverage and should lay special emphasis on topics discussed by the Commission at its twenty-first session.

B. Statistical data processing

159. For its consideration of agenda item 9 (b), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on progress in technical co-operation activities in statistical data processing (E/CN.3/555).

160. There was general agreement that the report was useful and informative, and addressed several major areas of concern in statistical data processing. The Statistical Office was commended for the progress it had made in this area.

161. The Commission questioned to what extent developing countries could be sufficiently flexible in their management of computing to take advantage of significant shifts in computing technology, such as that provided by the emergence of microcomputer-based systems and distributed processing. It was suggested that any study on this issue would be of assistance.

162. The development of statistical data processing packages by the Statistical Office and their dissemination for use in developing countries was warmly appreciated. It was felt that this activity was important and deserved firm and continued support. The XTALLY and UNEDIT programs were judged to be very useful to certain countries with certain hardware and software environments. It was suggested that regional and subregional meetings at which users of computer-based tools for statistical data processing could learn of each others' experiences could be useful. Other suggestions included increased attention to data-base-management software and data-analysis software, and to the simplicity of the user interface to assist users in developing countries.

163. Several cautionary notes were sounded regarding over-reliance of statistical offices on packaged software. It was felt that this might limit an organization's ability to adapt packages to suit its special needs. The use of a handbook of statistical data processing methods was suggested as another approach for building required software capabilities. In this regard, the Commission was informed that a manuscript on survey data processing, currently being prepared for the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP), could be a first step towards such a handbook. On the other hand, concern was also expressed that a rejection of the use of program packages could lead to an inefficient pattern of producing tailor-made programs for all data processing functions.

164. The Commission noted that a number of statistical packages from developed countries, such as RAPID and TPL, had been used in a variety of other countries, both developed and developing, with quite successful results, and pointed out that such products could be used with good results if they could be implemented on the recipient country's hardware. Progress was noted on a new tabulation package, CENTS4 and a COBOL version of the CONCOR editing program. A description was given of the project newly launched by ECE, entitled "Use of computers for statistical purposes and design and development of automated information systems", and the commonality of aims of the project with the technical co-operation objectives of the Statistical Office was noted. The activities in this regard of the International Association for Statistical Computing and the Overseas Development Group of the British Computer Society were also noted. It was hoped that the

Statistical Office would maintain an active awareness of such efforts by countries and other organizations and take the initiative in co-ordinating its activities in this area with other active organizations such as ECE and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE).

165. Some developing countries had difficulty obtaining adequate servicing and replacement parts for computers and it was suggested that the Statistical Office put some pressure on manufacturers to improve their performance in this respect.

166. It was noted that while in general the use of computers for the processing of statistical data had been mastered to some extent, a critical challenge now existing was the use of communications facilities and network products for collecting and disseminating data on a computer-to-computer basis. It was suggested that there should be an increased awareness on the part of the Statistical Office of this subject and of the potential of this technology for more effective data collection and dissemination.

167. The lack of increase in field experts and training fellowships, as shown in table 1 of document E/CN.3/555, was of some concern. Questions were posed regarding whether the United Nations was availing itself sufficiently of training facilities such as those offered by the International Computer Education Centre at Budapest or those available through the Government of India or through the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific at Tokyo. The Commission was informed that the greatest training needs in statistical data processing in the developing countries were in applied basic training, and that a great deal of such training was best done in projects which had both local computing equipment and a resident international expert.

168. The Commission was concerned about the omission of any discussion of training in both statistical data processing and computer-based tools for professional statisticians. It was stated that the computer was a tool for the statistician, and it was essential to train statisticians to have mastery over such tools.

169. The Commission hoped that there could be effective co-ordination between the technical support of data processing in the ongoing technical co-operation programme, in particular for the 1980 round of population and housing censuses, and the data processing resources needed to support NHSCP projects. It was hoped that such co-ordination would promote a more permanent capacity in statistical data processing within the statistical offices of the recipient Governments.

170. The Commission felt that the support provided to data processing components of statistically oriented technical co-operation activities would be more effective if increased resources were allocated for this purpose.

Action taken by the Commission

171. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the current efforts of the Statistical Office in providing both technical support in statistical data processing and packaged software developed

by the Statistical Office and by other organizations for performing major statistical data processing functions;

(b) Encouraged the role of the Statistical Office in keeping abreast of computer hardware developments and providing advice regarding hardware acquisition and use by developing countries;

(c) Suggested that software development under way should be continued, and that the approaches of developing a statistical data processing handbook and organizing regional and subregional meetings for sharing of data processing experiences should be considered, as well as co-ordinating such activities with other organizations active in this field;

(d) Requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its twenty-second session a further progress report on work in this area containing, inter alia, an overview of developments in data-base-management system technology, its application to statistical data processing and experience in transferring the technology to developing countries; and an overview of the linkages between computing and communications and the use of communications technology to provide computer-to-computer linkages in support of statistical data processing activities.

C. National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP)

172. For its consideration of agenda item 9 (c), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/556) summarizing the progress made in the establishment of the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) and the preparatory work undertaken in the development of country projects, as envisaged in Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/5, of 9 May 1979.

173. The Commission was informed of the developments since the completion of the report. Since the beginning of 1980, 35 developing countries had expressed or confirmed interest in NHSCP. Project-formulation missions had been undertaken in 21 of those countries. Project proposals for 10 countries had been approved by the Governments concerned and proposals for eight more countries would be completed shortly. Of the remaining three countries, completion of project proposals for two had been postponed and the proposal for the third was considered not yet ready to take advantage of the Programme. It was expected that missions to a number of countries would take place during 1981, apart from missions to countries that had expressed interest in the Programme but had not been visited so far.

174. Following approval by the Governments concerned, project proposals had either been distributed to interested donors or were being used as a basis for seeking funds from the countries' financial allotments from UNDP. There had also been intensive bilateral discussions with a number of donors on specific project proposals. The outcome of the discussions was encouraging, and it was expected that implementation of the survey programme would be under way in five countries by the end of 1981.

175. The Commission was informed of the arrangements made for effective and continuing communication with the donor agencies and for better co-ordination of

donor activities within countries. Project proposals and other documentation would be transmitted, for comment and appropriate action, to interested units of the donor agency and its representatives in the developing countries. Such arrangements would complement those made with regional and international statistical agencies for promoting co-ordination, as described in the report of the Secretary-General.

176. The Commission was informed of the progress being made on technical standards, which was of special relevance to NHSCP. The revised Handbook of Household Surveys, 29/ which would be available shortly, would cover a wide range of topics of interest and use to survey statisticians. Four technical studies had been commissioned on training, non-sampling errors, data processing and integration of survey results. Those studies would review the current state of knowledge and experience, identify the problems and indicate the possible direction of further work. First drafts of the studies would be considered at a technical meeting scheduled to take place in April 1981.

177. The Commission noted with appreciation the considerable progress made in the establishment of the Programme and expressed satisfaction with the arrangements for effective communication and collaboration among the international statistical agencies, interested developing countries and donor agencies at various stages of the Programme.

178. The Commission unanimously reiterated its strong support for the Programme as an essential means of obtaining, on a continuing basis, integrated and up-to-date statistics which the developing countries needed for their development plans and programmes. The Commission stressed the value of the special characteristics of the Programme, particularly its country orientation and its emphasis on building indigenous capability and the infrastructure necessary for undertaking surveys; the continuing dialogue between national users and producers of data in determining national priorities and in the planning of surveys and use of survey data; and the provision for improving the quality of survey results through experimentation and continuous improvement of skills. The Commission emphasized the role which national statisticians in developed as well as developing countries could play in highlighting the merits of the Programme and helping to secure allocation of resources on a priority basis.

179. The Commission attached great importance to the technical studies for improving survey standards and expressed the hope that, within the context of the regular methodological work of the United Nations system, they would contribute to the development of useful technical manuals on survey-taking and analysis and use of survey results. The Commission emphasized the need for the widest possible dissemination of survey experiences among the countries concerned.

180. The importance of developing appropriate computer software packages was emphasized, as was the need for countries to develop their own indigenous capabilities in data processing.

181. The Commission endorsed the organizational arrangements for NHSCP and noted the need to balance strengthening the regional commissions of the developing regions with securing permanent capability in individual countries. It was

29/ United Nations Publication, Sales No. E. 64.XVII.13.

recognized that, while the major share of technical assistance would be provided directly to the countries, assistance through the regional commissions and the Central Co-ordination Unit (CCU) in the Statistical Office was also essential.

182. The Commission noted with appreciation the effective contribution of the specialized agencies in support of the Programme. In that connexion, the Commission was informed that ILO had made available the services of three senior statisticians to work as part of NHSCP regional teams of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and that it would shortly provide a fourth statistician to work with the regional team of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA). The Commission was also informed of the strong support of FAO which had assigned an interregional adviser exclusively to the Programme. The FAO also modified the functions of its regional advisers so as to enable them to assist NHSCP regional teams as much as possible. The World Health Organization (WHO) expressed interest in continued collaboration, along with other agencies, in the planning and organization of surveys of health and nutrition.

183. The representative of UNDP expressed satisfaction at the substantial progress the Programme had already registered. He described the support which UNDP, as co-sponsor, continued to provide to the Programme. Besides contributing to the funding of CCU and partly to the funding of advisers in the regional commissions, the UNDP country Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) would also be available for funding individual country projects if the countries so desired. He expressed the hope that many countries would come forward to take advantage of the facility.

184. The representative of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) stated that his organization had supported the Programme from the very beginning, within the framework of its mandate for population-related activities. Other related Fund activities had helped in building up the infrastructure in a number of countries, which would contribute substantially to survey-taking capabilities. He mentioned, in particular, the contributions made by the Fund in the areas of cartography, data processing, provision of equipment and training. The Fund would continue to consider helping participating developing countries in population-related surveys, particularly surveys on migration, fertility and mortality.

185. The representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) informed the Commission of the renewed emphasis of its Executive Board on social statistics for services benefiting children and youth and on giving support to countries in the generation of those statistics. The Fund attached great importance to NHSCP as the major instrument for obtaining social statistics and would be pleased to support the Programme in that area. It was also contributing to the funding of CCU.

186. The representative of the World Bank expressed appreciation of the progress made by the Programme and the response from both the developing and developed countries and the other specialized agencies. The World Bank, as co-sponsor had assisted CCU financially and encouraged policy makers and data users in developing countries to take advantage of the Programme. It had urged them to make

counterpart resources available and thereby gain maximum benefit from the Programme. The World Bank attached great importance to the development and preparation of technical manuals, illustrative questionnaires and tabulations and urged that these activities be given high priority. The need for an effective and continuing dialogue between users and producers at all levels was stressed.

187. The representative of the World Bank described the Bank's activities in improving survey methodology and concepts appropriate for measuring living standards. Its Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS), initiated recently, was conceived in response to widely recognized needs and is aimed at providing a better basis for the design of development policy. The LSMS emphasized systematizing concepts, questionnaire design, field methods and subsequent processing of data and their analysis. The four-year project would conduct experiments in co-operation with national statistical offices. The Bank would maintain continuous dialogue with the Statistical Office and other specialized agencies in evolving the work programme and would disseminate the findings to the widest extent possible.

Action taken by the Commission

188. The Commission:

(a) Reaffirmed the value and importance of the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) for generating integrated and up-to-date information on a continuing basis to meet the requirements of developing countries, in accordance with their national priorities. The Programme was designed to generate national capability; it flexibly met developing countries' own policy needs for statistics; it would lead to better integration of the whole national statistical effort; and it would stimulate valuable intercourse between national statistical offices, national users of statistics, funding agencies and technical co-operation agencies;

(b) Welcomed the enthusiastic response to the Programme from developing and developed countries;

(c) Welcomed the arrangements for establishing communications with donor agencies and the participating countries in the formulation of country projects and in the implementation of the Programme;

(d) Stressed the importance of co-ordinating the Programme at the national, regional and international level and of the collaboration of the specialized agencies, regional commissions and national statistical offices in that regard;

(e) Emphasized the importance of technical studies on survey methodology and concepts and the need for further work in that area in order to assist national statistical offices in the planning and organization of surveys and in improving the quality of survey data;

(f) Requested the Secretary-General to submit a progress report on NHSCP to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session;

(g) Requested the Secretary-General to arrange with the World Bank for a progress report on the Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS), to be presented to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session;

(h) Requested a co-ordinated consideration of these two general programmes at its twenty-second session.

D. International technical co-operation in statistics, 1976-1985

189. For its consideration of agenda item 9 (d), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on international technical co-operation in statistics (E/CN.3/557), prepared by the Statistical Office jointly with the statistical offices of the regional commissions, specialized agencies and a number of individual countries to assist the Commission in its deliberations concerning technical co-operation. The report sets out the activities of the United Nations system and a number of countries for the period 1976-1985.

190. As recommended by the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination of the Commission, the report included for the first time information on the demand for technical co-operation activities, the information having been provided by individual developing countries. An analysis of this information was contained in a supplementary paper distributed during the Commission session.

191. The Commission was informed that, on the basis of information collected from all donors of technical co-operation in statistics, the principal forms of technical assistance are advisory services, training and provision of equipment. Advisory services were reported to have been provided in many fields of statistics, such as population censuses, agriculture and forestry, household sample surveys and general statistics including statistical organization. Substantial advisory services were also provided for statistical data processing.

192. The Commission stressed the importance of the report on technical co-operation. The Commission noted that preparing the document imposed on agencies the burden of providing data but stressed the importance of the knowledge that was derived from a global account of technical co-operation activities in statistics directed to developing countries.

193. The Commission expressed support for continuation of programmes which enabled developing countries to work with each other. It also reiterated its support for Governments giving immediate consideration to ways of reducing the outflow of trained statisticians from developing countries.

194. The Commission requested the Statistical Office to examine the statistical needs and stimulate the development of the statistical capability of the least developed countries with a view to enabling these countries to provide themselves with the statistics required for planning their socio-economic development and related activities.

195. It was suggested that the Statistical Office should consider the creation of a directory containing descriptions of the kinds of technical assistance in statistics available from individual international, multilateral and bilateral agencies and how developing countries could obtain assistance from them.

196. The Commission appealed to all countries, developed and developing, to provide information in response to questionnaires sent by the Statistical Office so that a more complete picture of supply and future demand for technical co-operation in statistics could be presented at the twenty-second session.

197. The Commission was informed of the present arrangement whereby the Statistical Office, which is within the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, provides substantive support to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development on all projects in statistics and data processing. The Commission endorsed the present arrangement and supported its continuation.

Action taken by the Commission

198. The Commission:

(a) Requested its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination to examine alternative methods of presenting the global picture of technical co-operation activities to meet the Commission's needs within the constraints imposed on documentation;

(b) Requested that a report on technical co-operation in statistics be submitted at its twenty-second session.

IX. CO-ORDINATION AND INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL PROGRAMMES

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

199. For its consideration of agenda item 10 (a), the Commission had before it the report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination (E/CN.3/536). The Working Group held its eighth session at Geneva on 29 and 30 October 1979.

200. The report of the Working Group included definitions of the terms "recommendations" and "guidelines" and the translations of these terms into the working languages of the Commission. The definitions and translations of the terms had been endorsed by the Working Group, and the Commission adopted them subject to modification of the Spanish translation of the definition of "guidelines". The Spanish translation of paragraph 201 (b) below reflects the modification.

201. The adopted definitions were:

(a) Recommendations are specifications issued by the Commission for adoption and implementation, to the extent possible, by national statistical offices, in the field of statistics;

(b) Guidelines are specifications issued by the Commission for consideration by national statistical offices in their own work in developing statistics.

202. The adopted translations of the terms were:

English	Recommendations	Guidelines
French	Recommandations	Guide
Russian	Рекомендации	Руководящие принципы
Spanish	Recomendaciones	Directrices

203. Definitions of the terms "manuals" (or "handbooks") and "technical reports", previously adopted by the Commission, were:

"Manuals (or handbooks) are publications that provide guidance to countries on the development of statistics through the provision of comprehensive descriptions of procedures, methods, sources and other related matters in a broad area of statistics or a major statistical process, e.g., sampling or index number construction.

"Technical reports are documents or publications that contain material on (a) classifications, concepts, definitions and other related matters that have not as yet received sufficient endorsement to qualify as recommendations or guidelines; (b) procedures, methods, sources and other related matters that are not sufficiently comprehensive to be considered manuals (or handbooks);

or (c) matters of interest and potential usefulness to the international statistical community, e.g., studies on statistical organization, country codes and weights and measures conversions." 30/

204. The Commission agreed to a change in the Spanish translation of the definition of "technical reports". This change is reflected in the Spanish translation of paragraph 203 above.

205. The Commission agreed that the composition of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination at its ninth session should be as follows:

J. W. Duncan (United States of America, Chairman)
G. Acosta Cordero (Ecuador)
Sir John Boreham (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
M. A. Korolev (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
V. Nyitrai (Hungary)
K. C. Seal (India)
A. R. Jubory (Iraq)
P. Singh (Kenya)

206. The Commission also agreed that Mr. Acosta Cordero, Mr. Seal and Mr. Singh should be replaced by J. Montello (Brazil), Khoo Teik Huat (Malaysia) and M. Beyene (Ethiopia), respectively, should any of the former be unable to participate in the Working Group.

207. The Commission recommended that the ninth session of the Working Group should be held from 29 September to 2 October 1981.

B. Review of achievements in co-ordination in selected areas and international statistical programmes, 1981-1985

208. For its consideration of agenda item 10 (b), the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General that reviewed achievements in co-ordination in selected areas and international statistical programmes, including priorities, 1981-1985 (E/CN.3/558). The report had been prepared jointly by the Statistical Office of the United Nations and the statistical services of the regional commissions, specialized agencies and other intergovernmental organizations. The Commission agreed that the report provided a good description of programmes and evaluations of co-ordination in selected areas.

209. The Commission stressed the importance of co-ordination in statistics, and several members identified areas where co-ordination by the Statistical Office was especially important for the immediate future - namely, standards and classifications (for example, commodity classifications), energy and environment statistics standards, trade and the balance of payments, and public sector and monetary statistics. One special aspect of the co-ordination of standards was the need for systems that were subordinate to the SNA to be co-ordinated and consistent with it.

30/ See E/CN.3/533.

210. The point was made that in annex 1 of the report of the Secretary-General similar programmes appeared for several international agencies, and this raised the question of possible duplication of programmes and a corresponding reporting burden on countries. The Commission was assured that there was a clear delineation in the responsibilities and activities of the Statistical Office, the regional commissions and the specialized agencies which was strictly adhered to. Data collection by the international organizations was co-ordinated with a view to minimizing the reporting burden on countries.

211. Several of the specialized agencies described the attention given to co-ordination and indicated that in general they felt the co-ordination process was working effectively, given the resources available for it in the organizations generally. They stated that the Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination of the Statistical Commission were the vehicles for co-ordination. The Commission endorsed that view and felt that the co-ordinating function of the Working Group could even be expanded and made more effective.

Action taken by the Commission

212. The Commission:

(a) Decided that co-ordination had high priority and should be kept on the agenda for the twenty-second session;

(b) Requested a report, including an evaluation of co-ordination, on the following:

(i) Forms used for data collection;

(ii) System design for machine-readable data bases;

(iii) The experience of the National Household Survey Capability Programme in identifying and overcoming problems of co-ordination within countries and among international agencies;

(iv) Co-ordination of standards.

213. The Commission indicated that the report requested under (b) above should pose issues of co-ordination, including benefits and costs, particularly in relation to the four subjects specified. It should also cover the statistical activities of the regional commissions and the total role of co-ordination in relation to those activities.

X. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES: IMPLEMENTATION AND PROSPECTS

A. Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies

214. For its consideration of agenda item 11 (a), the Commission had before it a progress report of the Secretary-General on the statistical activities of the regional commissions and the Inter-American Statistical Institute since the twentieth session of the Commission (E/CN.3/559).

215. Several representatives of the regional commissions provided supplementary information on their activities.

216. The representative of ECE informed the Commission of meetings held in 1980 pursuant to the work programme adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians. The meetings had dealt with integration of statistical information systems, environment and related statistics and the co-ordination of demographic statistics within the Framework for the Integration of Social and Demographic Statistics (FSDS). A meeting of the Steering Committee of the UNDP/ECE project on statistical computing had also been held. Several meetings were also planned in 1981 and 1982 in co-operation with the specialized agencies. They would concern consumer price statistics (with the ILO), agriculture statistics (with FAO), health statistics (with WHO) and science and technology statistics (with UNESCO).

217. The representative of ECWA informed the Commission of recent work undertaken and planned by ECWA in statistics, for example, agriculture statistics, demographic statistics, household surveys, the translation of international statistical documentation into Arabic and the publication of a regional statistical yearbook.

218. The representative of ESCAP informed the Commission of technical meetings held in 1980 on the harmonization of trade statistics, environment statistics, energy statistics, household surveys and the International Comparison Project. Meetings were scheduled in 1981 on environment statistics, population and vital statistics, the evaluation and utilization of census data, social and related statistics and labour productivity statistics. He also noted the close collaboration that had been achieved with countries in the compilation and analysis of data in the region, and with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific in training activities.

219. The representative of ECLA noted several items in the report that ECLA felt were of particular importance in its statistical work. They included collaboration with the Latin American Programme of Integration Studies, integration and analysis of Latin American data on income distribution and preparation of estimates of poverty, development of data banks, technical co-operation in household surveys and technical co-operation in statistics among developing countries. He also noted that seminars would be held in 1981 on the development of national accounts in Latin America and on the investigation of living conditions in rural areas.

220. The representative of ECA informed the Commission that the first session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers had been

held in 1980. He noted that it had been a successful meeting and that it had been of particular value in promoting communication between statisticians and planners.

221. In concluding its consideration of agenda item 11 (a), the Commission expressed its appreciation of the valuable information provided in the report. It agreed that the ex-officio membership of ECLA in the Co-ordinating Board of the Committee on Improvement of National Statistics of the Inter-American Statistical Institute should enhance the co-ordination of statistical work in Latin America. It also noted with satisfaction the improved communication between statisticians and planners that the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers had made possible.

B. Statistical work of the specialized agencies

222. For its consideration of agenda item 11 (b), the Commission had before it a progress report of the Secretary-General on the statistical activities of the specialized agencies since the twentieth session of the Commission, covering work in the ILO, FAO, UNESCO, ICAO, WHO, the World Bank, IMF, UPU, WIPO and GATT (E/CN.3/560).

223. Representatives of several specialized agencies provided information to supplement and bring up to date that contained in the report of the Secretary-General.

224. The representative of FAO informed the Commission of work on social and economic indicators which had been undertaken pursuant to the Programme of Action of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, held in 1979. 31/ He noted in particular the arrangements which had been made for co-operation and co-ordination with other units of the United Nations system in this work and the assistance already received. The Commission noted that FAO would soon be seeking the collaboration of national statistical offices in the implementation of the work programme in this field.

225. In concluding its discussion of agenda item 11 (b), the Commission expressed its appreciation of the information provided in the report, as supplemented in the discussion, and its continuing interest in the activities described.

C. Statistical Office of the United Nations

226. For its consideration of agenda item 11 (c), the Commission had before it a progress report on the work of the Statistical Office (E/CN.3/561); a note by the Secretariat entitled "Proposed draft work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, 1982-1983, and medium-term plan, 1984-1989" (E/CN.3/562) and two conference room papers containing the proposed draft work programme, 1982-1983, and the medium-term plan, 1984-1989 (E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.1 and 2, respectively).

31/ See Report of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Rome, 12-20 July 1979 (WCARRD/REP); transmitted by a note of the Secretary-General (A/34/485).

227. It was decided to treat agenda item 11 (c) in two sections, the first covering the progress report of the Statistical Office and the work programme for 1982-1983 and the second covering the medium-term plan for 1984-1989.

228. The Commission was informed of a request from the General Assembly that it examine the work programme of the United Nations Statistical Office, identify activities which are of highest priority and of lowest priority and indicate whether any of the activities in the proposed work programme are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective. The Commission was also informed that this was a new requirement in the programme-planning system of the United Nations and that the Statistical Commission was the first specialized intergovernmental body to be involved in the process.

229. The Commission expressed appreciation of the work done by the Statistical Office since the twentieth session, which was consistent with the programme it had approved at that time. 32/

230. Commission members expressed the view that it was extremely difficult to consider the work programme for 1982-1983 and to assign priority to programme elements on the basis of the documentation provided. Resource and cost structure information, at least at the programme-element level, was required. Concern was expressed that the Commission could not obtain approximate resource information for 1982-1983, as it was still under review in the Budget Division of the Secretariat. Background information for each programme element, based on approximate resource allocations for the 1980-1981 biennium, was made available, but was considered to be not particularly useful. Greater detail was needed not least because higher-priority jobs sometimes formed part of lower-priority programme elements and vice-versa. Comparable figures of the costs incurred by the regional commissions, specialized agencies and possibly by national statistical offices were also needed.

231. Other information about programme elements that would be useful to provide a basis for establishing priorities are the relative state of completion of current tasks, dependencies among the various programme elements and the flexibility of the human resources available.

232. The Commission felt that future consideration of the work programme and priorities would be facilitated if the various reports of the Statistical Office (progress report, work programme and the medium-term plan) utilized a single classification system for describing its work - although there might be less detail in the medium-term plan classification. The work programme should, in addition to identifying outputs, also describe the projects or activities giving rise to them, should contain necessary resource information and should incorporate the views of the Director of the Statistical Office on priorities and commitments. There was agreement that the documentation must be made available to members well in advance of the session.

233. Several members of the Commission suggested that the designation of priorities should be delegated to the Working Group at its ninth session, recommended to be held in September-October 1981. This would allow delegations

32/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1979, Supplement No. 3 (E/1979/23), para. 245.

adequate time to consider this important matter and let their views be known to the Secretariat. The Commission was informed that delaying until September 1981 was not possible because of deadlines for the completion of the budget documentation for submission to the central intergovernmental bodies.

234. Despite the difficulties, the Commission made a preliminary assessment relying on the approximate resource information for 1980-1981 and an understanding of developments in the work programme between the two bienniums. The Commission used the following criteria in examining the work priorities:

- (a) Legislative mandates from the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;
- (b) The need for continuity in established crucial functions;
- (c) The need to initiate new activities important for the future, taking account of needs at the national and international levels;
- (d) The need to concentrate on activities which only an organization in the central position occupied by the Statistical Office could carry out;
- (e) The need to achieve an appropriate balance of the special requirements of developing countries and the need to continue to improve statistics from the developed countries;
- (f) The availability of appropriately skilled personnel to carry out the various parts of the work programme;
- (g) The need to work on linked activities even if some might have lower priorities.

235. The Commission pointed out that all programme elements contained some outputs and activities which had high priority, based on one or more of the above criteria. Items with the highest priority reflected important functions in the programme rather than particular projects or outputs, for example, the functions of development and harmonization of classifications and other international standards, co-ordination of the statistical programme and improvement and maintenance of statistical capability in developing countries. It was felt that the highest-priority activities were in those functions.

236. The Commission emphasized that the activities of the United Nations Statistical Office on the development of economic and social classifications were crucial to the development of comparable international statistics for decision-making at all levels. It was especially important to achieve harmonization between the classifications recommended at the world level. Further, the Statistical Office, as noted elsewhere in the report, played a unique and valuable role in the co-ordination of statistical activities of regional bodies, specialized agencies and bilateral programmes; hence, co-ordination activities were included among the highest-priority categories.

237. A number of programme elements were mentioned by several members as having high priority for all or a substantial number of activities or outputs within those programme elements. (Some of these views were embodied in the two draft

resolutions that the Commission recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council (see chap. I.) They were the following:

1.1: Review and further development of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA);

1.3: Linking of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS);

1.4: Development, updating and harmonization of standard international classifications;

2.1: Collection, compilation and dissemination of industrial, construction and distributive-trade statistics - recurrent publications;

2.2: Standards and methods of industrial, construction and distributive trade statistics;

2.4: Standards, methods and classifications of international trade statistics;

2.5: Recurrent publications and standards, methods and classification of energy statistics;

3.3: Methodological development of price and related statistics and co-ordination of related international activities;

4.7: Statistics of the environment;

5.2: Improved computerization of statistics (see paras. 166 and 245);

6.1: Co-ordination of the statistical programme of the United Nations;

6.2: Construction of catalogues of economic and social statistics;

7.1: Improvement of statistical capabilities of developing countries;

7.2: Improvement of statistical data processing capabilities of developing countries.

Several other programme elements were considered to have high priority by some members but to have a lower priority in the view of other members. Therefore, no firm conclusion was possible in relation to these programme elements.

238. The Commission used the expression "lower-priority items" as an alternative to "low-priority items". Items described in this way were not meant to be marginal, as all marginal activities had been removed in earlier stages of the process of developing the work programme. The Commission was faced with a dilemma in trying to identify lower-priority activities because all the programmes presently under way and in the work programme had been the result of previous decisions of the Commission to include these activities since they had been considered of high priority.

239. The Commission decided that it was not in a position to identify specific

programme elements with lower priority. However, it was recognized that within most programme elements, it would be possible to identify lower-priority activities for which the level of resources allocated could be reduced if high-priority activities required additional resources. The Commission suggested that the detailed management decisions involved should be left to the United Nations Statistical Office.

240. The Statistical Commission expressed the view that statistics, because they were a basic tool for policy development and decision-making relating to economic and social development at the national and international level, should rank high over-all in the priority activities of the United Nations system.

Action taken by the Commission

241. The Commission:

(a) Approved the proposed draft work programme of the Statistical Office, as contained in document E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.1, subject to the comments made by the Commission and the priorities set;

(b) Identified sets of functions and programme elements which were considered to have high priority within the work programme;

(c) Stated that there were no activities in the proposed work programme which were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, because the current activities in the work programme were the result of elimination of other activities by the Commission at previous sessions;

(d) Recommended that the management decisions regarding resource utilization in relation to activities within programme elements which might be considered by the Director to have lower priority should be made by the Director of the Statistical Office;

(e) Requested that documentation required for considering the work programme and the medium-term plan at future sessions of the Statistical Commission should provide all necessary information and should be made available in advance of the session, in accordance with the six-weeks rule, to allow appropriate consideration of this important issue;

(f) Requested the Working Group at its ninth session to review further developments in the budget and work-programme process, to determine what kind of documentation should be prepared for the Commission to have an adequate framework for considering this matter and to report their views to the Statistical Commission at its twenty-second session.

242. The Commission was informed that the draft medium-term plan for 1984-1989 was presented at a higher level of generality than the work programme for 1982-1983 and was structured under a new set of objectives which were more in line with those adopted by the Commission at its twentieth session. 33/ The plan was

33/ Ibid., para. 220.

supportive of the requirements of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade 34/ and reflected the needs of several sectoral and intersectoral areas which were identified for special emphasis by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.

243. The Commission was informed of a request from the General Assembly that it should examine the medium-term plan of the Statistical Office to identify any activities that might be obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective and to propose priorities for the various subprogrammes.

244. Commission members, in their comments, expanded upon earlier discussions of the substantive items, the work programme and the proposals for the future work of the Commission. The medium-term plan was considered a useful description of future directions of planned work for the Statistical Office. It was felt that the documentation could, however, be improved along the lines specified for improving the documentation on the work programme (see paras. 230-232, 241 (e) and (f)).

245. A number of suggestions were made for modifying the content and emphasis in the plan. They are set out below under subprogramme headings:

Subprogramme 1. Development of concepts and methods

The activities for developing countries, especially the least developed, should be stressed and the work oriented towards the needs of these countries. The Recommendations for the Preparation of Sample Survey Reports (Provisional Issue) 35/ should be revised. Special attention should be given to the use of administrative records for statistical purposes.

Subprogramme 2. Application of advanced computer and related techniques for improved statistical operations

Statistical development must be kept up to date with identified advances in technology. The Statistical Office should take the lead in this field, especially in developing its own data bases for its own use to allow more efficient processing. This would enhance the possibilities for the Statistical Office to provide assistance to countries. Steps in the plan to participate in international statistical systems carried over a communication network for data exchange needed to be developed in the next work plan. Joint work with other international agencies, especially the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT), would be beneficial.

Subprogramme 3. Support of technical co-operation

The Commission indicated that stress should be placed on developing and maintaining national capabilities, including the general infrastructure of statistical services, especially within the least developed countries. A subject which merited particular attention in many countries was the expansion of civil registration systems.

34/ General Assembly resolution 35/56 of 5 December 1980.

35/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.64.XVII.7.

Subprogramme 4. National accounts, industry, international trade and transport statistics

The focus in the work should turn more towards the developing countries. Attention should be given specifically to industrial statistics and the establishment of enterprise lists or registers.

Subprogramme 5. Energy and related statistics

Subprogramme 6. Price statistics and related areas

The Commission stressed that these are extremely important in view of emerging national and international issues and needs.

Subprogramme 7. Social, demographic and environment statistics

The Commission agreed that increased attention should be given to environment statistics within the limit of resources. This also applied to the development of concepts and definitions (subprogramme 1). Here as elsewhere, stress should be laid on activities where the Statistical Office has a unique capability.

Subprogramme 8. Co-ordination of international statistical programmes

The Commission reiterated that this is a crucial function of the Statistical Office, for which it has a unique capability. This must be given adequate attention in the medium-term plan period to enable all the other objectives of the plan to be achieved.

246. The Commission approached priorities at the subprogramme level using the same criteria and concepts as it had used in considering priorities for the work programme. It felt that they applied equally to the long and the short term. The Commission gave the highest priority to development of concepts and methods (subprogramme 1), provision of technical co-operation to establish and maintain statistical capabilities and statistical data processing capabilities in developing countries (subprogramme 3) and co-ordination (subprogramme 8). No activities were identified as obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective. The Commission recognized that some 50 per cent of the Statistical Office's resources were allocated to the collection, processing and publication of statistics. It was felt that, if it were possible to improve the efficiency of these processes by improving technology and methods, some resources might be released which could be allocated to other activities in the plan.

Action taken by the Commission

247. The Commission:

(a) Endorsed the draft provisional medium-term plan of the Statistical Office, as contained in document E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.2, subject to the comments made by the Commission and the priorities set;

(b) Assigned a high priority to specific subprogrammes of the medium-term plan and identified several areas within subprogrammes that should be stressed in the work of the Statistical Office (see paras. 245-246 above);

(c) Stated that there were no activities in the medium-term plan which were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective;

(d) Stated that some activities in the subprogrammes on data collection, processing and publication might be carried out more efficiently with appropriate technology so as to release resources for other activities;

(e) Requested the Statistical Office to give attention to interaction with users as a means of identifying priority needs;

(f) Requested the Statistical Office to provide improved documentation for consideration of the medium-term plan at future sessions, including information on types of resources and possibly covering those of the regional commissions and specialized agencies where relevant and available;

(g) Requested the Working Group to pay particular attention to the evolution of the medium-term plan process, obtain feedback from the central intergovernmental bodies involved in planning and make the most appropriate preparations for the Statistical Commission to consider this matter at its twenty-second session.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Proposals for the future work of the Statistical Commission and its methods of operation

248. For its consideration of agenda item 12, the Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General entitled "Proposals for the future work of the Statistical Commission and its methods of operation" (E/CN.3/563). The document was prepared at the request of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination.

249. The document indicated why the development of such proposals was timely. It presented, for discussion, the view that the Commission might adopt a more future-oriented approach and suggested that it was important to balance the agendas of the Commission sessions to give the necessary continuity to some subjects while still allowing adequate time for the consideration of new topics. A number of proposals were presented concerning the documentation and the conduct of the sessions, the aim being to permit the Commission to cover all agenda items adequately. The document also outlined possible implications for the Working Group of any changes made by the Commission.

250. The Commission felt that the document was useful, that discussion on future orientation should be undertaken periodically and that the present time was critical in the evolution of the international statistical system. The Commission believed that it was extremely important to maintain the appropriate balance between matters of current concern and the longer-term development aspects of the statistical system. The Commission recalled its past success in this matter; the record showed that it had taken the initiative to meet developing needs while continuing to meet existing ones.

251. The establishment and development of closer contact between the users and producers of international statistics was considered important. It was suggested that the Statistical Office might collect the experience of countries in uses of international statistics and circulate the results to all central statistical organizations. The Commission was informed of the intention of the Statistical Office to involve national statistical offices, to the extent possible, in establishing continuing contacts with users of international statistics.

252. The Commission continued to be concerned that countries should not be overburdened, that there should be no duplication and no new collection systems started unless absolutely necessary.

253. As regards the possible improvement in dissemination of international statistics, it was suggested that there should be a review of the total publications programme of the Statistical Office, regional commissions and specialized agencies to ensure that it was consistent with users' needs and that no redundancy existed.

254. The Commission recognized that regional and global information networks based on telecomputer technology were being established, developed and used and that this

was of great potential importance to the international statistical system. The international agencies would have significant data bases available to countries. This would require and promote uniform standards, eliminate duplication in data and minimize effort in using data. This would be of great value to countries, particularly those without the technology to develop their own sets of data. The need to provide further technical co-operation to countries to develop their statistical data processing capability was recalled.

255. The question of commercial organizations disseminating statistics from the international agencies through computer services was discussed. Such dissemination, as it added to total dissemination, was welcomed, although some commercial organizations might not be as thorough as was desirable and some of the dissemination profit should be recovered, if possible, for the producers of statistics.

256. There was agreement that ways and means should be found to promote national implementation of the recommendations, guidelines etc. adopted or approved by the Commission. The development of "bridges" between various types and levels of classifications was considered important. Pilot studies were endorsed as an approach to provide practical experience in this matter, especially in relation to implementation of classifications.

257. To close gaps between international recommendations on methodology and their implementation, especially for the principal classifications, the improvement and maintenance of national capabilities were considered essential. The reasons why it is sometimes difficult to maintain a capability after it has been established should be investigated.

258. The issues for possible future consideration listed in paragraph 13 of document E/CN.3/563 were generally agreed upon, subject to some clarification and modification. The representative of Data for Development informed the Commission of its work, including studies of ways and means of using administrative records. Administrative records as a source of data received special endorsement as a matter to be included in the medium-term plan of the Statistical Office and to be considered at the ninth session of the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination, and subsequently to be placed on the agenda of the Commission.

259. There was general agreement with the proposals concerning changes in documentation and conduct of the sessions. They included separating documents into two categories, namely those for discussion and those for information, and ensuring that oral introductions by members of the Secretariat were brief. They also involved eliminating repetition among various agenda items; consolidating and rationalizing the documentation on programme implementation and objectives to provide the Commission with the information that it needed within documentation limitations; and avoiding duplication in reporting from the Statistical Office, regional commissions, specialized agencies and other international organizations. The need to receive documentation well in advance of the session to enable circulation to all relevant divisions in a national statistical service was recognized.

260. Following a statement by the Secretary of the Commission concerning the financial implications, the Commission supported extending the responsibility of the Working Group and extending the length of its session to four days, within

available resources, to enable it to handle its expanded functions. Such expansion should not affect the length of the sessions of the Commission. It was recognized that expanding the functions of the Working Group to look at a number of issues of detail and some routine aspects of the Commission's work would enable the Commission to concentrate its attention on the more significant issues, including the substance of the short-term and long-term plans, and to deal with these and its full set of responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner.

Action taken by the Commission

261. The Commission:

(a) Decided that at the next several sessions, agenda items should include specific important aspects of future development work;

(b) Requested the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination to determine special topics to be taken up by the Commission at these sessions and to determine the kind of documentation required;

(c) Requested the Statistical Office to develop for consideration by the Working Group at its ninth session a plan for topics to be referred to the Commission;

(d) Requested the Working Group to decide on the documentation to be made available to the Commission to enable it to carry out its required functions in relation to reviewing the draft work programme and medium-term plan of the Statistical Office and matters of co-ordination among the international organizations;

(e) Requested the Working Group to review and finalize the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-second session of the Commission, including the determination of the documentation to be prepared, and to decide which documents should be submitted to the Commission for discussion and which for information;

(f) Requested the Economic and Social Council to extend the ninth session of the Working Group to four days, within available resources.

B. Statement of thanks by the representative of the African Development Bank

262. The representative of the African Development Bank expressed his appreciation that an invitation had been issued for an observer of the Bank to be present during the twenty-first session of the Commission. He felt that the discussions were informative and useful and indicated that the Bank was in the process of developing a statistical unit. He expressed the wish that the African Development Bank should be invited to participate in future sessions of the Statistical Commission.

C. Date and place of the twenty-second session of the Statistical Commission

263. The Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council that the twenty-second session should be held in the first quarter of 1983 in New York.

XII. CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

264. In compliance with the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolutions 1894 (LVII) and 1979/41, paragraph 2 (e), the Commission had before it, for its consideration of agenda item 13, the draft provisional agenda for its twenty-second session (E/CN.3/XXI/CRP.3).

265. The Commission was informed of recent Economic and Social Council and General Assembly decisions concerning the limitations and control of volume of documentation prepared for meetings.

266. The Commission felt strongly that its documentation must be adequate for it to carry out its responsibilities to guide the substantive and co-ordination work of the Statistical Office. There was a consensus that all documents should be precise. They should be reduced in number and size consistent with the Commission's ability to carry out its responsibilities. The Commission noted that the number of pages of documentation proposed for the twenty-second session represented reductions of approximately 10 per cent from the present session and 35 per cent from the preceding session. The Commission recalled the conclusion it had reached during the discussion of "proposals for the future work of the Statistical Commission and its methods of operation" to consolidate five reports on co-ordination and programme implementation and prospects into two reports for the twenty-second session, if possible. The Commission agreed to combine some agenda items and documents and felt that the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination would be able to decide on combining other items and documents when the planned coverage of reporting on the various items was known in more detail later in 1981.

267. A number of corrections, clarifications and additions were made to the agenda items and planned documentation, reflecting decisions made during the session. Two subjects were selected for consideration as special issues, namely:

- (a) The use of administrative records for statistical purposes;
- (b) Implications of new developments in information technology.

268. It was suggested that the item entitled "Special issues" was of such importance that it should be the first substantive item of the agenda.

269. It was also suggested that countries should participate in preparing documentation for the two subjects under "Special issues". The Working Group and the Statistical Office were requested to consider ways in which this might be done, taking advantage of offers from interested countries.

270. The Commission emphasized that the agenda would be more fully considered by the Working Group at its ninth session. The Working Group was requested to make such modifications in the draft provisional agenda and the indicated documentation as might be required. The Working Group was also requested to divide the documents into two groups - those for discussion and those for information.

271. In accordance with paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and subject to any modifications made by the Working Group, the Commission approved the following provisional agenda and documentation for its twenty-second session.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-SECOND SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
3. Special issues
 - (a) Administrative records

(Report on the use of administrative records for statistical purposes: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.28
 - (b) Information technology

(Report on the implications of new developments in information technology: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.28
4. Industrial, transport, energy and international trade statistics
 - (a) Industrial and transport statistics

(Progress report on the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics and on transport statistics: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.1 and 3
 - (b) Energy statistics

(Report on developments in energy statistics, including steps towards a global system of integrated energy statistics: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.2
 - (c) International trade statistics

(Draft of the third revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and correlation with the Harmonized System (HS): approximately 250 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.4
5. National accounts and balances
 - (a) System of National Accounts (SNA)

(Report on specific proposals with regard to (i) needed short-term clarification and updating of the System of National Accounts (SNA), including external transactions, and (ii) elimination of differences among related international standards, including recommendations on

international trade and the balance of payments: approximately 32 pages)
Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.8

(Progress report on the implementation of the guidelines and the establishment of international data series in fields selected from among national accounts, public sector statistics, income distribution statistics, input-output tables, national balance-sheet statistics and social accounting matrices: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.28

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

(Report on developments in the conceptual framework for SNA/MPS comparisons and related topics: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.5

6. Price statistics

(Report outlining recent developments, with special reference to the interagency price statistics programme: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.28

(Report on the long-term organization of the International Comparison Project (ICP): approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.6

7. International economic classifications

(Progress report on the harmonization of economic classifications, including (a) an outline of the status of the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) and its co-ordination with SITC and (b) co-ordination between activity and goods classifications of the United Nations and other organizations: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.7

8. Demographic and social statistics

- (a) Population and housing censuses

(Report on national experiences and emerging issues: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.10

- (b) International migration statistics

(Progress report on the improvement of international migration statistics: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.13

- (c) Social indicators and links among social, demographic and related economic and environment statistics

(Progress report on national and international work on social indicators, including indicators in special fields, and on work on concepts and classifications of particular relevance to two or more fields: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/1979/23, para. 121 (c) (ii); E/CN.3/L.91/Add.9, 14 and 15

9. Environment statistics

(Report on developments, with special attention to progress on the framework for the organization of environment statistics: approximately 32 pages)
Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.18

10. Technical co-operation

- (a) Development of country capabilities: the National Household Survey Capability Programme and the Living Standards Measurement Study

(Progress report: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority:
E/CN.3/L.91/Add.17

- (b) Training in statistics

(Report on several aspects of training in statistics: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.16

- (c) Statistical data processing

(Report on several aspects of statistical data processing: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.20

- (d) Technical co-operation in statistics

(Report on technical co-operation in statistics by all members of the United Nations system, other international organizations and countries: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.19

11. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes

(Report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination on its ninth session: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.24

(Report on evaluation of co-ordination in relation to four specified issues: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.23

12. Programme implementation

(Progress report of the Secretary-General, prepared in co-operation with the relevant international organizations and providing an over-all review of the work of the international organizations: approximately 32 pages)
Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.25

13. Programme objectives and planning

(Report of the Secretary-General, prepared in co-operation with the relevant international organizations, describing future plans: approximately 32 pages)
Legislative authority: E/CN.3/L.91/Add.25

(Report containing the proposed work programme of the United Nations Statistical Office for 1984-1985 and any revisions in the medium-term plan for 1984-1989: approximately 32 pages) Legislative authority:
E/CN.3/L.91/Add.26 and 27

14. Other business
15. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-third session of the Commission
16. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

XIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION TO THE ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

272. For its consideration of agenda item 14, the Commission had before it the draft report (E/CN.3/L.91 and Add.1-28), which it discussed at its 375th and 376th meetings. Following an inquiry from a member of the Commission regarding financial implications, the Secretary of the Commission referred to statements made on the subject earlier in the session. He indicated that these statements had been prepared at short notice and, while broadly correct, more detailed information on financial implications would be available at the forthcoming session of the Economic and Social Council. The Commission then adopted the report, as amended during the discussion, at its 376th meeting.

XIV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

A. Opening and duration of the session

273. The Statistical Commission held its twenty-first session at United Nations Headquarters from 12 to 21 January 1981. The Commission held 15 plenary meetings (362nd to 376th meetings).

274. The session was opened by Mr. M. A. Korolev (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), Chairman of the Commission at its twentieth session.

275. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General for Technical Co-operation for Development addressed the Commission.

B. Attendance

276. All States members of the Commission were represented at the session except Jamaica and Tunisia. Observers for Member States, and representatives of the Secretariat and of United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations also attended the session. A complete list is given in annex I to the present report.

C. Tributes to the memory of Mr. P. J. Loftus and Mr. Gamal Askar

277. At its 362nd meeting, on 12 January 1981, the Commission observed a minute of silence in memory of Mr. P. J. Loftus, a former director of the United Nations Statistical Office. At its 365th meeting, on 13 January 1981, the Commission observed a minute of silence in memory of Mr. Gamal Askar, the representative of Egypt on the Commission.

D. Election of officers

278. At its 362nd meeting, the Commission elected the following officers by acclamation: Chairman: Mr. Joseph W. Duncan (United States of America); Vice-Chairmen: Mrs. Vera Nyitrai (Hungary), Mr. K. C. Seal (India) and Mr. Parmeet Singh (Kenya); Rapporteur: Sir John Boreham (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

E. Agenda

279. The Commission considered its agenda at its 362nd meeting. It had before it the provisional agenda (E/CN.3/535), drawn up by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 5 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions. This was adopted without objection.

280. The agenda adopted by the Commission is reproduced in annex II to the present report.

281. The Commission also approved, with amendment, the organization of the work of its session, as contained in document E/CN.3/L.90.

F. Resolutions, decisions and recommendations

282. The draft resolutions and the draft decisions recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council and the recommendations made by the Commission of special relevance to the Council are reproduced in chapter I of the present report.

G. Documentation

283. The documents that were before the Commission are listed in annex III to the present report.

ANNEXES

Annex I

ATTENDANCE

Members*

AUSTRALIA

Representative: R. J. Cameron
Alternate: P. Atcherley

AUSTRIA

Representative: Lothar Bosse

BRAZIL

Representative: Jessé Montello
Alternate: Marco Antonio de Souza Aguiar

CANADA

Representative: Martin B. Wilk
Alternates: Guy Leclerc
David A. Worton
Béla Prigly

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Representative: Jan Kazimour

ECUADOR

Representative: Gastón Acosta Cordero
Adviser: Jacob Ryten

EGYPT

Alternates: Hassan Gadel Hak
Soad Shalaby
Ramzy Ezzeldin Ramzy

* Jamaica and Tunisia were not represented.

ETHIOPIA

Representative: Mitik Beyene

FINLAND

Representative: Olavi E. Niitamo

Alternates: Tapio Leppo
Aarno Laihonon

GHANA

Representative: O. A. Y. Jackson

HUNGARY

Representative: Vera Nyitrai

Alternate: Ágoston Pelva

INDIA

Representative: K. C. Seal

Adviser: T. C. A. Rangachari

IRAQ

Representative: Abdul Rahman Jubory

Alternates: Wisam Jamil Tawfiq
Ali Nahi Hassoon

JAPAN

Representative: Saburo Kawai

Alternates: Yuki Miura
Minoru Matsui
Makoto Wakasugi
Yuko Ishida

KENYA

Representative: Parmeet Singh

MALAYSIA

Representative: Khoo Teik Huat

MEXICO

Representative: Sergio Mota Marín

Alternate: Heladio Jiménez Zaragoza

SPAIN

Representative: Francisco Azorín
Alternates: José Luís Sánchez Crespo
Carmen Arribas

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Representative: N. N. Artemyev
Adviser: I. M. Turanskiy

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Representative: M. A. Korolev
Alternates: N. I. Yevdokeyev
A. A. Konevsky

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Representative: Sir John Boreham
Alternates: K. V. Henderson
T. F. Hughes
M. G. D. Evans

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Representative: Joseph W. Duncan
Alternate: Meyer Zitter
Adviser: Suzann K. Evinger

States Members of the United Nations represented by observers

China, Cuba, France

United Nations Secretariat

Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

Economic Commission for Europe

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Economic Commission for Latin America

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Western Asia

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements

United Nations bodies

United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Fund for Population Activities
United Nations Development Programme

Specialized agencies, IAEA and GATT

International Labour Organisation
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
World Health Organization
World Bank
International Monetary Fund
Universal Postal Union

* * *

International Atomic Energy Agency

* * *

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

Other intergovernmental organizations

African Development Bank
Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
Customs Co-operation Council
European Economic Community
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Non-governmental organizations

Category II

Inter-American Statistical Institute
International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics
International Union for the Scientific Study of Population

Roster

Data for Development

Annex II

AGENDA OF THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
3. Industrial, energy, transport and international trade statistics
 - (a) Industrial statistics
 - (b) Energy statistics
 - (c) Transport statistics
 - (d) International trade statistics
4. National accounts and balances
 - (a) System of National Accounts (SNA)
 - (b) Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS)
5. International Comparison Project (ICP)
6. International economic classifications
7. Social and demographic statistics
 - (a) 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme
 - (b) Civil registration and vital statistics
 - (c) Housing and related statistics
 - (d) International migration statistics
 - (e) Classification of age
 - (f) Classifications of size and type of locality and urban/rural areas
 - (g) Links among economic, social and demographic statistics
8. Environment statistics
9. Technical co-operation

- (a) Training of statistical personnel
 - (b) Statistical data processing
 - (c) National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP)
 - (d) International technical co-operation in statistics, 1976-1985
10. Co-ordination and integration of international statistical programmes
- (a) Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination
 - (b) Review of achievements in co-ordination in selected areas and international statistical programmes, 1981-1985
11. 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
12. Other business
13. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-second session of the Commission
14. Report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMISSION AT ITS
TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

<u>Document Number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
E/CN.3/535	2	Provisional agenda
E/CN.3/536	10 (a)	Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination: report of the eighth session
E/CN.3/537	3 (a)	Draft international recommendations on the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/538	3 (b)	Progress report on energy statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/539	3 (c)	Progress report on shipping statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/540	3 (d)	International trade statistics; concepts and definitions: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/541	4 (a)	Future directions for work on the System of National Accounts (SNA): report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/542	4 (a)	Relationship of the revised System of National Accounts (SNA) to the International Monetary Fund's <u>Balance of Payments Manual</u> : report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/543	4 (b)	Links between the System of National Accounts (SNA) and the System of Balances of the National Economy (MPS): report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/544	5	International Comparison Project (ICP) developments: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/545	6	Progress report on the harmonization of economic classifications: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/546	7 (a)	Progress report on the 1980 World Population and Housing Census Programme: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/547	7 (b)	Progress report on civil registration and vital statistics: report of the Secretary-General

<u>Document Number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
E/CN.3/548	7 (c)	Status report on and plans for the improvement of housing and related statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/549	7 (d)	Strategy for implementation of recommendations on international migration statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/550	7 (e)	Draft guidelines on age-group classifications: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/551 and Corr.1	7 (f)	National practices in classifications of size and type of locality and urban/rural areas: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/552	7 (g)	Role of macro-data and micro-data structures in the integration of demographic, social and economic statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/553	8	Progress report on environment statistics: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/554 and Add.1	9 (a)	Review of training of statistical personnel: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/555	9 (b)	Progress report on statistical data processing: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/556	9 (c)	Progress report on the National Household Survey Capability Programme: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/557	9 (d)	International technical co-operation in statistics, 1976-1985: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/558	10 (b)	Review of achievements in co-ordination in selected areas and international statistical programmes, 1981-1985: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/559	11 (a)	Regional conferences of statisticians and similar bodies: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/560	11 (b)	Statistical work of the specialized agencies: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/561	11 (c)	Statistical Office of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/562	11 (c)	Proposed draft work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, 1982-1983, and medium-term plan, 1984-1989: note by the Secretariat

<u>Document Number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title or description</u>
E/CN.3/563	12	Proposals for the future work of the Statistical Commission and its methods of operation: report of the Secretary-General
E/CN.3/NGO/8	7 (b)	Statement submitted by the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics, a non-governmental organization in category II consultative status
PROVISIONAL ST/ESA/STAT/ SER.M/71 (Part I)	3 (a)	Draft recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, Part One: General statistical objectives
PROVISIONAL ST/ESA/STAT/ SER.M/71 (Part II)	3 (a)	Draft recommendations for the 1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics, Part Two: Organization and conduct of industrial surveys
PROVISIONAL ST/ESA/STAT/ SER.M/52/ Rev.1	3 (d)	International trade statistics; concepts and definitions
E/CN.3/XXI/ CRP.1	11 (c)	Proposed draft work programme of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, 1982-1983
E/CN.3/XXI/ CRP.2	11 (c)	Proposed draft medium-term plan of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, 1984-1989
E/CN.3/XXI/ CRP.3	13	Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-second session of the Commission
E/CN.3/L.90	2	Organization of the work of the session
E/CN.3/L.91 and Add.1-28	14	Draft report of the Commission to the Economic and Social Council
E/CN.3/L.92	3 (a)	Ecuador, Ghana, Malaysia, Mexico and Spain: draft resolution "1983 World Programme of Industrial Statistics"
E/CN.3/L.93	3 (b)	Austria, Ghana, India, Japan, Malaysia: draft resolution "International energy statistics"
E/CN.3/L.94	3 (a)	Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document E/CN.3/L.92: statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

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