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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-ninth plenary session  
(Geneva, 11-13 June 2001)

**THE 50<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATION OF THE CES**

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1. The 50<sup>th</sup> celebration of the Conference of European Statisticians will take place on the occasion of the Conference's 50<sup>th</sup> plenary session (Paris, 10-12 June 2002).

**I. Seminar session: Future Challenges for the Conference of European Statisticians**

2. One full day will be devoted to the discussion of the main challenges facing the CES in the future, and on the priority issues and concerns on which the CES will have to focus. The capacity to meet the demands of the future necessarily reflects the major accomplishments of the past. Therefore these accomplishments will also be considered in the discussion.

3. Two parts are envisaged. Each will have an organiser, whose task will be to define the specific topics, contributions, authors and other arrangements.

**A. The role of the Conference of European Statisticians in Europe and North America (the ECE region)**

4. The society, institutions, the economy, and the environment are drastically and rapidly changing in Europe and North America. What impact will the great changes that are taking place have on statistics and what role can the CES play? In particular we need to look at the transition to the market economy, which is taking place in Europe and the CIS, at the widening and deepening of the EU, at the effects of NAFTA and at the agenda for renewed and strengthened transatlantic co-operation.

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5. How can the CES operate to improve the measurement of these changes, strengthen the democratic processes and empower the policy players to take informed decisions?
6. What are the implications for national statistical systems, and what assistance can the CES provide for these systems?

## **B. The role of the CES in the global statistical framework**

7. The Statistical Commission, together with the ECE, is the parent body of the CES. This is one of the reasons why there have traditionally been strong links in the past between the regional and the global statistical policy agendas. The CES has played a leadership role in the development of norms, e.g. The Fundamental Principles, and statistical standards and in the co-ordination of statistical activities at the international level. In the future the CES will operate in a context profoundly changed. In fact, statistical institutions in other UN regions are becoming increasingly active and authoritative. The end of the cold war and focus on peace and security, economic and social development, and the environment in the UN policy agenda have had and will have an impact on statistical international activities and the role of ECE.

8. What then will be the role of the CES in this new environment? In particular, what implications will this new environment have for:

- the co-ordination of statistical activities among major international organisations active in the region, and with other organisations active in other regions or at the global level;
- the promotion of inter-regional co-operation;
- the promotion of the international comparability of statistics;
- the role of the Fundamental Principles in the future;
- the provision of international stimuli and tools for enhancing the quality of international statistics, and the dissemination of national statistics at the international level;
- the policy dialogue on statistical issues, best practise and peer pressure to support innovation and adjustment;
- the role of the CES for the transfer of statistical know-how, capacity building and technical co-operation in statistics;
- etc.

## **II. A more formal celebration session.**

9. One half day devoted to a more formal celebration session including speeches and a high-level round table.

### *i) A few speeches*

- (Recorded) messages from the UN Secretary General, and the President of the EU
- Speeches by the ECE Executive Secretary  
the OECD Secretary General  
the CIS Secretary General  
the UNSD Director

### *ii) A high-level round table*

The round table will take stock of the conclusions of the previous seminar session and focus on the accomplishments that the Conference has made during its history, future challenges that are facing the Conference and strategic visions.

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