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**SESSION 1: RECONSTRUCTING THE PAST**

**PROBLEMS OF THE RUSSIAN STATISTICS RECONSTRUCTION  
OVER A LONG-TERM PERIOD**

Report submitted by the Institute of Statistics and  
Economic Research of the State Committee of the Russian Federation  
on Statistics \*/

Summary

1. New social, economic and political conditions as well as Russia's joining the European Council impose high requirements for the quality and depth of long-term statistics series for the national economy. Under new conditions such an information can be essentially helpful for understanding and controlling the processes of Russia social-economic development.

2. It is supposed to compile official statistical yearbooks of Russia's historical statistics for about three last centuries on the basis of the experience gained in other countries. Such task has been set for the first time and the problems immediately have arisen. The main problems are as follows:

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- (a) to make compatible indicators which have been never determined over such a long-term historic periods;
- (b) to correct regional indicators for similar administrative regions included in Russian Empire, the former USSR and the present

Russian Federation; c) if it is possible to correct accumulated errors in absolute values of statistical indicators.

3. The problem in the field of analysis of previous experience and Russia's development forecasts, consists not in (even if it seems strange) the lack of works on this topic (the list of bibliographical reference books accounts for more than 50,000 books and articles on historical statistics and Russia's economic state from the beginning of the 18th century to the present time not considering the papers of narrow branch and regional character) but in their redundancy. The common disadvantage consists in the fact that these works are based on poor factual numerical material especially for the period before 1807 and for the last 75 years.

4. In order to solve these problems it is supposed to critically study the available archived and published materials as well as to use indirect methods of statistical estimation in especially critical cases. These methods include balance and math-statistical methods as well as international standards and comparisons.

5. Presently the previously closed archive materials have become available. Consequently the favourable conditions have been formed for fulfilling such work.

6. Only large-scale scientific studies will make it possible to reveal the trends in the economy development which do not depend on change of either the government or social and economic structures as well as to show how economic reforms accelerate or retard the economy development.

7. The preliminary work has been carried out at the Institute of Statistics and Economic Research of the RF State Committee for Statistics under the supervision of M.R. Eidelman (1991) and G.A. Golts (1994).

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