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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Statistics

Second session

Bangkok, 15-17 December 2010

Report of the Committee on Statistics on its second session

I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action

Strategic direction of the Committee on Statistics Recommendation 2/1

1. The Committee expresses its full support for the proposed strategic direction, as described in the note by the Bureau (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2), including its two overarching, strategic goals of (a) ensuring that all countries in the region by 2020 have the capability to provide an agreed basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics, and (b) creating a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration.

Core set of economic statistics Recommendation 2/2

2. The Committee recommends the use of the core set of economic statistics¹ as a regional framework to focus regional efforts, coordinate training and mobilize donor support for capacity-building.

International Comparison Programme Recommendation 2/3

3. Recognizing the importance of the statistics produced by the International Comparison Programme and the opportunities presented by the International Comparison Programme to enhance the statistical infrastructure and strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to

¹ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4.

produce price statistics and national accounts among others, the Committee encourages member States to participate in the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

Principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau Decision 2/1

The Committee adopts the principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau proposed by the Bureau.²

Strategic direction of the Committee on Statistics Decision 2/2

In reference to goal 1,³ the Committee decides to establish a Technical Advisory Group on social statistics. It entrusts its Bureau to develop draft terms of reference for the work of the Technical Advisory Group, for circulation to all members and associate members for approval. On the basis of expressions of interest by member States and development partners, the Bureau will decide on the membership of the Technical Advisory Group, taking into consideration the need for balanced representation in terms of geography and expertise. Mindful of the need for inclusiveness, the Committee invites all members to express their interest in participating in the Technical Advisory Group.

Vital statistics Decision 2/3

The Committee welcomes the offer of several delegations to submit a draft resolution on improving civil registration and vital statistics systems for the consideration of the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.

Decision 2/4

Recognizing the importance of reliable vital statistics for producing timely and accurate population estimates and other demographic and health statistics, including the Millennium Development Goals, which are some of the most basic requirements for evidence-based planning and efficient resource allocation, the Committee supports the development of a regional programme for improving vital statistics in the Asian and Pacific region and recommends that the secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureau, continue to develop the regional programme fully in close collaboration with development partners.

Core set of economic statistics Decision 2/5

Recognizing the importance of and urgent need for economic statistics, the Committee endorses the core set of economic statistics proposed by the ESCAP Technical Advisory Group on the Development of Economic Statistics,⁴ as a guideline for developing the capacity of national statistical systems.

² E/ESCAP/CST(2)/1.

³ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2, chap VI, sect. A.

⁴ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4.

Regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific
Decision 2/6

1. The Committee endorses the proposed regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics,⁵ as a formal strategy for the improvement of economic statistics in the region. In particular, the Committee endorses the following:

(a) The proposed principles and strategy underpinning the regional programme;

(b) The proposed key components and main activities of the regional programme;

(c) The proposed management arrangements;

(d) The proposal for the transformation of the Technical Advisory Group for the Development of Economic Statistics into a steering group to directly oversee the implementation of the regional programme. The Bureau will review the terms of reference and expand the membership of the Technical Advisory Group to form the membership of the new steering group in consultation with the members of the Committee;

(e) The proposed role of the secretariat in the implementation of the regional programme.

2. The Committee encourages member States and development partners to actively support the implementation of the regional programme by, among other things, providing the necessary funding and other resources on a voluntary basis and through active coordination of efforts.

Integration of agricultural statistics into national statistical systems
Decision 2/7

1. The Committee strongly endorses the proposal of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to develop, over the next six months, a regional implementation plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, and requests the secretariat to coordinate this effort in partnership with FAO and other relevant regional and subregional organizations.

2. The Committee agrees that the regional implementation plan to improve agricultural and rural statistics should be integrated into the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. In this light, the Committee decides to establish a subgroup on agricultural statistics under the Steering Group for the Regional Programme for the Improvement of Economic Statistics. The Committee decides that the membership of the subgroup should include representatives of national statistical offices, ministries of agriculture and national agricultural policy and research institutes.

⁵ E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5.

Coordination of statistical training

Decision 2/8

The Committee decides to establish a small working group charged with preparing a proposal on the coordination of statistical training in the region to be put before the Committee, through the Bureau, within six months after the Committee session.

Coordination mechanism

Decision 2/9

The Committee welcomes the initiative and requests that progress made by the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific towards achieving its strategic objectives be reported to the Committee on a regular basis.

Consideration of possible draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session

Decision 2/10

The Committee welcomes the offer of several delegations to submit draft resolutions on (a) statistical capacity development (b) improving vital statistics and (c) the core set of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific for the consideration and endorsement of the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.

II. Proceedings

A. Agenda item 2

Strategic direction of the Committee on Statistics

4. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

5. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; Japan; Kazakhstan; Mongolia; New Zealand; Philippines; Russian Federation and Samoa.

6. Representatives of the following observer also made statements: United Nations Statistics Division.

7. In deliberating on the proposal, the Committee stressed the need to develop an implementation strategy for achieving goal 1 that would take into account the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region, possibly by adopting a subregional approach. In that regard, other delegations noted that work on common frameworks or regional guidelines presented opportunities for the region to collaborate and to influence developments at the global level.

8. In reference to goal 2,⁶ several delegations acknowledged the importance of modernizing statistical information systems in response to the changing information management environment; some delegations further expressed their interest and willingness to share their related experiences at the regional level.

⁶ See E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2, chap. VI, sect. B.

9. The Committee emphasized the importance of developing the capacity of not only national statistical offices but also of national statistical systems across the Asia-Pacific region and, in that regard, welcomed the offer of one delegation to sponsor a resolution to further that course.

10. The Committee recognized the significance of the enhanced use of administrative data for statistical purposes as a means of increasing the effectiveness of the production of official statistics. In that context, the need for intensified advocacy efforts, including developing a national legal framework, across government agencies to facilitate access by national statistical offices to administrative records was acknowledged.

11. The Committee adopted recommendation 2/1 and decision 2/2.⁷

B. Agenda item 3

Regional initiatives

1. Vital statistics

12. The Committee had before it several documents issued under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

13. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bangladesh; India; Japan; Maldives; Malaysia; Philippines; Russian Federation; Samoa; and Sri Lanka.

14. Representatives of the following observer also made statements: World Health Organization (WHO).

15. The Committee highlighted the role of a regional programme to improve vital statistics in (a) supporting national efforts to address coverage, quality and accessibility issues; (b) strengthening the coordination of national institutions engaged in the production of civil registration and vital statistics; (c) managing changes in registration systems as well as setting up new ones; and (d) advocating for long-term commitment to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems.

16. Some delegations emphasized that a regional programme would need to take into account the wide regional variation in the current state of development of vital statistics systems. The Committee noted that, for some countries, attaining a fully developed registration system would involve a long-term process and that interim methods for collecting vital statistics data would therefore be needed.

17. One delegation, speaking on behalf of the delegations of Pacific island countries, expressed support for the proposal to develop a regional programme. The delegation informed the Committee that improvement of vital statistics, including more efficient registration systems, was a key priority under the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy Phase 1 (2011-2014). It also informed the Committee of the efforts in the Pacific subregion to contribute to effective and efficient national solutions through a newly established initiative called the “Brisbane Group Initiative” that would coordinate initiatives for advancing the development of vital statistics.

⁷ For the text of all recommendations and decisions, see chap. I.

18. The representative of Japan expressed his Government's willingness to provide training and engage in the exchange of information on their good practices in support of the proposed regional programme. The representative of Australia informed the Committee of efforts to obtain financial assistance through AusAid to help the Australian Bureau of Statistics provide further technical support on vital statistics in the region.

19. With regard to the Regional Forum to Improve Vital Statistics and Civil Registration Systems in Asia and the Pacific, one delegation emphasized the importance of extending invitations to those types of forums to all member States, regardless of funding limitations.

20. The Forum's request that the urgent need to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in countries of the region be brought to the attention of the Commission was noted by the Committee, but one delegation expressed the need for more time to study the statement and requested that the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, facilitate further discussions with member States in order to determine the most appropriate formulation to bring the issues raised in the statement to the attention of the Commission.

21. The Committee adopted decisions 2/3 and 2/4.

2. Economic statistics

(a) Core set of economic statistics

22. The Committee had before it several documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

23. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bangladesh; China; India; Japan; Maldives; Mongolia; Nauru; New Zealand; Philippines; and Russian Federation.

24. Representatives of the following observers also made statements: International Monetary Fund (IMF) and International Labour Organization (ILO).

25. The Committee welcomed the work of the Technical Advisory Group in proposing a core set of economic statistics and recognized its importance as a framework for capacity-building in the region.

26. Recognizing the large variation in the size and structure of the economies of member States and that parts of the core set might not be relevant to all, the Committee acknowledged that some countries might wish to prioritize elements in the core set. Further appreciating the diversity in national statistical capacity, some delegations suggested that the production of the core set by 2020 might need to be phased. The Committee was informed that a subregional minimum economic data set for the Pacific was under development and that there were similarities between that work and the core set.

27. The Committee stressed that the core set of economic statistics should be reviewed and adapted as user needs evolved. Some delegations expressed an interest in contributing to any such future revisions of the core set of statistics. Some delegations mentioned that the addition of environmental, agricultural, and informal sector statistics might be considered for inclusion in future versions of the core set.

28. One delegation noted that additional support from donors would be necessary in order to enhance national statistical capacity to produce the core set of economic statistics by 2020.

29. The Committee welcomed the expression of intent by the delegation of New Zealand, supported by the delegation of Samoa, to sponsor a resolution on the core set of economic statistics for consideration and endorsement by the Commission.

30. The Committee adopted recommendation 2/2 and decision 2/5.

(b) Regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific

31. The Committee had before it several documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

32. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; India; Japan; Nauru; New Zealand; Philippines; Russian Federation; and Thailand.

33. Representatives of the following observers also made statements: United Nations Statistics Division; United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and IMF.

34. The Committee recognized the importance of the regional programme for the improvement of the economic statistics in the region and praised the work of the secretariat conducted under the guidance of the Technical Advisory Group and the Bureau.

35. The Committee unanimously endorsed the proposed regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics, while acknowledging that the programme was ambitious but timely and achievable.

36. The Committee agreed to transform the Technical Advisory Group into a Steering Group, with expanded membership, for the implementation of the regional programme and requested that the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, develop the terms of reference of the group over the succeeding months for review by members of the Committee and subsequently constitute the group. Representatives of India, Japan, New Zealand and the Russian Federation expressed the willingness of their countries to serve on the steering group. The Committee agreed that the steering group would report to the Bureau between Committee sessions.

37. The Committee agreed that the steering group, under the guidance of the Bureau and with the support of the secretariat, would be responsible for overseeing the formulating of an implementation plan for the regional programme, including clear prioritization of the components of the programme.

38. The Committee emphasized that implementing the regional programme would require a coordinated statistical training effort in the region.

39. Several delegations shared country experiences in improving economic statistics and stressed the need to share and promote good practices.

40. One delegation suggested that the term “South-South cooperation” be replaced with “regional cooperation, including South-South cooperation”, to take into account the various forms of technical cooperation among countries in the region.

41. One delegation recommended that the secretariat conduct another region-wide assessment of the capacity of national statistical systems, using the core set of economic statistics as a benchmark.

42. The Committee adopted decision 2/6.

C. Agenda item 4

Global initiatives

1. Integration of agricultural statistics into national statistical systems

43. The Committee had before it several documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

44. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Sri Lanka; Thailand; and Viet Nam.

45. Representatives of the following observers also made statements: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and ILO.

46. The Committee recognized the urgency of the need to improve agricultural statistics in the region and the importance of integrating agricultural statistics into national statistical systems. That required not only stronger coordination between national statistical offices and ministries of agriculture, but also the active involvement of national agricultural policy and research institutes. The Committee stressed the need to ensure consistency between national plans and the regional implementation plan to improve agricultural and rural statistics.

47. Many delegations stressed the importance of the agricultural sector in total employment and its contribution to gross domestic product. Several delegations emphasized the challenge of integrating agricultural statistics into national statistical systems, in particular with regard to harmonizing definitions, establishing a legal framework and the consistency and availability of administrative data. Several delegations noted in that context that the definition of agriculture also included both forestry and fishing.

48. Several delegations commented on the need to address the specific problems of least developed countries and small island developing States, specifically with respect to improving data collection methodologies, measuring employment in agriculture and rural areas, and a consistent strategy for incorporating subsistence farming into agricultural statistics.

49. Several delegations shared the experiences of their countries in improving the coordination between national statistical offices and ministries of agriculture in the production of agricultural and rural statistics and offered to contribute to the development of the related regional implementation plan. One delegation said it would contribute to the plan by

sharing the experiences of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) project. Several delegations noted the need for a coordinated regional training programme in agricultural statistics and for a mechanism for the sharing of good practices across the region.

50. Several delegations emphasized the need to develop appropriate data collection methodologies for the production of agricultural and rural statistics in inter-agricultural census years, as well as for improved crop production forecasts.

51. The FAO invited ESCAP and Asian Development Bank (ADB) and subregional organizations to participate in the formulation and implementation of the regional programme component of the Global Strategy.

52. The Committee adopted decision 2/7.

2. International Comparison Programme

53. The Committee had before it two documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

54. Representatives of the following countries made statements: China; India; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Maldives; Myanmar; Philippines; and Russian Federation.

55. Representatives of the following observer also made statements: ADB.

56. The Committee expressed appreciation for the role that ADB had been playing in coordinating the implementation of the International Comparison Programme in Asia and the Pacific and welcomed the increased participation of countries in the 2011 round. The Committee also recognized the important role of the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (ROSSTAT) and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT) in facilitating the implementation of the International Comparison Programme for countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which included several ESCAP member States.

57. Noting the importance of public awareness and appreciation of the value of International Comparison Programme data, the Committee suggested that the regional advisory board of the International Comparison Programme Asia-Pacific should consider the inclusion of advocacy and awareness-raising activities in the implementation plan for International Comparison Programme. The Committee also emphasized the need to expand the use of International Comparison Programme data through means such as reaching out to academia, providing metadata and disseminating good practices.

58. The Committee stressed the importance of building regional capacity for research and development, analysis and the use of International Comparison Programme data to enable member States to contribute to the development of techniques and methodologies of the global International Comparison Programme.

59. The Committee adopted recommendation 2/3.

D. Agenda item 5

Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities

1. Statistical training

60. The Committee had before it several information documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

61. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Bangladesh; Bhutan; China; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Japan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; New Zealand; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; and Vanuatu.

62. Representatives of the following observers also made statements: ASEAN Secretariat; Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries; and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

63. The Committee noted that the region relied on multiple training providers and expressed strong support for improving the coordination of training activities to prevent duplication, achieve consistency and improve efficiency.

64. Some delegations mentioned the challenges they faced in identifying appropriate training opportunities and that better coordination should help in that regard. One delegation suggested the development of a web portal to assist national statistical systems in identifying training opportunities in the region.

65. The Committee noted the important role of basic statistical training, particularly for the small island developing States and least developed countries of the region. Several delegations expressed appreciation for training providers, such as the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), and for the support of donor agencies in facilitating participation in training.

66. The Committee recognized that the training needs of the region would continue to grow and diversify, particularly in the light of the new regional programmes for improving statistics. One delegation suggested that training should not be restricted to statisticians, but should also be aimed at improving the statistical skills of the general public through methods, such as integrating statistical training into education curricula. Several delegations informed the Committee of work being done to establish training institutions and programmes in their respective countries and the Committee noted their importance in filling the demand for training in the region.

67. The Committee agreed that, by establishing a network of training providers in the region, including academic institutions, and developing appropriate coordination mechanisms, the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of training offered in the region would be strengthened. It was anticipated that achieving effective coordination would be challenging and that careful consideration should be accorded to determining which country or organization would play the lead role. One delegation emphasized the importance of including not just training institutes, but also subregional

bodies, such as ASEAN and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, in the coordination mechanisms.

68. To determine the best way forward, the Committee decided to establish a small working group charged with preparing a proposal on the coordination of statistical training to be put before the Committee, through the Bureau, within six months after the Committee session.

69. The Committee adopted decision 2/8.

2. Coordination mechanism

70. The Committee was provided with an oral report by the Co-chair of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific (“the Partnership”) on the outcomes of its first meeting, which had been held on 14 December 2010.

71. Representatives of the following countries made statements: New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; and Russian Federation.

72. Representatives of the following observer also made statements: European Commission.

73. The Committee welcomed the establishment of the Partnership, recognizing that the Partnership would take coordination at the regional level one step further. The Partnership was urged to make use of existing tools for information sharing, such as the Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) initiated and conducted by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21).

74. Appreciating the efforts by some countries in the region to actively coordinate donor support, some delegations requested that development partners, including donors, respect national priorities as outlined in National Strategies for the Development of Statistics

75. The Committee adopted decision 2/9.

E. Agenda item 6

Items for information

1. Millennium Development Goal indicators

76. The Committee had before it one information paper entitled “Availability and use of data on the Millennium Development Goal indicators in Asia and the Pacific” (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/5) submitted by the secretariat.

77. Representatives of the following countries made statements: India and Indonesia.

78. Some delegations noted the lack of data at the subnational level for measuring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and the need for a framework to address the issue. One delegation requested that the secretariat perform further analysis to determine in which specific areas lack of data at the regional level remains a particular concern.

2. Informal sector and informal employment statistics

79. The Committee had before it one information paper entitled “Report on the work of the secretariat on informal sector and informal employment statistics” (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/6) provided by the secretariat.

80. Representatives of the following country made statements: Thailand.

81. Representative of the following observer also made statements: ILO.

82. One delegation emphasized the need for better defined global standards and methodologies to measure informal employment and the contribution of the informal sector to gross domestic product.

83. The representative of ILO informed the Committee about related work initiatives, particularly on decent work, and available knowledge and information resources, in particular the preparation of the manual on employment in the informal sector.

3. Disability statistics

84. The Committee had before it two information documents (see the annex for the list of documents). The Committee was informed about related work conducted by WHO and ILO.

4. Gender statistics

85. The Committee had before it three information documents submitted under the agenda item (see the annex for the list of documents).

86. Representatives of the following country made statements: Philippines.

87. Representatives of the following observers also made statements: ILO, UNFPA, WHO and Plan International.

88. Plan International suggested that, as part of the work on gender statistics, sex-disaggregated data on children should be produced to help address gender-based violence. One delegation along with the representatives of ILO, UNFPA and WHO informed the Committee about their related work and good practices.

5. Information and communications technology statistics

89. The Committee had before it one information paper submitted under the item (see the annex for the list of documents).

90. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Indonesia; Republic of Korea; and Thailand.

91. Several delegations recognized the importance of improving in information and communications technology (ICT) statistics. One delegation and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) suggested that a working group be established by the Committee to work on the development of ICT statistics. Another delegation requested support for the improvement of its capacity to conduct in-depth analysis on existing ICT data.

92. ITU suggested that ICT statistics be included in national statistical strategies and master plans and recognized the need for harmonizing methodologies for ICT measurement based on existing international standards to ensure international comparability of data.

6. Other topics

93. The Committee had before it two information papers, one submitted by Myanmar (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/18) and the other submitted by the Philippines (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/34). There were no interventions for this sub-item.

F. Agenda item 7

Reports brought to the attention of the Committee

1. Bureau

94. The Committee had before it the document entitled "Report on the activities of the Bureau since the first session of the Committee" (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/10), which provided an overview of the work carried out by the Bureau in implementing the decisions and recommendations adopted by the Committee at its first session. The report was supplemented by an oral report delivered by the Rapporteur of the first session of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics on behalf of the Bureau.

95. The Committee took note of the report. The secretariat expressed gratitude to the Bureau for its leadership in carrying out the Committee's work during the intersessional period, emphasizing that it had benefited greatly from the Bureau's guidance and technical advice.

2. Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

96. The Committee had before it the report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its fifth session (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/11), which provided an overview of the work of SIAP and the recommendations of the Governing Council for the academic year 2010-2011. The report was supplemented by an oral report delivered by the Chairman of the sixth session of the Governing Council.

97. The Committee took note of the document and the oral report.

98. The delegation of Japan informed the Committee about the ceremony celebrating the fortieth anniversary of SIAP in August 2010. As the host country of SIAP, Japan expressed its gratitude to the Committee and development partners for their cooperation with SIAP.

G. Agenda item 8

Consideration of future programme focus

99. Representatives of the following countries made statements: Philippines; and Russian Federation.

100. Representatives of the following observer also made statements: WHO.

101. In reference to an overview provided by the secretariat of its planned programme of work for 2011-2013, the Committee expressed its appreciation that all priority areas discussed during its present session were reflected in the plan. One delegation expressed appreciation for the role of the secretariat as an information hub for the national statistical offices of the region.

102. In response to a suggestion by one delegation, the secretariat informed the Committee that, as part of its programme of work, it would support closer collaboration with other divisions within the secretariat to enhance the use of statistics compiled by the secretariat. Towards that end, the secretariat had started addressing measurement issues and was considering the introduction of a central data management system.

H. Agenda item 9

Consideration of possible draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session

103. Member States were invited to discuss and review ideas to be considered in draft resolutions on statistics development in the Asia-Pacific region that could be proposed to the Commission for further deliberation and endorsement at its sixty-seventh session. The Committee welcomed the commitment by member States to sponsor and co-sponsor draft resolutions, as follows:

(a) Mongolia expressed its intention to sponsor a draft resolution on statistical capacity development in Asia and the Pacific. Bhutan and the Maldives offered to co-sponsor the draft resolution;

(b) The Philippines expressed its intention to sponsor a draft resolution on improving vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific, which would reflect the result of further consultations as per the Committee's deliberations on the topic. Bangladesh offered to co-sponsor the draft resolution;

(c) New Zealand expressed its intention to sponsor a draft resolution on the core set of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific. Samoa offered to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

104. The Committee adopted decision 2/10.

I. Agenda item 10

Other matters

105. No other matter was raised.

J. Agenda item 11

Adoption of the report

106. The Committee adopted the present report on 17 December 2010.

III. Organization of the meeting

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

107. The Committee on Statistics held its second session in Bangkok from 15 to 17 December 2010. The session was opened by the Minister of Information and Communication Technology of Thailand, H.E. Mr. Chuti Krairiksh. Preceding this, a welcoming statement by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP was delivered by the Acting Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer-in-Charge of secretariat of ESCAP. The Director of the United Nations Statistics Division also made a welcoming statement.

108. In his statement, Mr. Krairiksh noted two significant achievements in the field of statistics during 2010: the first-ever celebration of World Statistics Day on 20 October 2010; and the conduct of Population and Housing Censuses in 62 countries around the world. He informed the Committee that Thailand had participated in both events while also celebrating the 100 year anniversary of the National Statistical Office in 2010.

109. Mr. Krairiksh stated that Thailand's Prime Minister had continuously emphasized the importance of statistical data and the crucial role it plays in developing the government's evidence-based plans and policies. He stressed the need to focus on data quality as that underlined the country's planning and development. As Minister of Information and Communication Technology, he placed emphasis on standardized and integrated data management systems to facilitate the use of statistical information.

110. In closing, Mr. Krairiksh wished the Committee well in its work to identify data requirements for understanding economic, social and environmental trends and developing the capacity of national statistical systems to provide high-quality statistical information. He noted the importance of the Committee in providing guidance with respect to producing, disseminating and harmonizing official statistics at national, subregional and regional levels. He concluded that this guidance allowed statistical systems to provide governments with the high quality, comparable statistics that then served as the basis for evidence-based plans and policies.

111. The Acting Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer-in-Charge of the secretariat of ESCAP, in his opening statement, noted the necessity of timely and comprehensive statistics for informing governments and agencies about current development trends and their impact on the everyday life of people. He stated that statistics that covered the quality as well as the quantity of growth enabled political leaders to send credible messages about the importance of inclusive and sustainable development paths. He declared the commitment of ESCAP to take a lead role in developing statistics to capture the inclusiveness and sustainability of economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific. He noted that the newly established subregional offices of ESCAP would allow ESCAP to better identify and meet diverse statistical capacity development needs across the region. He noted with satisfaction that, on 14 December 2010, the regional development community had come together at the first meeting of the Partners for Statistics Development in Asia-Pacific to ensure that the international community would be working as one at the regional level, facilitating the implementation of the Committee's decisions.

112. The Director of the United Nations Statistics Division highlighted the importance of a coordinated approach in building and improving sustainable statistical capacity and emphasized the crucial role of regional forums such as the ESCAP Committee on Statistics in coordination at the regional level. He underscored the importance of making progress in improving data availability and information sharing of an agreed basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics, which was indicated as the first strategic goal for 2020 in the Committee's programme of work. While commending the work of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, he also acknowledged the increasing number of countries in the region willing to take on the task of providing statistical training. He detailed some of the work that the United Nations Statistics Division had been doing with respect to statistical capacity-building and training.

B. Attendance

113. The Committee session was attended by representatives of the following members of ESCAP: Afghanistan; Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; New Zealand; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam. The session was also attended by representatives of the following associate members: Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China. The session was also attended by representatives of South Africa.

114. Representatives of the following offices of the United Nations bodies attended: United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and United Nations Population Fund.

115. Representatives of the following secretariat unit attended: United Nations Statistics Division.

116. Representatives of the following specialized agencies and related organizations attended: FAO, ILO, IMF, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNIDO and WHO.

117. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: ASEAN Secretariat, ADP, European Commission, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries and The Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa.

118. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Plan International Inc and Accelerated Data Program.

119. The total attendance included 142 persons from ESCAP members and associate members and 31 persons from other organizations.

C. Election of officers

120. The Committee had before it a note by the Bureau on the principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau (E/ESCAP/CST(2)/1).

The Committee adopted the principles and procedures proposed by the Bureau.⁸

121. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair:	Mr Brian Pink (Australia)
Vice-chair:	Mr Jiantang Ma (China) Mr T.C.A Anant (India) Mr Gerelt-Od Ganbaatar (Mongolia)
Member:	Mr Sefuiva Reupena Muagututia (Samoa)
Rapporteur:	Mr Romulo A. Virola (Philippines)

D. Agenda

122. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening addresses;
 - (b) Election of the Bureau;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Strategic direction of the Committee on Statistics:
 - (a) Outcomes of the most recent sessions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Statistical Commission;
 - (b) Proposed future work.
3. Regional initiatives:
 - (a) Vital statistics;
 - (b) Economic statistics:
 - (i) Core set of economic statistics;
 - (ii) Regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific.
4. Global initiatives:
 - (a) Integration of agricultural statistics into national statistical systems;
 - (b) International Comparison Programme.
5. Coordination of statistical capacity-building activities:
 - (a) Statistical training;
 - (b) Coordination mechanism.

⁸ See chap. I, sect. B, decision 2/1.

6. Items for information:
 - (a) Millennium Development Goal indicators;
 - (b) Informal sector and informal employment statistics;
 - (c) Disability statistics;
 - (d) Gender statistics;
 - (e) Information and communications technology statistics;
 - (f) Other topics.
7. Reports brought to the attention of the Committee:
 - (a) Bureau;
 - (b) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.
8. Consideration of future programme focus.
9. Consideration of possible draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.
10. Other matters.
11. Adoption of the report.

E. Side event

123. A side event on modernizing statistical information systems in Asia and the Pacific was held on the morning of 17 December. Presentations by Australia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea and the PARIS21/Accelerated Data Program were followed by a lively discussion. The event highlighted how the Internet had revolutionized the management, exchange and use of statistical information, and explored possibilities for regional coordination to support the transformation of statistical information systems. The discussion also included the relationship between the private sector as data producers and the national statistical office.

Annex**List of documents**

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/1	Principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau of the ESCAP Committee on Statistics	1(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/2	Proposed strategic directions of the Committee on Statistics	2(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/3	Development of a regional programme for the improvement of vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/3/Add.1	Outcome statement of the Regional Forum on the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration in Asia and the Pacific	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/4	Proposed core set of economic statistics for Asia and the Pacific	3(b)(i)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/5	Proposed regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific	3(b)(ii)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/6	Implementation plan for the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/7	Report on the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme in Asia and the Pacific	4(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8	More relevant, effective and efficient statistical training through improved regional coordination	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/10	Report on the activities of the Bureau since the first session of the Committee	7(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/11	Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its fifth session	7(b)
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/L.1/Rev.1	Revised annotated provisional agenda	1(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/L.2	Draft report	11
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/1 (English Only)	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/2 (English Only)	Provisional list of participants	1(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/3	Tentative programme	1(a)

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/4 (English Only)	Outcomes of the most recent sessions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Statistical Commission	2(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/5 (English Only)	Availability and use of data on the Millennium Development Goal indicators in Asia and the Pacific	6(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/6 (English Only)	Report on the work of the secretariat on informal sector and informal employment statistics	6(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/7 (English Only)	Report on the work of the secretariat on disability statistics	6(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/8 (English Only)	Report on the work of the secretariat on gender statistics	6(d)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/9 (English Only)	Report on the ESCAP region-wide assessment of the capacity of national statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific to produce basic economic statistics	3(b)(ii)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/10 (English Only)	Draft regional programme for the improvement of economic statistics in Asia and the Pacific, February 2010	3(b)(ii)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/11 (English Only)	Comparison of the core set of economic statistics with other international sets of statistics and its availability in the ESCAP region	3(b)(i)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/12 (English Only)	List of participants of the Forum on the Improvement of Vital Statistics and Civil Registration in Asia and the Pacific	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/13 (English Only)	Family registration system and vital statistics in Japan	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/14 (English Only)	Economic census for business frame in Japan	3(b)(ii)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/15 (English Only)	Situation of agricultural statistics in the basic policy for development of statistics in Japan	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/16 (English Only)	Disability surveys in Japan	6(c)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/17 (English Only)	Gender statistics in Japan	6(d)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/18 (English Only)	The means to successful statistics	6(f)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/19 (English Only)	Strategies for the development of statistics in the Pacific island region – the Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy	2(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/20 (English Only)	Information and communication technology statistics	6(e)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/21 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by China	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/22 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by Asian Development Bank	5(a)

Symbol	Title	Agenda item
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/23 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/24 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by International Monetary Fund	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/25 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by the Islamic Republic of Iran	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/26 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by the Republic of Korea	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/27 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by the Philippines	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/28 (English Only)	Response to request for information for preparation of document E/ESCAP/CST(2)/8 - Response by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/29 (Russian Only)	Подготовка к проведению сплошной переписи населения Туркменистана и жилищного фонда 2012 года	3(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/30 (English Only)	SIAP-ESCAP: fifth decade of statistical training	5(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/31 (English Only)	Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural Statistics: Implementation Plan for Africa - Proposals on Research Component	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/32 (English Only)	Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural Statistics in Africa –Draft proposal for the training component	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/33 (English Only)	Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural Statistics: Implementation plan for Africa - Proposals for the Technical Assistance Component	4(a)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/34 (English Only)	Country experiences and practices on various sectoral statistics in the Philippine statistical system	6(f)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/35 (English Only)	Improvement of social statistics: birth rate, mortality, gender statistics	6(d)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/36 (English Only)	SNA as a basis of development of economic statistics in Kazakhstan	3(b)(i)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/37 (English Only)	The work of the Republic of Kazakhstan on preparation for 2011 Global Round of the International Comparison Programme	4(b)
E/ESCAP/CST(2)/INF/38 (English Only)	Integration of agricultural statistics into the National Statistical System	4(a)