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**REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE STATISTICAL CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Santiago, Chile, 18-20 June 2003

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was convened by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC in accordance with resolution 2000/7 of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and was held in Santiago, Chile, from 18 to 20 June 2003.

Attendance¹

2. Representatives of the following States members of the Commission participated in the meeting: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

3. Puerto Rico, an associate member of ECLAC, was also represented.

4. On behalf of the United Nations Secretariat, the meeting was attended by a representative of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

5. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the following United Nations funds and programmes: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Habitat), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

6. The following specialized agencies of the United Nations were also represented: International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and World Bank.

7. In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations: Andean Community, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), European Commission, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT).

8. Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) and the Ibero-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators (RICYT) were also represented at the meeting.

¹ See annex 3.

Documentation

9. The working and reference documents presented by the secretariat at the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean are listed in annex 4 of this report.

B. Organization of work

10. The work of the Conference was conducted in plenary sessions at which a report on the implementation of the Programme of International Statistical Work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003, and a proposed programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005, were introduced. These presentations were followed by an in-depth analysis of the following substantive issues: “Preparation of directories and use of administrative registers as a primary information source and as a framework for surveys and other statistical research”, “Management geared to ensuring the quality of data produced by national statistical institutes” and “Public credibility of national statistical institutes”.

B. AGENDA

11. At its first plenary session, the Conference adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC
2. Report on the Programme of International Statistical Work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003
3. Presentation of the proposed programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005
 - (a) Presentation of subprogramme 1: Adaptation and production of basic statistics within the framework of a regional strategy for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA)
 - (b) Presentation of subprogramme 2: Improvement of the production and use of statistics on social variables and well-being
 - (c) Presentation of subprogramme 3: Improvement and extension of the production of statistics on specific issues
 - (i) Environmental statistics
 - (ii) Statistics on science, technology and innovation
 - (iii) Statistics on gender equity

- (d) Presentation of subprogramme 4: Modernization of statistical systems and dissemination of statistical information
4. Presentation and discussion of substantive issues
 - (a) Public credibility of national statistical institutes
 - (b) Preparation of directories and use of administrative registers as a primary information source and as a framework for surveys and other statistical research
 - (c) Management geared to ensuring the quality of data produced by national statistical institutes
 5. Report of the Rapporteur
 6. Adoption of agreements
 7. Election of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC for the period 2003-2005

C. OPENING SESSION

12. At the opening session, statements were made by Mr. José Antonio Ocampo, Executive Secretary of the Commission, and Mr. Eduardo Pereira Nunes, President of the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE) and Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas.

13. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that the activities carried out in fulfilment of the Statistical Conference's programme of work for 2001-2003 were the result of the coordinated efforts and determination of the member countries' Governments. The Statistical Conference provided an institutional forum for multilateral analysis and cooperation aimed at strengthening national statistical systems and monitoring the economic and social development of each country and of the region as a whole. ECLAC had a long tradition of efforts in the field, dating all the way back to its founding in 1948, and was therefore honoured to have been chosen to serve as the secretariat for the Conference.

14. The quality and coverage of economic, demographic and social statistics had improved a great deal, but further progress had to be made in order to adapt them to the existing situation in the region, which was marked by a slowdown in economic growth, financial instability, the relative stagnation of progress in reducing poverty and indigence, and the need for a more equitable and sustainable development process. All those circumstances, combined with the challenges of globalization, made it essential to continuously adapt models of participation in the international economy and created new demands for the development of statistics in the region. In that regard, three areas should be given priority: the adaptation of the economic, demographic and social statistics currently being produced to accommodate the changes taking place in the socio-economic fabric; the challenges posed by globalization and the opportunities it offered, which had created an urgent need to close the technology

gap; and communication between the producers and users of statistics based on the transparency and credibility of information, which were the pillars of governance, democracy and civil participation.

15. Along with customary subject areas such as national accounts, population censuses and housing surveys, the Conference's programme of work placed particular importance on three high-priority topics: the environment and sustainable development, gender equity, and science and technology. Another important aspect of the programme was the strengthening of the institutional structure for statistical work as an essential element in ensuring continued progress in the improvement of data quality and transparency. Yet another was the monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations, which represented one of the most important commitments made in recent years by heads of State and Government throughout the world. The second meeting of the Conference offered a valuable opportunity to analyse the programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2003-2005. The countries' inputs and comments on the subject were certain to result in a highly productive debate that would benefit the entire region.

16. The President of the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE), speaking in his capacity as Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Conference, recalled that one of the objectives of the meeting was to exchange ideas regarding topics of importance for the production and dissemination of official statistics on economic, demographic and social conditions, all of which were extremely useful for public and private decision-makers. He also highlighted the importance of compiling directories and using administrative records as primary sources of information which could be very helpful to national entities that produced statistics. The creation of an electronic forum for the Conference had expedited the exchange of information among heads of statistical institutes in the region, enabling them to select topics on the basis of relevance and timeliness.

17. Information exchanges between statistical offices and agencies responsible for maintaining administrative records were proving to be increasingly valuable for both types of institutions, as well as providing an extremely effective way of saving resources. Management geared to ensuring data quality was another quite innovative topic which should be dealt with in greater depth at subsequent meetings.

18. In closing, the Chairperson of the Conference observed that the prestige of national statistical offices was largely dependent on the extent to which economic agents trusted the information they produced. That kind of trust was strengthened by the existence of international links. A high-level forum such as the Conference offered an ideal environment for establishing and strengthening links of that nature. The Chairperson concluded his statement by inviting all those in attendance to take part in the debates, whose purpose was to finalize the substantive contents of the proposed programme of work.

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

C. Report on the Programme of International Statistical Work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003 (agenda item 2)

19. A representative of the secretariat introduced the document "Progress report on the activities of the Programme of International Statistical Work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003" (LC/L.1697/Rev.2), which had been prepared by the Commission. The report reviewed the main

multilateral activities that had been undertaken to assist the countries of the region at the level of both national statistical offices and subregional integration blocs.

20. In fulfilment of the Conference's objectives, the report referred to innovative or emerging issues such as the incorporation of accounts on tourism, the environment, the gender perspective and telecommunications. The activities had been pursued within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and the follow-up to world conferences, in particular the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). The commitment to cooperation demonstrated by member countries of the Conference and by collaborating agencies and institutions was extremely important and had led to the provision of technical assistance to a number of countries and to the signing of various agreements.

21. The representative of Chile proposed that the last sentence of paragraph 93 of the report on the programme of work should be replaced by the following: "The other groups completed their activities under the programme, which included the development of a web page presenting the outputs of those activities. Work was completed on the MERCOSUR-Chile statistical compendium, which provides relevant harmonized information for each country for the period 1997-2000. Special mention should be made of the methodological studies conducted on macroeconomic indicators, a harmonized consumer price index, total quality management, technological innovation and the statistical compendium. National subprojects were also carried out on regional statistics (Argentina); a survey on the supply of tourism services in the State of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), which IBGE plans to expand in order to achieve national coverage and its integration into the tourism satellite account; a first industrial survey (Paraguay), which is to be incorporated into the ongoing annual programme of the statistical office; a services survey (Uruguay), which is to become a permanent component of economic statistics; and a producer price index for sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture and construction (Chile).

22. "One important activity of group 9, consisting of the directors of the national statistical offices of the countries members of MERCOSUR and Chile, was the creation of a framework committee for statistical harmonization and coordination."

D. Presentation of the proposed programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005 (agenda item 3)

23. A representative of the secretariat gave an overview of the document "Draft programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005" (LC/L.1903(CEA.2003/3)), which defined the thematic priorities that had been established for the compilation of statistical information in the region. The proposal was based on the guidelines established by the member countries at the twenty-ninth session of the Commission (Brasilia, May 2002) and on the conclusions reached by the Executive Committee of the Conference at its second meeting (Panama City, December 2002).

24. The proposal constituted a frame of reference for the Commission's work in the field of statistics. While a large part of that work was carried out by the Statistics and Economic Projections Division and the Population Division of ECLAC - Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE), other ECLAC divisions and units were also involved in producing quantitative analyses of the region's economic and social situation. The document also described how the tasks of the member countries' statistical offices could be organized in order to generate positive synergies that would

strengthen all aspects of statistical work in the region. It also indicated how international agencies and institutions could support the efforts being made in that regard by Governments.

(a) Presentation of subprogramme 1: Adaptation and production of basic statistics within the framework of a regional strategy for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA)

25. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on subprogramme 1 in which emphasis was placed on three substantive aspects: the implementation of the 1993 SNA; statistics on tourism; and the work being done to promote the harmonization of different types of economic statistics. In connection with that last aspect, special mention was made of the International Comparison Programme. In view of the progress achieved by some countries in adopting and applying the new 1993 SNA international standards, it had been proposed that the programme of work should include more activities geared towards harmonization. Although a major effort had been made in the region to implement the 1993 SNA, the proposed goals for the completion of the central SNA framework had been only partially fulfilled. At a meeting of Latin American and Caribbean experts on national accounts held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in November 2002, ECLAC had been asked to promote the improvement of the basic statistical information necessary for that purpose and to help seek funding and political support for efforts to move forward in that area.

26. ECLAC would concentrate its support efforts on the organization of seminars on the preparation of national accounts, dissemination of documentation and exchange of experiences and outputs. That work would be carried out from a new perspective designed to facilitate the standardization of methodologies used by the countries in calculating the variables included in those accounts.

27. With respect to tourism statistics, ECLAC and the World Tourism Organization had been collaborating since the year 2000 on the development of a tourism satellite account for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The two organizations had signed a cooperation agreement in early 2003 under which they had held regional seminars and workshops. Those activities would be continued in the 2003-2005 biennium in order to move towards the consolidation of a framework for the economic analysis of tourism statistics and to help countries to gain a fuller understanding of statistical information and of how it tied in with macro-statistical systems.

28. The representative of the World Bank referred to the International Comparison Programme (ICP), which was organized at three levels: global, regional and national. The coordination of ICP was conducted by a consortium of international, regional and national institutions under the leadership of the Global Executive Board. The Board consisted of representatives of the main stakeholders, including two representatives of countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region. ECLAC, meanwhile, would serve as the regional ICP coordinator, with responsibility for setting regional goals, priorities and objectives, taking into consideration the statistical needs of participating countries. In that capacity, ECLAC would also be responsible for adopting an annual programme of work and for managing daily operational matters, including project development, coordination and implementation of the regional comparison. At the national level, implementing agencies would be requested to appoint coordinators to organize and manage the data collection process and to serve as liaison with the regional coordinator.

29. The speaker informed the participants that to date, 26 countries members of the Conference had expressed their intention to take part in the activities planned for 2004 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

30. The representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stressed the importance of the International Comparison Programme and said that its financing arrangements must be more clearly defined.

31. The representative of Brazil noted that the work being done on the harmonization of consumer price indices in the MERCOSUR countries and Chile was further along than was indicated in the progress report on the activities of the programme of work for the past biennium. He also noted that the programme of statistical work for 2003-2005 provided for more activities dealing with tourism satellite accounts but made no mention of activities focusing on the compilation of basic tourism statistics. Moreover, the programme's activities should include central banks, as well as national statistical offices.

32. Representatives of various member countries then took the floor. The representative of Peru said that, in his view, a conflict of interest could arise between producers of statistics and the national authorities responsible for monetary policy. He also voiced concern about the supervisory process for certifying the quality of statistics produced by the countries. That function had formerly been performed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, but was currently being discharged by the International Monetary Fund.

33. The representative of Mexico offered to share the experience acquired by his country in the development of a tourism satellite account with the other countries of the region. He proposed that a methodological research project on the informal economy should be included in the programme of work. That proposal was endorsed by the delegation of Jamaica. The representative of Mexico also proposed that the programme should take into account the results of the study on the harmonization of industrial classifications undertaken within the framework of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

34. The representative of Spain announced that his country planned to hold several expert workshops in order to share experiences in the area of satellite accounts, and suggested that those activities should be included in the biennial programme. He also reported on the protocol concluded between Spain's national statistical office (INE) and the Andean Community, which provided for the establishment of mechanisms for cooperation on the development of tourism satellite accounts. In that connection, a request was made for a more specific description of the topics included in paragraph 16 of the proposed programme of work. The representative of Chile underscored the importance of working with the central banks in activities dealing with prices.

35. The representative of Puerto Rico said that Puerto Rico had implemented the 1993 SNA, with the exception of the tourism satellite accounts, a first draft of which would be submitted at the next meeting of the World Tourism Organization, to be held in July in Cartagena, Colombia. Progress had also been made in the area of economic statistics, including the compilation of input-output data and the development of an economic activity index. In addition, an administratively and financially autonomous statistical office would soon be established.

36. The representative of El Salvador proposed that the programme should include an area of activity relating to the compilation of data for national health accounts, and reported that Harvard University was executing a project on the compilation of data on health-care expenditure and financing. In addition, he suggested that ECLAC should provide the member countries with a status report on the implementation of the International Comparison Programme in the region.

37. The representative of Cuba said that subprogrammes 1 and 2 should be combined, given the importance of statistics on health, education and housing for the measurements needed to prepare national accounts. The representative of the Andean Community noted that a book on tourism satellite accounts had been published by Ecuador with support from INE of Spain. Mention was also made of the work being done to harmonize the price indices of the Andean Community countries with technical assistance from the Government of France.

38. The representative of EUROSTAT reported that the European Commission was planning to send an identification mission to the countries members of MERCOSUR under a cooperation programme on macroeconomic convergence that included a significant statistical component. That programme would take into consideration the outputs of the cooperation project being conducted by MERCOSUR and Chile with regard to national accounts and the development of a harmonized consumer price index. The representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) noted that his institution's web page included basic health indicators among its statistics on well-being.

(b) Presentation of subprogramme 2: Improvement of the production and use of statistics on social variables and well-being

39. The representative of the ECLAC Population Division - CELADE reported on the outcome of a meeting held the preceding day for the exchange of experiences concerning the 2000 round of population censuses, pursuant to a request from the Executive Committee of the Conference. Among other topics, the participants had analysed the implications of the use of de facto and de jure criteria in the censuses; the use of new techniques for compiling, processing and disseminating census data; the democratization of access to data banks and the possibility of marketing some of the information they contained; and the need to develop better ways of using census information.

40. In reply to enquiries from some delegations as to whether CELADE would resume its former practice of offering advanced training courses on demographic analysis, the representative of the Population Division said that, while CELADE recognized that there was a shortage of demographers in the region, it could no longer provide training on a large scale because it lacked resources. Currently, it could only carry out short-term training on an ad hoc basis. Therefore, a strategy must be devised for offering more ambitious training activities with assistance from other agencies, especially in the form of financing. Mention was also made of the importance of the MERCOSUR-Bolivia-Chile common census project, the second phase of which would begin in 2004.

41. The representatives of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and ECLAC reported on the support they had provided to countries under the programme on the improvement of surveys and the measurement of living conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean (MECOVI). In response to the concern expressed at the preceding meeting of the Statistical Conference with respect to the English-speaking Caribbean countries' insufficient participation in the MECOVI programme, a separate subregional programme had been developed for those countries.

42. The representative of Argentina said that the subprogramme should expressly include the aim of developing an integrated system of indicators and that administrative records should be added as the third major source of information, along with censuses and household surveys.

43. The representative of the Andean Community said that the countries members of the Community were working to harmonize methods and variables and were exploring the possibility of developing

indicators on governance and the impact of the informal sector on the economy. He suggested that the agenda of the next meeting of the Statistical Conference should include the issue of financing for surveys and censuses and an analysis on the next census round.

44. A representative of the secretariat outlined the main features of the REDESA project, for which funding was being drawn from the United Nations Development Account. The principal objective of the project was to set up a network of regional institutions and experts on social and environmental statistics. The project was open to all organizations, institutions and independent experts working on the production and dissemination of data relating to social development and the environment.

45. In that connection, the representative of Cuba emphasized the importance of having the availability of information figure as a goal in its own right when statistical work was being planned. In view of the need for training in the management of administrative records and particularly in their use to supplement survey data when the latter did not provide a sufficiently clear picture of social conditions, she offered her country's collaboration in any technical assistance project on the subject to which Cuba could contribute human resources and technical expertise.

46. The secretariat recalled the high priority which the United Nations system attached to the development goals formulated at the Millennium Summit. From a public information standpoint, those goals were significant not only because they quantified the progress to be achieved, but also because they gave rise to a new type of international dialogue focusing on quantitative targets that were to be achieved within a specific time frame established by the countries. That approach to development called for the definition of very accurate indicators and highlighted the importance of accountability and transparency in public administration.

47. The challenge was thus to identify the best methodologies for measuring the attainment of those goals, bearing in mind that they had been established for extremely poor countries. Within that general context, both basic and complementary goals could be distinguished; the latter, which had been added in the course of different world conferences and other United Nations forums subsequent to the Millennium Summit, did not apply to some countries in the region with intermediate levels of development, since a number of them had already achieved the targets set at the global level some years earlier.

48. Given that situation and the need to provide an accounting to the General Assembly in 2004, ECLAC proposed that it should analyse measurement methods that would enable it to compare regional data; carry out pilot projects in selected countries to study how development was measured by international organizations, especially the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and ECLAC itself; and support the convening of a regional conference on the Millennium Development Goals in the course of the current year. She concluded by recalling that the essential aim in that regard was to give Governments an overview that would facilitate decision-making and the definition of a suitable set of public policies.

49. The representative of Peru noted the absence of baselines in some of the topics and the need to provide financing for indicator measurements. In addition, the targets should preferably be made applicable at the regional level; for example, purchasing power parity could be defined for the whole region, which would make it possible to avoid using the dollar in all calculations. That proposal was elaborated upon by the representative of the World Bank, who said that the Bank currently coordinated the International Comparison Programme, one of whose objectives was precisely to define reliable, comparable purchasing power parities at the world level. He related the concept of purchasing power

parity to poverty measurement and explained that that indicator could be a highly effective tool for measuring the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, the Peruvian proposal was by no means inconsistent with those goals. The preliminary activities of the International Comparison Programme on purchasing power parity with special emphasis on the poor would be launched in the region in July 2003.

50. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported that her organization was conducting a joint education and equity project with ECLAC. Its participation in the methodological debate on the goal concerning education was essential, since it had helped to define that goal for the Millennium Summit and its fulfilment of its mandate in the area of education had given it valuable experience and perspective. Similarly, the Commission's cooperation was crucial, since the relevant research was based on household surveys. In the same vein, the representative of the Pan American Health Organization-World Health Organization (PAHO-WHO) urged all the agencies and institutions present at the meeting to share their statistical information with a view to moving progressively towards homogenization, standardization and, ultimately, comparability.

51. The representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) voiced that institution's full support for the United Nations initiative to establish and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. However, problems were likely to arise in the sphere of public policy if the figures on progress towards those targets lacked credibility. Allegations of such a lack could become a dangerous political weapon. In his view, it was the statistical offices' responsibility to ensure reliability of the information even though they would not be generating all of the figures, which was why support, assistance and cooperation from multilateral agencies would be of such crucial importance. As for sustainable development, OECD, EUROSTAT and the United Nations Statistics Division had decided to set up a steering group on sustainable development statistics. Countries and international organizations could take part in the work of that group. The United Nations regional commissions were also invited to contribute to its work.

52. The representative of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) expressed satisfaction about the fact that the countries of the Caribbean subregion had benefited directly from the programmes presented by the secretariat. The CARICOM secretariat was implementing a programme designed to develop the capacity of countries in the region to produce reliable and comparable statistical data and indicators on the environment, gender, social development and other areas.

53. The representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Habitat) explained that his organization had made a commitment to developing indicators of the quality of life of city dwellers, particularly the inhabitants of slums and low-income districts. Habitat and ECLAC were working together in that area with a view to being able to provide information on national averages and selected cities within one or two years. It would therefore be helpful to include questions on housing in household survey forms or even in the next census round.

54. The representative of Bolivia discussed the reductions that had been made in national statistical offices' budgets, which often made it necessary to use substitute or indirect indicators to obtain the necessary information; a case in point was the information required in order to evaluate the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals. If, therefore, Governments made a commitment to provide or produce a given type of information, they should also make a commitment to supply the necessary funding, as mentioned among the development objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

55. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee reported that the Rio Group had decided to collaborate with the United Nations Statistics Division on a book concerning the measurement of poverty. The book would provide an overview of the processes involved in producing indicators and applying methodologies for measuring poverty, together with a compendium of best practices in relation to the calculation and construction of relative and absolute poverty indicators.

(c) Presentation of subprogramme 3: Improvement and extension of the production of statistics on specific issues

56. A representative of the secretariat reported that the demand for environmental statistics and indicators had increased, in terms of both international, governmental and civil-society organizations and the topics to be covered, especially in relation to the goals set at the Millennium Summit and in Johannesburg. One of the greatest difficulties in that respect was the fragmentation and dispersion of data, rather than a lack of such information. It was essential to provide a bridge between data producers and users, especially political decision-makers, and to continue to facilitate training and the exchange of experiences. Examples of the actions undertaken to that end included the preparation of a report on the progress achieved by the region's countries in developing environmental statistics, the work being done by the Network of Institutions and Experts on Social and Environmental Statistics (REDESA) and the revision of the United Nations handbook on environmental accounting. Coordination was essential in all those endeavours. The representative of Mexico also referred to that last point and drew attention to the insufficient awareness, in many countries, of the importance of environmental surveys.

57. A representative of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC introduced the topic of statistics on gender equity and referred to some of the activities undertaken by ECLAC and national women's offices to improve the processing, analysis and use of gender statistics, which was a very specific area of work. Efforts were being made to strengthen institutional structures in order to overcome existing problems of fragmentation and to promote the application of time-use surveys as a valuable public policy-making tool. She mentioned a variety of subregional and inter-agency initiatives for the development of indicators relating to violence against women, and noted that ECLAC was developing a methodological proposal on new ways of measuring poverty on a differentiated basis. In connection with that point, Cuba offered to share its expertise in the area of time-use surveys.

58. A representative of the Economic Projections Unit of the Statistics and Economic Projections Division of ECLAC emphasized the linkages between statistics on science, technology and innovation—especially information and communication technologies—and productivity and economic growth in the region. Work in that area was based on an interdisciplinary approach involving the use of common methodologies that would facilitate cross-country comparisons. He also discussed the Commission's plans to present an institutional document on productive development policies in 2004. The representative of Peru described the joint initiative being pursued by his country together with Mexico and Brazil, which was being supported by ECLAC and other partners. The initiative concerned the construction of indicators on information technologies and was intended to help disseminate common methodologies. A representative of the Division of Production, Productivity and Management of ECLAC emphasized the need to establish priorities based on the needs of users in order to optimize the use of available resources. He discussed the creation of an observatory for the information society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILA) under an agreement between ECLAC and the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA). The representative of Mexico referred to other areas that should not be overlooked, such as biotechnology, patents, production processes and, in particular, the study of the reasons for the region's technological dependence and possible ways of reducing it.

59. The representative of Peru stressed the need to define priorities for the construction of new indicators owing to the shortage of available financing for projects not included in national statistical offices' operating budgets. In that connection, he suggested that ECLAC should play a coordinating role for the countries of the region in the assessment of available resources and in the prioritization of projects.

60. The representative of the Ibero-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators (RICYT) concurred with the comments made by the representative of Mexico and considered the ICA-ECLAC agreement to be a very positive step. RICYT had indicators available for expenditure, employment and other variables and was developing indicators on innovation and on the social impact of technological innovation. A pilot survey was being conducted to develop indicators to measure the public perception of science.

61. The representative of OECD stressed the importance of the definitions and classifications already developed by his organization and other international entities engaged in scientific research, technology and innovation in the field of statistics. To ensure that statistics were comparable across countries, it was essential to adopt international definitions and classifications to the extent possible. National statistical offices should therefore strive to guarantee that those standards were adopted by all national entities related to science, technology and innovation, including ministries and other government authorities.

62. The representative of EUROSTAT agreed with OECD and RICYT concerning the need for harmonization and the establishment of common methodologies in the areas of science, technology and innovation, and referred to the progress made in that regard within the European statistical system, as well as its recent cooperation with MERCOSUR and Chile.

63. The representatives of Bolivia, UNESCO and the World Bank proposed that activities relating to statistics on ethnicity should be included in the proposed programme of work. Various delegations emphasized the importance of developing an integrated national statistical system. In that connection, mention was made of the strategic alliances established by Chile's national statistical office with other departments and institutions, which had made it possible to share some of the costs of its statistical work. In addition, thanks to a successful project carried out by the United Nations Statistics Division and CARICOM, two publications on social, gender and environmental statistics had been produced.

64. The representative of Bolivia announced that, in the fourth week of September, his country would host the second technical meeting on gender statistics and indicators, entitled "Second meeting on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the measurement of poverty". The meeting was being organized by the ECLAC Women and Development Unit with financial support from specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system.

(d) Presentation on subprogramme 4: Modernization of statistical systems and data dissemination

Presentation and discussion of substantive issues (agenda item 4)

65. The representative of the secretariat said that subprogramme 4 represented the most political area of the proposed programme of work and that it encompassed a wide variety of activities such as institution-building, advocacy with regard to statistics, strategy design, governance and the credibility of national statistical offices. The activities planned under the subprogramme did not represent the

continuation of projects already under way, but had been proposed in response to concerns raised and requests made by participants in the Conference, whose joint efforts would be required in order to implement them.

66. The representative of Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) said that PARIS21 had been launched to increase political support for statistics, integrate statistics into poverty reduction strategies, promote strategies for strengthening statistics and improve dialogue between producers and users. Its proposed activities in cooperation with ECLAC included workshops and meetings to promote a “culture of statistics”, production of an awareness-raising video, a meeting on the institutional aspects of statistics and, in 2006, development of the peer review method and the convening of a region-wide meeting to assess the progress made and to discuss how to enhance the Conference’s role in the countries’ statistical development, possibly by allowing more civil-society involvement in the Conference.

67. Referring to the role of statistics in national policies and regional integration, the representative of the Andean Community said that the Community’s statistical development programme took the strategic approach of forging links between government decision-makers, statistics-producing entities and civil society, which made it possible to draw up national statistical plans funded through bilateral and multilateral cooperation and to make the most of limited resources by upgrading skills and information technology. Progress in harmonizing concepts, methodologies and nomenclatures, updating sampling frames, using administrative records and improving the coordination and management of national statistical systems helped enhance the credibility, relevance, comparability and quality of statistics.

68. The representative of Canada said that the PARIS21 initiative had made significant progress in defining its goals. He welcomed the organization of regional workshops sponsored by international cooperation entities, since they enabled the participating countries to design sustainable projects with well-defined goals. Canada had held similar workshops for countries in Central Europe and China and had emphasized the involvement of political authorities as well as statisticians, with good results. It was essential to involve civil society in the process and to break the vicious circle in which a lack of resources made it impossible to produce high-quality, reliable statistics. To ensure that such funding was made available, development initiatives should involve not only statistical institutes, but also the government entities that financed them.

69. The representative of Honduras explained that the 2003-2006 research agenda of his country’s statistical institute would be funded under an agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank. International cooperation and the assistance of ECLAC and PARIS21 would play a crucial role in the future. Recently, a proposal had been made to establish a Central American Statistical Council, consisting of seven countries, as part of the Central American integration scheme. Honduras, which had been designated its secretariat pro tempore, was responsible for submitting the proposal for consideration at the next Summit of Central American Presidents.

70. The representative of Peru drew attention to the political role of international institutions. He recalled the existence of conditionalities with respect to statistics in countries’ relations with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and wondered whether it might be more efficient to assign a single body, possibly the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to oversee the integrity and quality of the statistics produced in all countries or, failing that, to coordinate all those conditionalities.

71. The representative of Uruguay said that, in his view, the assessment put forward by the representative of PARIS21 did not reflect the real situation in the region. The standards formulated by international agencies had played a key role in the development of statistical work in the Latin American and Caribbean countries. Uruguay, like a number of other countries, had wide experience on the subject and a reliable statistical system. While all of the region's statistical systems were in need of contributions, reforms and improvements, they worked well in terms of their basic functions. He urged international agencies to continue to provide cooperation, as they had in the past, and to deal only with each country's national statistical office for that purpose, in order to mobilize the units that produced statistical data and avoid undermining the objectives of national statistical systems.

72. The representative of Mexico said that he supported the views expressed by the Uruguayan delegation and observed that the history of those institutions must not be ignored. Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) was caught between the requirements imposed by international agencies, which the Peruvian delegation had mentioned, and local demands that sometimes arose even at the municipal level. Although the current law on statistics had established a completely interconnected system in which the Institute was to play a central role as coordinator, regulator and supervisor of nationwide censuses and surveys, the pressure of demand was forcing the Institute to produce information itself and was weakening its supervisory functions. In his view, the most important outstanding issues were (a) how to harmonize public policies, statistical outputs and budgetary allocations; (b) the tendency of many Governments to abandon the planning process in favour of a market approach, which undermined the privileged position of national statistical systems; and (c) opportunities to achieve savings by using administrative records and other elements that might obviate the need for certain censuses and surveys, and by using modern technologies such as the submission of forms by Internet. He offered to prepare a paper on the subject and submit it to the secretariat.

73. The representative of Spain said that he also agreed with the Uruguayan delegation. In that regard, the situation of statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean varied tremendously from one country to another. One feature that all the countries had in common, however, was the need to strengthen national statistical offices. To that end, Spain's National Statistical Institute had offered several workshops and would be holding the next one in the initial months of 2004. That workshop and similar ones should be attended by the highest authorities of statistical offices, since they were the ones who needed a comprehensive view and more complete training. He supported the idea of making use of existing media to spell out the purposes and objectives of national statistical offices.

74. The representative of El Salvador pointed out an error in paragraph 104 of the proposed programme of work, noting that the words "Central American Monetary Council" should be replaced with "General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System". With respect to statistical work, paragraph 99 of the proposal should enumerate the priority issues already mentioned in relation to the institutional framework.

75. The representative of the European Commission said that the simplest way to address many of the concerns raised at the meeting was to take a regional approach, since the value of national statistical functions was enhanced when they were required to meet standards set by a regional or subregional organization. Concerning the need for laws on statistics, he mentioned the case of Europe, where a relatively recent law had formed a genuine federal system based on the principle of subsidiarity. He also mentioned the REDIMA project, sponsored by ECLAC and the European Union, under which a coordination meeting was to be held in connection with the project's work on the exchange of indicators.

That meeting, which would be attended by representatives of statistical institutes from Latin America and the Caribbean, could have very positive results in terms of improving the standardization and comparability of indicators. Lastly, as the representative of PARIS21 had stated, critical peer review was vital because it reduced budgetary and other resource requirements and, at the same time, enhanced credibility.

76. The representative of UNICEF briefly described the Regional Programme for the Strengthening of Cooperation among National Information Networks and Systems for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOLAC), which made use of the ChildInfo software, designed to facilitate the compilation of data and democratize the use of information to support the definition of public policies. It was useful for monitoring not only issues relating to children, but also issues in a variety of other areas. The software, which was compatible with conventional information systems, was available at national UNICEF offices and the Fund's regional office in Panama.

77. The representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said that the problems mentioned by the delegations, such as the growing demand for statistical outputs and the difficulty of obtaining the necessary resources, were apparent all over the world. The basic problem was that many political decision-makers thought they had all the information they needed, when what they actually had were isolated figures rather than genuine statistics. In other words, the quality of the information they used was unsatisfactory. Given that situation, national offices should seek support from the media and opinion leaders to increase their visibility and influence. He offered the cooperation of OECD in studying possibilities for enhancing the image of statistics and reintroducing them into the countries' policy exercises.

78. The representative of Puerto Rico said that he shared the concern expressed by other speakers that the lack of funding could act as a serious constraint on the activities of national statistical offices. He also agreed with other delegations that the key task was to define the principal lines of statistical work for each country, taking into account the political stature of national systems. That same exercise should be carried out jointly by the relevant international organizations in order to streamline and harmonize their requests and the assistance they provided to the countries. He described the experience of Puerto Rico and explained how the media, as mentioned in other statements, had played a crucial role in reinforcing the credibility of the institutions involved and in rebuilding the national statistical system. He advocated an institutional identity that would be entirely independent of the State, with funding being provided on the basis of a fixed percentage of the general budget to guarantee that autonomy. Bilateral horizontal cooperation could provide a means of taking the first step towards region-wide comparability of indicators.

79. The representative of the secretariat referred to proposed activities dealing with leading indicators, short-term statistics and business tendency surveys, noting that such tools were increasingly necessary as inputs for economic decision-making. ECLAC was cooperating with OECD and Brazil on the organization of meetings to examine such topics as business tendency surveys and leading indicators. In the second half of 2003, the Commission would be starting to prepare a strategy paper on the standardization of business tendency surveys that would outline the advantages of such an approach, and it would endeavour to increase the number of countries included in the relevant database. In addition, a meeting on the standardization of the different types of business tendency surveys used in the region was scheduled for December. The OECD representative complemented the introduction of the issue with observations regarding the usefulness and relatively low cost of short-term statistics and the trade-offs they represented in terms of achieving the necessary balance between timeliness and quality. He also

referred to composite leading indicators, which also provided information on business cycles and facilitated short-term decision-making. The OECD countries had been producing such data since the early 1980s, with excellent results, and would be interested in cooperating with ECLAC on the production of that type of information in Latin America and the Caribbean.

80. The representative of Jamaica requested special assistance in connection with political support for national statistical systems. She concurred with the views expressed by the representative of PARIS21 regarding the lack of a statistical culture in the region and suggested that a forum for international organizations should be established in order to define basic lines of action. The constraints mentioned by almost all the delegations were even greater in the Caribbean subregion, and she was therefore requesting that ECLAC should make a special effort to support the creation of national statistical capacity.

81. The representative of France underscored the importance of reinforcing the regional and subregional dimensions of statistical work and urged the Conference to partner with ECLAC in bilateral or regional initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean.

82. At the end of the session, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Conference summed up the discussion of the various items on the agenda. At the request of a number of delegations, his statement is included in this report as annex 2.

Presentation and discussion of substantive issues

83. Pursuant to the Executive Committee's recommendations for improving the efficiency of the Conference's meetings, which were contained in document LC/L.1921(CEA.2003/8) and adopted in plenary session, records of discussions on substantive issues are limited to procedural aspects of the meeting and do not refer to their technical content.

84. In accordance with the decision taken by the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC at its first meeting, held in Rio de Janeiro on 25 and 26 March 2002, the Conference considered the following issues:

- (a) Preparation of directories and use of administrative registers as a primary information source and as a framework for surveys and other statistical research
- (b) Management geared to ensuring the quality of data produced by national statistical institutes
- (c) Public credibility of national statistical institutes.

85. The documents on each issue were prepared by member countries designated by the Executive Committee and were distributed to all the participating delegations.

86. The session on "Preparation of directories and use of administrative registers as a primary information source and as a framework for surveys and other statistical research" was moderated by the representative of Panama. The Brazilian delegation introduced the working document "Statistical business registers based on administrative records" (LC/L.1892(CEA.2003/7)). Several delegations took the floor in the discussion that followed the introduction, fleshing out the concepts and approaches

described in the document and sharing their national experiences. The session concluded with a summing-up by the moderator.

87. The session on “Management geared to ensuring the quality of data produced by national statistical institutes” was moderated by the representative of Chile. Two reference documents were introduced. First, the representative of Canada summarized the document “Managing data quality in a statistical agency” (LC/L.1891(CEA.2003/6)). Second, the delegation of Spain outlined the main points contained in the document “Data quality in national statistical institutes” (LC/L.1889(CEA.2003/4)). At the beginning of the discussion, the Chilean delegation drew attention to a conference room paper (available in Spanish only) describing his country’s experience in developing quality statistics, entitled “Gestión orientada a asegurar la calidad de los datos en los institutos nacionales de estadísticas: Desarrollando calidad en el INE - Chile”. A number of delegations took part in the discussion, presenting their viewpoints and the experiences of their institutions. The session concluded with a summing-up by the moderator.

88. The final substantive discussion session was devoted to the topic “Public credibility of national statistical institutes” and was moderated by the representative of Peru. The Bolivian delegation introduced the working document “Public credibility of statistical offices: Generating public value” (LC/L.1890(CEA.2003/5)). In the participants’ view, the subsequent discussion was the logical extension of the previous session’s debate on the management of data quality. The discussion of substantive issues ended with the moderator’s summary of the debate.

89. At the conclusion of this phase of the meeting, several delegations underscored the excellent quality of the presentations and debates, and requested the secretariat to make the participants’ statements available in written form. The secretariat indicated that all available materials, together with all the working and reference documents, would be posted on the Conference’s web site.

Election of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC for the period 2003-2005 (agenda item 7)

90. Pursuant to United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/7, the participants in the Conference elected the following member countries to serve on the Executive Committee for the period 2003-2005:

Chairperson:	Chile
Members:	Bolivia
	Brazil
	Panama
	Spain
	Trinidad and Tobago
	United States of America

Report of the Rapporteur (agenda item 5)

91. The Rapporteur briefly outlined the contents of the draft report distributed by the secretariat for adoption by the participating delegations. Considering the divergent views expressed by some delegations with respect to the PARIS21 representative’s analysis of the situation of statistical offices in

the region, the participants agreed that the final report should include the full text of that statement and the Chairperson's summary of the relevant debate.

Adoption of agreements (agenda item 6)

92. The participants in the Conference adopted the report of the meeting and the resolution whose text is reproduced below:

Resolution 2 (II)

**PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK FOR
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 2003-2005**

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/7 approving the proposal on the establishment, as one of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Bearing in mind that one of the objectives of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean is to draw up a biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities to meet the demands of the countries of the region in the field of statistics, subject to the availability of resources,

Recalling that the agreements adopted at the first and second meetings of the Executive Committee of the Conference, held in Rio de Janeiro on 25 and 26 March 2002 and in Panama City on 11 and 12 December 2002, respectively, included a decision to use the Millennium Declaration as a general framework for the draft programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005, and the adoption of guidelines for the draft programme,

Having considered all aspects of the draft programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Taking fully into account the views expressed by the countries members of the Conference, as well as their contributions,

1. Adopts the Programme of International Statistical Work for Latin America and the Caribbean for the period July 2003-June 2005, with the amendments agreed upon in the discussions, as set forth in the final report of the meeting;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary to report on the implementation of the present resolution at the third regular meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2005.

E. CLOSING SESSION

93. The representative of Chile thanked the participants for electing his country to chair the Executive Committee. The Conference had made a promising start in its first three years, largely thanks to the leadership shown by Brazil in chairing the Conference and to the support provided by institutions of worldwide prestige such as EUROSTAT. The Conference gave the countries of the region an opportunity to transcend the differences between them by exchanging information and benefiting from each other's experiences. The programme of work for the coming biennium was well designed, since it kept current items on the agenda while adding new ones that were priorities for most of the member countries. He trusted that the Conference would contribute to the improvement of the member countries' statistical offices and would help them overcome the obstacles they encountered in their day-to-day work.

94. On behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Commission, the Director of the Statistics and Economic Projections Division reiterated the secretariat's gratitude to the outgoing Executive Committee members and to the participating delegations and organizations. He appreciated the high quality of the participants' contributions, which had made the meeting a success, and welcomed their adoption of the new programme of work, which would enable them to build upon the initiatives undertaken thus far.

Annex 1

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF PARTNERSHIPS IN STATISTICS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY (PARIS21)

Despite the efforts that have been made at both the national and international levels, statistical systems capable of supplying all the information needed for the definition, implementation and assessment of poverty reduction policies and development policies are not yet available. Statistical systems are still disjointed; there are no coordinated, interconnected statistical systems that can meet the real needs of users. International meetings have demonstrated that high-quality information is a prerequisite for decision-making; I believe this interest has been expressed at all international meetings on this subject, and I think this is an important time for statistics in the world, especially the developing world. This is a good opportunity and we must make the most of it, because if we fail to do so, our task will be left unfinished. It is important that we move forward and seize the opportunity which the international community is offering us today.

What is the perspective of PARIS21 in this regard? PARIS21 engages in advocacy for statistics; that is, we feel that, since a country's political authorities need information in order to define the policies they want to implement, they must provide adequate funding to statistical systems so that that information can be supplied. At the same time, however, statistical systems must provide what users really need, so it is essential that they understand the nature of user demand. In other words, the policy of statistical offices and statistical systems in general must be demand-driven, instead of reflecting the preferences of statisticians themselves or what they imagine users want. So there are two sides to this problem: on the one hand, political authorities must provide funding; but on the other, statisticians must produce what society needs.

With regard to this forum in particular, I wonder what political role the Statistical Conference should play. I think we need to specifically address this issue. For instance, I see political representatives taking part in this meeting, and I believe the meeting was convened by the countries' ministries of foreign affairs; that is, through eminently political channels. Accordingly, we should think about how to improve the role and work of the Conference in the countries' statistical development. It is also important to consider both how to improve the countries' statistics and how to ensure that statistical offices produce what societies need. In sum, our aim is to foster political support for statistics; that is our primary role.

Our second idea is that statistics should be integrated into the formulation, implementation and assessment of poverty reduction policies and development policies. Statistics should be at the heart of policy design, implementation and evaluation, and this is what we advocate in our various activities.

Another idea we promote is the strengthening of statistics through a holistic approach to statistical systems. We should consider these systems in their entirety to identify shortcomings and advantages that can be instructive for other statistical systems. The idea here is to take a comprehensive approach. It is not our job to improve this or that particular survey; specific tasks of that sort can be done by other entities. Rather, we are interested in improving the statistical system as a whole and determining whether it really meets users' needs. Thus, we promote a system-wide approach and also better coordination within the system. Too often, statistical offices are isolated and statistical systems are disjointed. Synergies can be generated and the production of statistics can be greatly enhanced through the coordination of the entire statistical system. This happens in many countries, with some exceptions,

which are very few in Latin America. Another way to further this goal is to promote coordination between national and international institutions. We would like to see better coordination with international organizations involved in the development of statistical systems.

Lastly, we promote dialogue between producers and users of statistical information. It is important to be aware of what users want and to understand what the demands are; this can be done in different ways, but our way is to promote workshops with the participation of not only producers of statistics, but also users. We want to find out how they perceive the statistical system and its operation, which is important for our people's development. The essential goal is to improve the well-being of the people of Latin America. To that end, we must listen to those who are directly related to our statistical work.

What have we done in Latin America? Together with countries in the areas concerned, we have held two subregional workshops: one with the Andean Community in 2002 and one for the Central American countries. Progress was made at these workshops, and I think they launched a process and a new awareness of how to consider statistics, working in a new way, with a view to responding to what our societies want. This also generates a process of refinement that involves figuring out what the system's shortcomings are and introducing the improvements needed. Both the Andean Community and Central America have moved forward in this process. The idea behind the workshops, then, is to raise awareness of the process that must be undertaken to make permanent improvements in statistical systems, which can be useful for the design, implementation and assessment of development policies. I believe both Guillermo Lecaros and Miguel Corleto, among others, will give details on the progress we have made in these two subregions. We are also discussing a project for the MERCOSUR countries plus Chile, which would consist of a series of workshops based on the integration systems currently in place in Latin America. There is also a plan to hold a workshop with the Caribbean countries, among others, which is under discussion right now.

Another issue that remains to be considered, and on which we should work with ECLAC, is what role ECLAC should play in this whole process. We need the participation of ECLAC, as a prestigious institution in Latin America, since we must take advantage of the current environment in order to make progress. I should therefore like to propose a work plan consisting of a few specific activities under subprogramme 4, which is essentially a political work plan. We have some serious problems to tackle. For instance, some people were unable to come to this meeting. These are important issues that we must try to address in the future.

We would like to present, for your consideration, a work plan covering five basic issues. The first concerns a culture of statistics. We have found that, in some of the workshops we have held in Latin America, there is an insufficient understanding of statistics. In the Latin American countries, or in some of them—in most of them, perhaps—statistical information is not duly appreciated and is not given the weight it ought to have in the decisions of all the citizens of those countries, because every civic decision must be informed by such data. In this regard, we propose that two meetings be held—one in 2004 and one in 2005—with the press and communications media, academic institutions, schools, civil-society organizations and other organizations of society in general to promote a culture of statistics. These meetings would result in the production of communication tools for enhancing the image of statistics in the general population. We would have to decide on the content of the meeting, but the idea is to find ways to incorporate the whole population into the demand for statistics.

The second issue relates to the problem of raising awareness and highlighting the value of statistics, which can be done through two or three activities, one of which is the production of a regional video to raise awareness of statistics. We started doing this with a video we made for the African countries, which has been translated into Spanish and French. This video is designed to create awareness and enhance the image of statistics and the need for reliable information. We would like to do this in collaboration with ECLAC. The Commission can provide us with some contacts, people who could be interviewed, to create a video that is useful and educational and that raises the awareness of different sectors of society concerning the need for reliable information. Also on this issue, we would like to hold one or two meetings with high-ranking government officials to promote statistics. In the two workshops we have held in Latin America, we found that political authorities' interest in statistics is very relative; they have not shown much interest in working more actively to promote statistics. One possibility would be to meet with them, based on an agenda that we would have to define, to promote this idea and tell them: you need information to take decisions, this information is important; so we have to motivate them to make them aware of this new idea of attaching higher value to statistics. At the workshop in San Salvador, for example, there were very few authorities in attendance.

The third issue is the institutional structure. We propose that a meeting be held in 2004 or 2005 to review the institutional aspects of the region's statistical systems and take advantage of good experiences, so that these systems in Latin America will have an institutional structure under their laws on statistics that will enable them to carry out their activities more efficiently. The fourth issue is the "peer review" method developed by OECD, which is a kind of horizontal cooperation system in which one country looks at the statistical system in another country and prepares an assessment of the situation of statistics in that country. This can perhaps be done once we have completed this whole process of regional and national workshops that we are holding in Latin America. We propose that the Conference's 2005 meeting should include a discussion on the convening of a region-wide meeting in 2006 to make an overall assessment of all these efforts and see how much progress has been made in statistical development in the Latin American countries. We think that the Conference should consider what political role it should play in statistical development and how it can enhance that political role, and I think that in the future we should make the Conference more open to civil society. These are two ideas that we might want to think about in the future. Thank you.

Annex 2

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE STATISTICAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS OF ECLAC

I thank the ECLAC secretariat for presenting these issues under subprogramme 4. At this session, the participants dealt with a wide variety of issues, made many statements and expressed quite contradictory opinions. In the PARIS21 presentation, we observed the viewpoint that statistical offices in Latin America are not yet geared to meeting user demand. On the other hand, we also heard the OECD presentation indicating that, in a society such as ours, where the demand for information is very great, there is always a need for statistical offices to meet that demand, which continues to grow. So what we have here is the classic supply-and-demand model; that is, statistical offices continually generate statistics, and the information society needs those statistics on an ongoing basis.

We have also seen that this is not only the case of Latin America, which is a heterogeneous region. In Africa, Asia and Europe we also find countries whose statistical offices are developed to different degrees, so it is very hard to make generalizations that apply equally well to all of them. For this reason, Uruguay was right to respond to the statements of PARIS21, since Uruguay is in a context that also includes Brazil and MERCOSUR, in which, in recent years, we have made efforts on almost every front to develop the region's statistical system: we have achieved integration, developed surveys, worked for legislation and concluded technical cooperation agreements with France, Spain, CESD-Madrid, EUROSTAT and a number of others, including ECLAC and many other agencies.

We also have bilateral cooperation and a pilot programme on a harmonized population census for MERCOSUR, Chile and Bolivia. In other words, we have benefited from cooperation in many areas, while in others we have even provided technical cooperation and technical assistance to our partner countries. Together with CESD-Madrid, we offer a training programme for all of Latin America, and we also participate in the training programme offered by CESD-Madrid, attending courses in Latin America and also, even, in Madrid.

So what we have here is a set of countries that are very different from one another. I personally had the chance to attend the PARIS21 workshop in El Salvador, and there, too, we saw that some countries are still drawing up their laws on statistics, while others have had their legislation in place for many years, as Mexico mentioned. Brazil's statistical office has existed for 67 years; we have a school of statistics, a statistical office and a cartography office, all integrated with each other.

Thus, when ECLAC holds a meeting such as this one, it provides a fantastic opportunity for countries with different economies, ethnicities and statistical systems to meet. This gives all of us a chance to see the possibilities for advancing in certain areas. We are definitely progressing towards harmonization, since the Andean Community has a price index harmonization project, as does MERCOSUR. Certainly ECLAC could coordinate all these programmes once they have been identified.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Glenn Ferri, Chief, Methodology & Software Development. Branch, IPC, United States Census Bureau
- Irma Harahush, Gerente, Programa Económico en Puerto Rico y Áreas Insulares, United States Census Bureau
- Kristen Wayne, United States Embassy Economic Policy Section Intern
- Joshua Picker, United States Embassy Economic Policy Section Intern

FRANCIA/FRANCERepresentante/Representative:

- Jean François Divay, Chef, Division des Programmes de Coopération, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (INSEE)

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Victor-Pierre Morales, Responsable des relations avec l' Amérique latine et les pays méditerranéens, Division des Programmes de Coopération, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques

GUATEMALARepresentante/Representative:

- Israel Valenzuela, Jefe, Sección de Cuentas Nacionales, Departamento de Estadísticas Económicas, Banco de Guatemala

HONDURASRepresentante/Representative:

- Gustavo Sáenz, Asesor Técnico, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

ITALIA/ITALYRepresentante/Representative:

- Giovanni Ferrero, Embajador de Italia en Chile

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Fabrizio Lobasso, Primer Secretario Comercial
- Rossella Bellini, Agregada Comercial
- Francesca Di Micco, Asesora Comercial

JAMAICARepresentante/Representative:

- Sonia Jackson, Director-General, Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)

MÉXICO/MEXICORepresentante/Representative:

- Gilberto Calvillo, Presidente, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI)

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Francisco Javier Gutiérrez, Director General de Estadística, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática
- Francisco Escobar Vega, Secretario Técnico, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática

NICARAGUARepresentante/Representative:

- Osvaldo Arteaga, Director, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INEC)

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Margel Beteta H., Director Técnico, Censo de Población y Vivienda

PANAMÁ/PANAMARepresentante/Representative:

- Carlos A.T. Palacios R., Subdirector, Estadísticas y Censo

PERÚ/PERURepresentante/Representative:

- Emilio Farid Matuk Castro, Jefe, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI)

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Mario Cámara F., Director Técnico de Normatividad y Producción, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática

- Ursula Sánchez Gamarra, Asistente de Jefatura, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática
- Jessica Vásquez Turkowsky, Asistente de Jefatura, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática

TRINIDAD Y TABAGO/TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Representante/Representative:

- Peter Pariag, Director of Statistics

URUGUAY

Representante/Representative:

- Orual Andina, Director General, Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- Haroutiun Nalbandian, Jefe, Departamento de Estadísticas Económicas, Banco Central del Uruguay (BCU)

VENEZUELA

Representante/Representative:

- Rafael Armada, Jefe, Departamento de Control de la Calidad, Banco Central de Venezuela

**E. B. Miembros Asociados
Associate Members
États membres associés**

PUERTO RICO

Representante/Representative:

- Efraín Vásquez V., Secretario Auxiliar de Relaciones Exteriores

Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:

- José García López, Asesor del Presidente del Banco Gubernamental de Fomento (BGF)
- José Orlando Rolón Miranda, Secretario Auxiliar de Planificación, Investigación y Desarrollo
- Lillian Torres, Directora de la Oficina del Censo
- José Manuel Auger, Director del Programa de Planificación Económica y Social
- Herminio Hernández, Director del Subprograma de Análisis Económico de la Junta de Planificación
- Luis Gautier, Director del Subprograma de Estadísticas de la Junta de Planificación

**C. Secretaría de la Organización de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations Secretariat
Secrétariat de l'Organisation des Nations Unies**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

- Stefan Schweinfest, Chief, Statistical Development and Analysis Section

**F. D. Organismos de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations bodies
Organisations rattachées à l'Organisation des Nations Unies**

Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF)/United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (FISE)

- Markela Castro, Chief, InfoLac Regional Group, Panama

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD)/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD)

- Roberto Monteverde, Oficial a Cargo/Officer-in-Charge, PNUD-Chile

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos (Naciones Unidas-Hábitat)/United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)/Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains

- Alberto Paranhos, Oficial Principal/Principal Officer, Oficina Regional del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos para América Latina y el Caribe/Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Programme for Human Settlements

Fondo de Desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas para la Mujer (UNIFEM)/United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)/Fonds de développement des Nations Unies pour la femme (UNIFEM)

- Mónica Muñoz-Vargas, Jefa/Chief, Sección para América Latina y el Caribe/Latin American and Caribbean Section

**G. E. Organismos especializados
Specialized Agencies
Institutions spécialisées**

Banco Mundial - Banco Internacional de Reconstrucción y Fomento (BIRF)/World Bank - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)/Banque mondiale - Banque internationale pour la reconstruction et le développement (BIRD)

- Haeduck Lee, Senior Economist, Poverty Group, Latin America and the Caribbean Region
- Yonas Biru, Deputy Global Manager

Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO)/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)/Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO)

- Luis Gómez Oliver, Senior Policy Officer
- María José Montero, Consultora/Consultant

Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT)/International Labour Organization (ILO)/Organisation internationale du travail (OIT)

- Gerhard Reinecke, Especialista en Empleo/Employment Specialist
- Jacobo Velasco, Analista Laboral/Labour Analyst

Organización Meteorológica Mundial (OMM)/World Meteorological Organization (WMO)/Organisation météorologique mondiale (OMM)

- Hugo Humberto Oliva, Permanent Representative of Chile with WMO

Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS)/Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/Organisation panaméricaine de la santé (OPS)

- Jaume Canela Soler, Biostatistician, Health Analysis and Information System Area

Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO)/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO)

- Paula Louzano, Consultant, Statistical Institute, UNESCO

H.

I. F. Otras organizaciones intergubernamentales Other Intergovernmental Organizations Autres organisations intergouvernementales

Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID)/Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/Banque interaméricaine de développement (BID)

- José Antonio Mejía, Coordinator MECOVI Programme, Poverty and Inequality Unit

Comunidad Andina/Andean Community/Communauté andine

- Guillermo Lecaros, Gerente de Estadística

Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM)/Caribbean Community (CARICOM)/Communauté des Caraïbes (CARICOM)

- Philomen Harrison, Programme Manager Statistics
- Sylvan Roberts, Senior Officer Coordinating the CARICOM Programme of Social Gender and Environment Statistics

Comisión Europea/European Commission/Commission européenne

- Christian Ghymers

Oficina de Estadística de las Comunidades Europeas (EUROSTAT)/Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT)/ Office statistique des Communautés européennes (EUROSTAT)

- Ernesto Azorin, Officer for Latin America

Instituto Interamericano de Estadística (IASI)/Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI)/Institut interaméricain de statistique (IASI)

- Evelio O. Fabbroni, Technical Secretary,

Organización de Cooperación y Desarrollo Económicos (OCDE)/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (OCDE)

- Enrico Giovannini, Chief Statistician and Director, Statistics Directorate

Organización Internacional para las Migraciones (OIM)/International Organization for Migration (IOM)/Organisation internationale pour les migrations (OIM)

- Jorge Gurrieri, Consultant

**J. G. Otras Organizaciones
Other Organizations
Autres Organisations**

Consortio de Estadísticas para el Desarrollo en el Siglo XXI (París 21)/Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (París 21)

- Jean Paul Vasquez

Red Iberoamericana de Indicadores de Ciencia y Tecnología (RICYT)/ Ibero American Network of Science and Technology Indicators (RICYT)

- Gustavo Arber, Technical Secretary

**K. H. Secretaría
Secretariat
Secrétariat**

Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)/Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/Commission économique pour l'Amérique latine et les Caraïbes (CEPALC)

- José Antonio Ocampo, Executive Secretary
- Hubert Escaith, Director, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
- Alicia Bárcena, Director, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- Wilson Peres, Director, Division of Production, Productivity and Management
- Miguel Villa, Officer-in-Charge, Population Division of ECLAC - Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)
- Dirk Jaspers, Chief, Population Information and Training Area

- Sonia Montaña, Chief, Women and Development Unit
- Juan Carlos Feres, Chief, Social Statistics Unit
- Marcelo Ortúzar, Chief, National Accounts Unit
- André Hofman, Chief, Economic Projections Unit
- Fernando Medina, Regional Adviser
- Sandra Manuelito, Associate Statistical Officer
- Luis F. Yáñez, Legal Adviser, Office of the Executive Secretary

Annex 4

LIST OF DOCUMENTS**A. DOCUMENTOS DE TRABAJO/WORKING DOCUMENTS**

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| LC/L.1887(CEA.2003/1) | - | Temario provisional |
| | - | Provisional agenda |
| LC/L.1888(CEA.2003/2) | - | Temario provisional anotado |
| | - | Annotated provisional agenda |
| LC/L.1903(CEA.2003/3) | - | Propuesta de programa de trabajo estadístico internacional para América Latina y el Caribe, julio de 2003-junio de 2005 |
| | - | Draft programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, July 2003-June 2005 |
| LC/L.1697/Rev.2 | - | Informe de avance de las actividades del Programa de trabajo estadístico internacional para América Latina y el Caribe, junio de 2001-junio de 2003 |
| | - | Progress report on the activities of the Programme of international statistical work for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2001-June 2003 |
| LC/L.1889(CEA.2003/4) | - | Gestión orientada a asegurar la calidad de los datos en los institutos nacionales de estadísticas |
| | - | Data quality in national statistical institutes |
| LC/L.1890(CEA.2003/5) | - | Credibilidad pública de las oficinas de estadística mediante la generación del valor público |
| | - | Public credibility of statistical offices: generating public value |
| LC/L.1891(CEA.2003/6) | - | Managing data quality in a statistical agency |
| | - | Gestión de la calidad de los datos en un organismo estadístico |
| LC/L.1892(CEA.2003/7) | - | Cadastrros estadísticos de empresas construídos a partir de registros administrativos |
| | - | Directorios estadísticos de empresas elaborados a partir de registros administrativos |
| | - | Statistical business registers based on administrative records |

- LC/L.1921(CEA.2003/8) - Guidelines for improving the efficiency of the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Directrices para mejorar la eficacia de la segunda reunión de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
- LC/L.1916(CEA.2003/9) - Documentos presentados a la segunda reunión de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
- Documents presented at the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

B. DOCUMENTOS DE REFERENCIA/REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Documentos preparados especialmente para la segunda reunión de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la CEPAL/Documents prepared specifically for the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC

- DDR/1 - Managing data quality
Sólo inglés/English only
- DDR/2 - Termómetro de las estadísticas del medio ambiente en América Latina y el Caribe
Sólo español/Spanish only
- DDR/3 - Informe final. Primer taller Paris21 para la Comunidad Andina
Sólo español/Spanish only
- DDR/4 - Producción y proyección estadística 2002-2005 del Instituto Nacional de Estadística de Guatemala
Sólo español/Spanish only
- DDR/5 - Evoluciones contradictorias: PBI per cápita real en moneda doméstica y PBI per cápita en dólares de paridad
Sólo español/Spanish only
- DDR/6 - Tenth Anniversary of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Global review of the implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
- Décimo Aniversario de los Principios de las Estadísticas Oficiales. Revisión global de la implementación de los Principios Fundamentales de las Estadísticas Oficiales

Documentos que se encuentran a disposición de los participantes a la segunda reunión de la Conferencia Estadística de las Américas de la CEPAL/Documents available to participants at the second meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC

Sólo español/Spanish only - El avance en la implementación del Sistema de Cuentas Nacionales 1993 en América Latina y el Caribe, 2002-2003