

283 (XXV). ESCWA member country compliance with international standards for enhancing national statistical systems

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Guided by the 1985 Declaration on Professional Ethics of the International Statistical Institute which stresses the importance of adherence by statisticians to the relevant ethics and best practices,

Committed to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics that were issued by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1994 with a view to enhancing public trust in official statistics and national statistical systems and establishing statistical systems that are consistent with international concepts, classifications and standards,

Affirming the importance of the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics and the recommendations that were made at the three Arab statistical forums that were held in Amman in 2003, Muscat in 2005 and Sana'a in November 2007, which called for the statistical profession to be developed and the capacities of statistical systems to be enhanced within general State administration, as an important tool in identifying, monitoring and evaluating the social and economic situation,

Affirming also the Amman Declaration of Statistics, issued by the First Arab Statistical Conference, that was held in Amman in November 2007, which emphasized the importance of autonomous statistical work and adherence by statisticians to the relevant ethics and best practice, and asserted the importance of building professional national statistical systems oriented towards the needs of users,

Guided by the General Data Dissemination System that was issued by the International Monetary Fund with the aim of enabling member countries to measure economic and social developments in an objective and transparent manner,

Guided also by the initiatives undertaken by several countries in the region with a view to increasing the autonomy of the statistical system:

1. *Requests member countries to take the following measures:*

(a) Take all the measures necessary in order to produce high quality official statistics that can be used in international comparisons, by applying international concepts, classifications and standards and activating statistical institutions;

(b) Adopt the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and take action to apply them, ensure the credibility, impartiality and autonomy of statistical institutions and enhance the credibility of statistics at the national, regional and international levels;

(c) Complete the design and implementation of national strategies for statistical development, in accordance with the general orientations issued by Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (Paris 21);

(d) Empower the statistical machinery to publish data in a timely fashion by adhering to the conditions of the General Data Dissemination System that was issued by the International Monetary Fund;

(e) Enhance the position of the national statistical machinery within the national institutional structure and strengthen the structural factors that are connected to the legislative framework and regulatory arrangements in accordance with the Handbook of Statistical Organization that was issued by the United Nations in 2004;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to take the following measures:

(a) Hold training workshops on international concepts, classifications and standards;

(b) Support member countries in adopting and undertaking to apply the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics;

(c) Support member countries in designing and implementing national strategies for statistical development by providing technical assistance, issuing and translating pertinent guidelines, holding workshops and contributing to the organization of Arab statistical forums;

(d) Encourage member countries to participate in and adhere to the General Data Dissemination System and the Special Data Dissemination Standard of the International Monetary Fund;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to follow up on the above recommendations and submit a report thereon to the twenty-sixth session of the Commission.

10th plenary meeting
29 May 2008